



Implication of Employment Generation Programme for the Poorest (EGPP) to Reduce Disaster and Gender Vulnerability

**Study Conducted for :
Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MODMR)
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**

**Conducted by:
Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS)**

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Part One

Introduction, Objectives & Methodology

Background and Overview

- Safety nets are formal & informal ways of protecting people from destitution. The ultimate aim is to:
 - **Enhance food security**
 - **Increase income & productive capacity**
 - **Mitigate the sufferings of the destitute people**
- Employment Generation Programme for the Poorest (EGPP) is one of the important safety-net programs which is being implemented by the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR) and is supported by the World Bank.

Objective of the Program

- To provide short-term employment to the hardcore poor in lean seasons **over two cycles** (March to April and October to December) for 80 days.
- To develop rural infrastructures through various construction projects under **EGPP**, primarily earthworks



Components and Conditions

- At least one third of the beneficiaries must be female
- 95 percent of sub-programs help build and repair rural roads.
- 50 million work days have been created per year.
- The program utilizes the banking process to make payments: 100 percent of payments are made to beneficiary bank accounts.
- The program has a forced saving component. The beneficiaries have to work for 7 hours a day at a wage of TK 200. Out of the wage income earned, the beneficiaries must save Tk. 25 every day in a bank account which cannot be withdrawn till the first day of next financial year.
- One *Sardar* is engaged to look after each program who gets extra allowance of Tk.50 per day



Objectives of the Study

The broad objectives of the study are:

- To assess the appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of the activities implemented under EGPP.
- To provide insights and recommendations that will contribute to further development of such employment guarantee scheme.
- To Examine whether EGPP is ensuring the livelihood of the poor people;
- To Examine if EGPP facilitates better coping mechanism during disasters;
- To assess if EGPP contributes to increase involvement of women in the decision-making process within households

Methodology

Issues in Methodology

- Though Bangladesh is a small country, it is not homogeneous. There are plain land, hilly areas, coastal belts, char and haor areas, etc.
- Some of the districts are affected by Aila/Sidre (vulnerable to frequent cyclone/tidal bore), some are flood prone and affected by river erosion, while some districts have problems of water logging for a significant part of the year.
- All these factors are likely to have direct influence on livelihood of people of the area, and poverty level.
- Poverty level varies by district and even by upazila within the same district.

Methodology (contd.)

- Prior to sampling, the domain of sampling was assessed on the basis of hydro-geological properties of the districts and following the ToR , **20 districts** have been selected.
- Among the sample districts, **6 districts** are in the **coastal belt**, which are vulnerable to frequent **cyclonic storm/tidal bore** , which include:
Barisal Jhalokathi, Pirojpur, Bagerhat, Satkhira and Chandpur
- **5 districts** have been selected covering **flood prone/river erosion areas** including: Rangpur, Kurigram, Gaibandha, Sunamgonj, and Jamalpur
- **3 districts** are from **hilly regions** , that is, Bandarban, Khagrachari, and Rangamati, and
- The remaining **6 districts** are from the **plain lands**,

Methodology (contd.)

Treatment-Control Framework to Understand the Wellbeing Impact of EGPP

- Evaluating the true impact a program requires drawing a representative sample of treatment and control groups. To assess the impact of the program on the beneficiaries, we have also covered respondents from 'non-beneficiary group'.
- In each district, the sampling frame comprised one upazila and two unions. Thus, a total of 20 upazilas and 40 unions from the 20 districts were covered.
- From each union 50 beneficiaries & 20 non-beneficiaries were selected. Thus, in the process of covering 20 upazilas and 40 unions, we have interviewed 2000 beneficiaries and 800 non-beneficiaries.

Methodology (contd.)

Table : No. of Respondents by District & Upazila: by beneficiary & non- beneficiary category

District	Upazila	Union 1	Union 2	Beneficiaries	Non-Beneficiaries
Bagerhat	Rampal	Baintala	Rampal	2 x 50=100	2 x 20=40
Satkhira	Shyamnagar	Atulia	Kaikhali	2 x 50=100	2 x 20=40
Magura	Sreepur	Nakol	Sreekol	2 x 50=100	2 x 20=40
Rangpur	Gangachara	Betgari	Gangachara	2 x 50=100	2 x 20=40
Kurigram	Raumari	Char Soulmari	Jadur Char	2 x 50=100	2 x 20=40
Gaibandha	Sadullapur	Banagram	Faridpur	2 x 50=100	2 x 20=40
Mymensingh	Gaffargaon	Mashakhali	Saltia	2 x 50=100	2 x 20=40
Sherpur	Nalitabari	Baghber	Kalaspur	2 x 50=100	2 x 20=40
Jamalpur	Islampur	Belgachha	Palbandha	2 x 50=100	2 x 20=40
Pirojpur	Bhandaria	Nudmulla	Ikri)	2 x 50=100	2 x 20=40
Jhalokati	Nalchity	Bharabpasha	Magar	2 x 50=100	2 x 20=40
Barisal	Hizla	Bara Jalia	Harinathpur	2 x 50=100	2 x 20=40
Rajbari	Pangsha	Kalimahar	Kasbamajhail	2 x 50=100	2 x 20=40
Shariatpur	Zanjira	Mulna	Paler Char	2 x 50=100	2 x 20=40
Gopalganj	Kotalipara	Kalabari	Sadullapur	2 x 50=100	2 x 20=40
Khagrachhari	Manikchhari	Batnatali	Manikchhari	2 x 50=100	2 x 20=40
Bandarban	Naikhongchhari	Naikhongchhari	Sonaichhari	2 x 50=100	2 x 20=40
Rangamati	Belaichhari	Belaichhari	Farua	2 x 50=100	2 x 20=40
Sunamganj	Sulla	Bahara	Sulla	2 x 50=100	2 x 20=40
Chandpur	Matlab Uttar	Eklaspur	Sultanabad	2 x 50=100	2 x 20=40
20 districts	20 upazilas	40 Unions		2000	800

Methodology (contd.)

- The study utilized both qualitative and quantitative information.
- Quantitative data was collected through a set of structured questionnaire & interviewing of EGPP beneficiaries & control households
- Under Qualitative data , information was obtained through **FGD and KII**.
- FGDs were conducted with two groups- community leaders and beneficiaries.
- Local level leaders including **school teachers, NGO workers, UP member/Chairman, journalists/lawyers,, etc** were assembled together to discuss various aspects EGPP
- A total of **30 FGDs** were conducted-**20** with community leaders and **10** with beneficiary groups.
- Information was also collected through in-depth interviews of key informants (KII) with **District, Upazila and Union level officials, including:**
UNO, PIO, Upazila/Union Parishad Chairman, and PIC Chairman.
- A total of **127 KIIs** were conducted with: **DRRO (17), UNO (15), PIO (20), Upazila Chairman (15), UP Chairman (20), PIC Chairman (10) and Bank Manager (21)**

Salient Characteristics of Households

- 'Beneficiary' and 'Non-beneficiary' HHs have similar demographic characteristics
- Mean age of HH head is 47 years in beneficiary compared to 44.73 years in control category.
- The average HH size is the same (4.33) for both categories & mean landholding size is almost similar 13.51 vs. 14.06 decimals)
- Day laboring, both agri. & non-agricultural, constitutes as the principal occupation for both categories households
- Vast majority of beneficiary (64.8%) and non-beneficiary (63.9%) respondents are either illiterate, or have completed elementary education with less than 5 years of schooling

Table : Salient Characteristics of Households: By Category

Category	Beneficiary	Non-beneficiary
Mean Age of Household Head	47.04	44.73
Household size	4.33	4.33
Land holding size (in decimals)	13.51	14.06
Literacy:		
% illiterate/no formal education	64.8	64.0
% primary (1-5 yrs) education	22.8	23.3
% day labour as main occupation	63.7	87.2
Gender of respondent		
Male	50.3	49.9
Female	49.7	50.1



Part Two

Implication of EGPP

Implication of EGPP can be analyzed by following indicators according to ToR/other issues :

- Employment
- Food security
- Income and Poverty Situation
- Disasters, Shocks and Coping Mechanism
- Migration
- Women Empowerment(Mobility, decision making role etc.)

Impact of EGPP on Employment

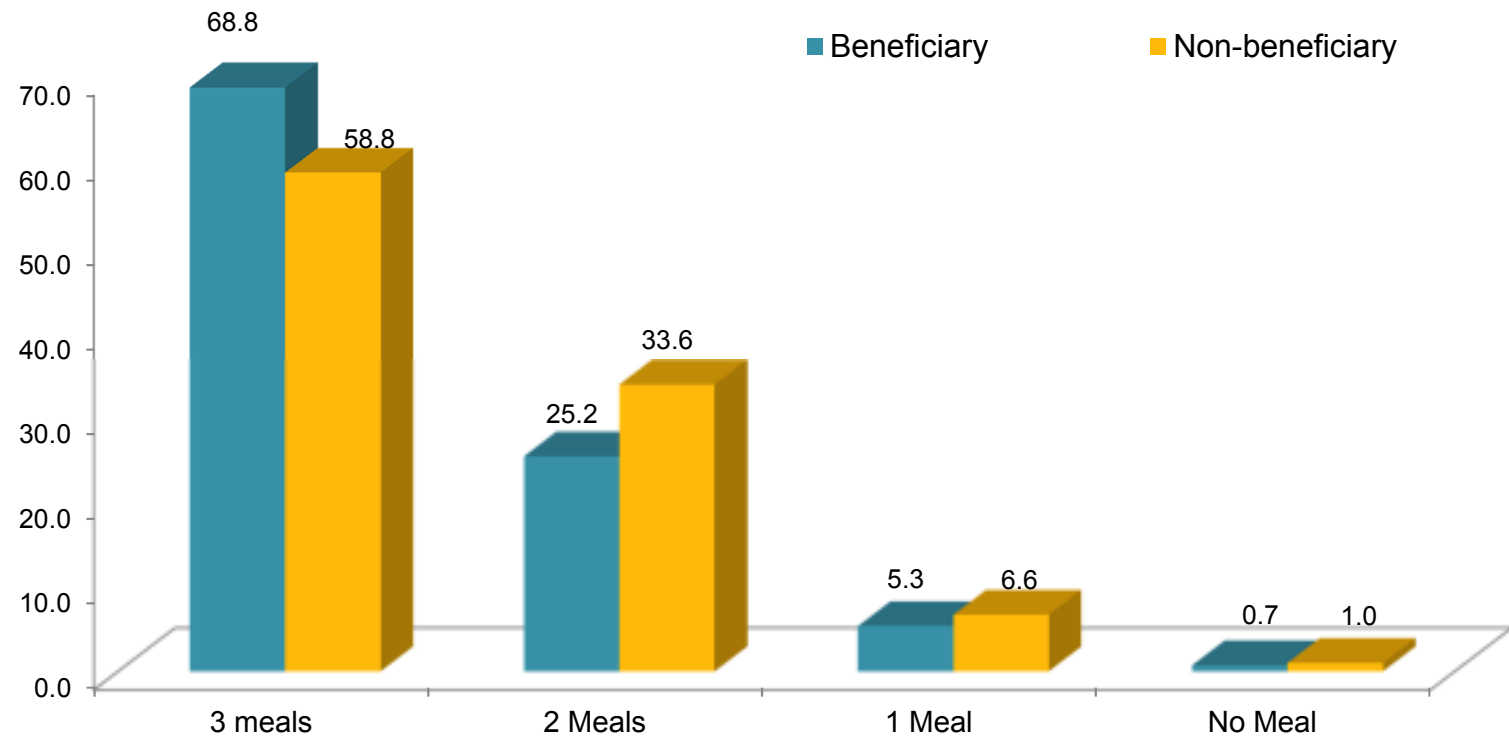
Table: Employment Size, Work-duration and Income by Season and Beneficiary Groups, July 2016-June 2017

Indicators	Period	Beneficiary	Non-Beneficiary	Difference	p-value
Average Number of Workers in the Household	October-December	1.66	1.47	0.19	0.00
	January-February	1.53	1.45	0.08	0.00
	March-April	1.65	1.44	0.21	0.00
	May-September	1.56	1.46	0.10	0.00
Average Number of Jobs taken up by members in the Household	October-December	2.07	1.55	0.52	0.00
	January-February	1.60	1.45	0.14	0.00
	March-April	1.98	1.44	0.54	0.00
	May-September	1.77	1.49	0.29	0.00
Total Working Days	Yearly	340	295	45	0.00
	October-December	90	76	15	0.00
	January-February	62	55	6	0.00
	March-April	70	55	15	0.00
	May-September	117	108	9	0.00
Total Work Hours	October-December	585	508	77	0.00
	January-February	404	374	30	0.00
	March-April	459	373	85	0.00
	May-September	768	721	47	0.01
Total Household Labour Income	Yearly	82283	76591	5692	0.00
	October-December	19818	18238	1580	0.00
	January-February	14855	14157	699	0.06
	March-April	15611	13967	1644	0.00
	May-September	31999	30229	1769	0.04

Note: October-December and March to April are respectively EGPP-Phase I and II while January-February and May-September match with the non-EGPP season.

Reducing hunger, an implicit objective of EGPP

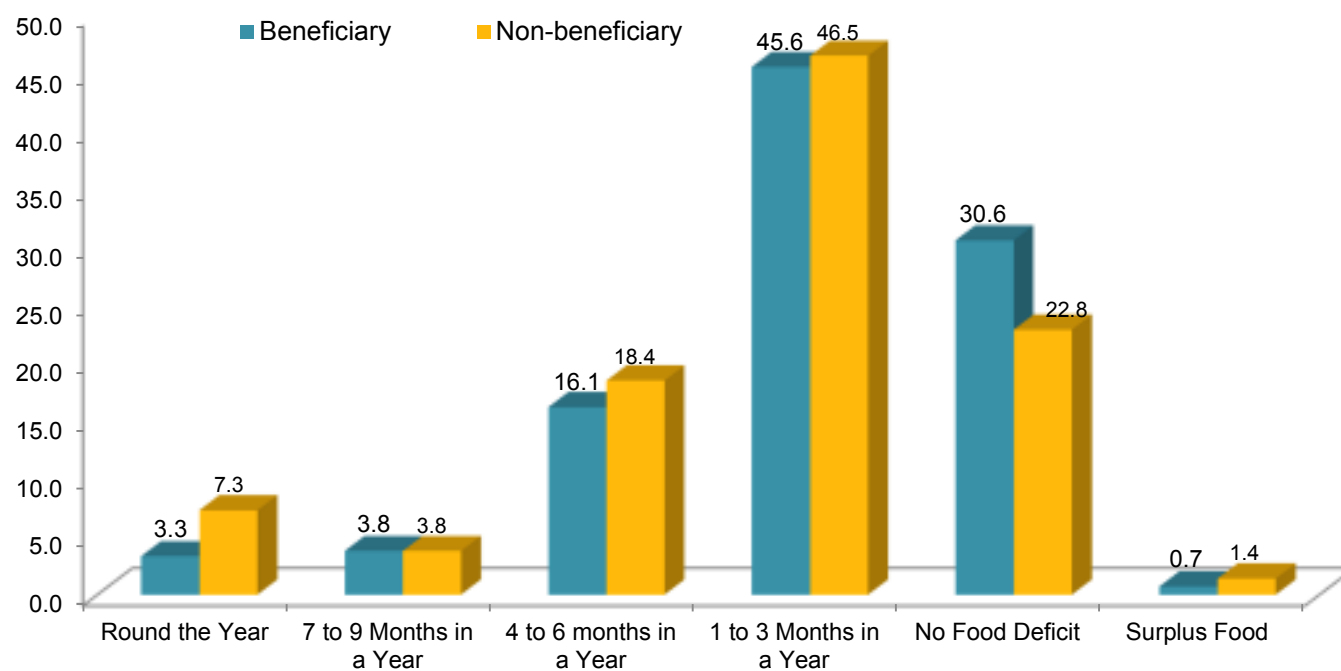
Figure : Number of Meals Taken During Last 24 Hours



Note: Pearson $\chi^2(3) = 25.87$ Pr = 0.000

Extent of Food Insecurity

Figure: Duration of Food Inadequacy during Last 1 Year



Note: Pearson $\chi^2(5) = 37.34$; $Pr = 0.000$

Food Deficit by Seasons

Table : Food Deficit by Seasons (Bengali Calendar)

	Beneficiary	Non-Beneficiary	Difference	p-value
Any Food Deficit during Last 1 Year	0.69	0.77	-0.07	0.00
Falgun	0.14	0.16	-0.02	0.22
Choitra	0.27	0.32	-0.05	0.01
Boishakh	0.08	0.08	0.00	0.91
Joishtho	0.04	0.04	0.00	0.80
Asharh	0.16	0.20	-0.04	0.01
Shrabon	0.20	0.22	-0.02	0.24
Bhadro	0.23	0.32	-0.09	0.00
Ashshin	0.53	0.58	-0.05	0.01
Kartik	0.48	0.50	-0.01	0.53
Ogrohayon	0.09	0.10	-0.02	0.18
Poush	0.04	0.05	-0.01	0.19
Magh	0.04	0.05	-0.02	0.03

Note: The EGPP phase I(March-April) mapped into *Falgun-Baishakh* while EGPP phase II(October-December) mapped into *Ashshin-Poush* of Bengali calendar

Impact on Income

- Household income is an important indicator of poverty. **16.5%** of beneficiary households have monthly income exceeding Tk. 10000, the corresponding figure for non-beneficiary households is only **12%**.
- The mean monthly income of beneficiary households was **10.8% higher** compared to non-beneficiary households (**Tk.7257 vs. Tk. 6698**), but there was variation by gender .
- Substantial improvement has taken place in income levels of women beneficiaries after joining the program.

Table : Mean Monthly Household Income of Respondents: by Gender

Gender	Type of Household	Monthly Income (Tk.)
Male	Beneficiary	7368
	Non-beneficiary	6996
Female	Beneficiary	7086
	Non-beneficiary	6221
All	Beneficiary	7257
	Non-beneficiary	6698

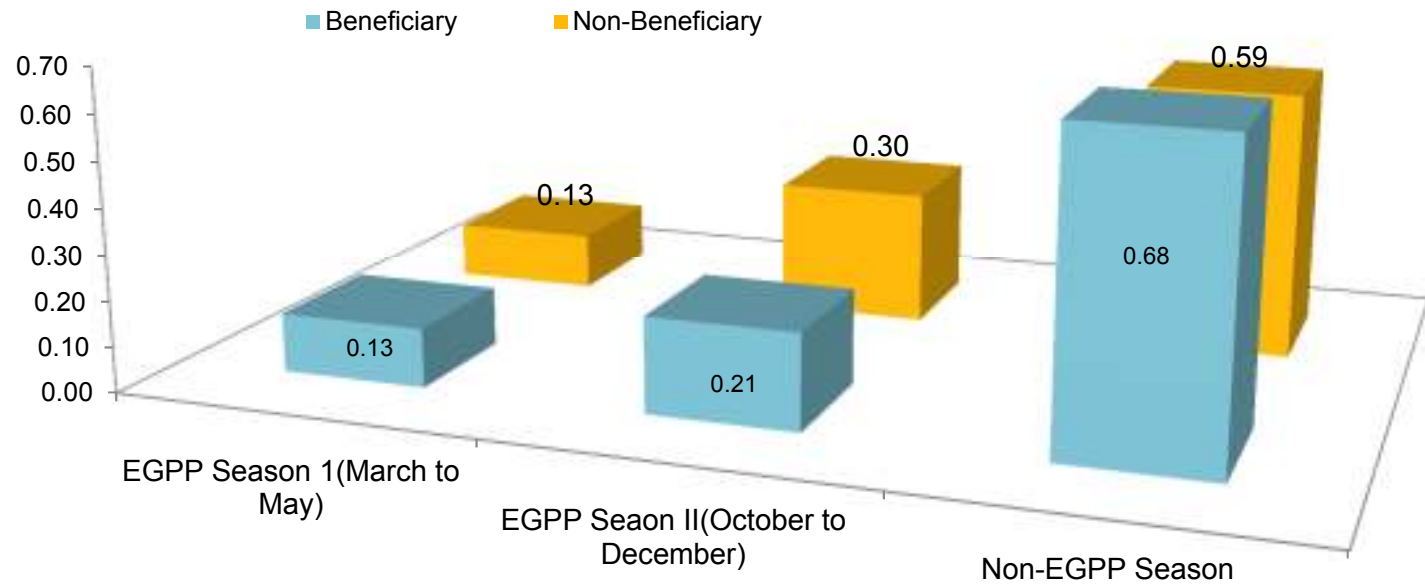
Poverty Situation of the Households

Table: Percentage of Households below Poverty Line and Measures on Poverty Gap

	Beneficiary	Non-Beneficiary	Difference	p-value
(a) Headcount Poverty				
Lower Income Poverty Line	0.67	0.75	-0.086	0.00
Upper Income Poverty Line	0.79	0.86	-0.072	0.00
Lower Poverty Line by Expenditure	0.61	0.67	-0.053	0.01
Upper Poverty Line by Expenditure	0.79	0.84	-0.048	0.00
Food Poverty Line	0.88	0.93	-0.050	0.00
(b) Poverty Gap				
Poverty Gap: Lower Poverty Line	0.16	0.18	-0.02	
Poverty Gap: Upper Poverty Line	0.26	0.29	-0.03	
Poverty Square Gap: Lower Poverty Line	0.06	0.07	-0.01	
Poverty Square Gap: Upper Poverty Line	0.11	0.12	-0.01	

Note: Lower poverty line income is defined at 23559Taka/person/year in 2017 while upper poverty line income is defined as 28697Taka/person/year. The food poverty line is defined at 18626/person/year in 2017 Taka.

Exposure to Shocks/Disaster



- Due to geographical, environmental, and poor socio-economic condition, HHs are exposed to different types of disasters, which can be lumped into three broad groups: (a) natural disasters, (b) economic shocks, and (c) accidents and deaths
- The majority of the households (68% of beneficiary households vs. 59% of non-beneficiary households) had been exposed to such disasters and shocks during the non-EGPP seasons.
- However, the EGPP beneficiary households are 9 percentage points less likely to be affected by disasters and shocks compared to the non-beneficiary households (21% vs. 30%) during the period of October-December that overlaps with EGPP phase I.

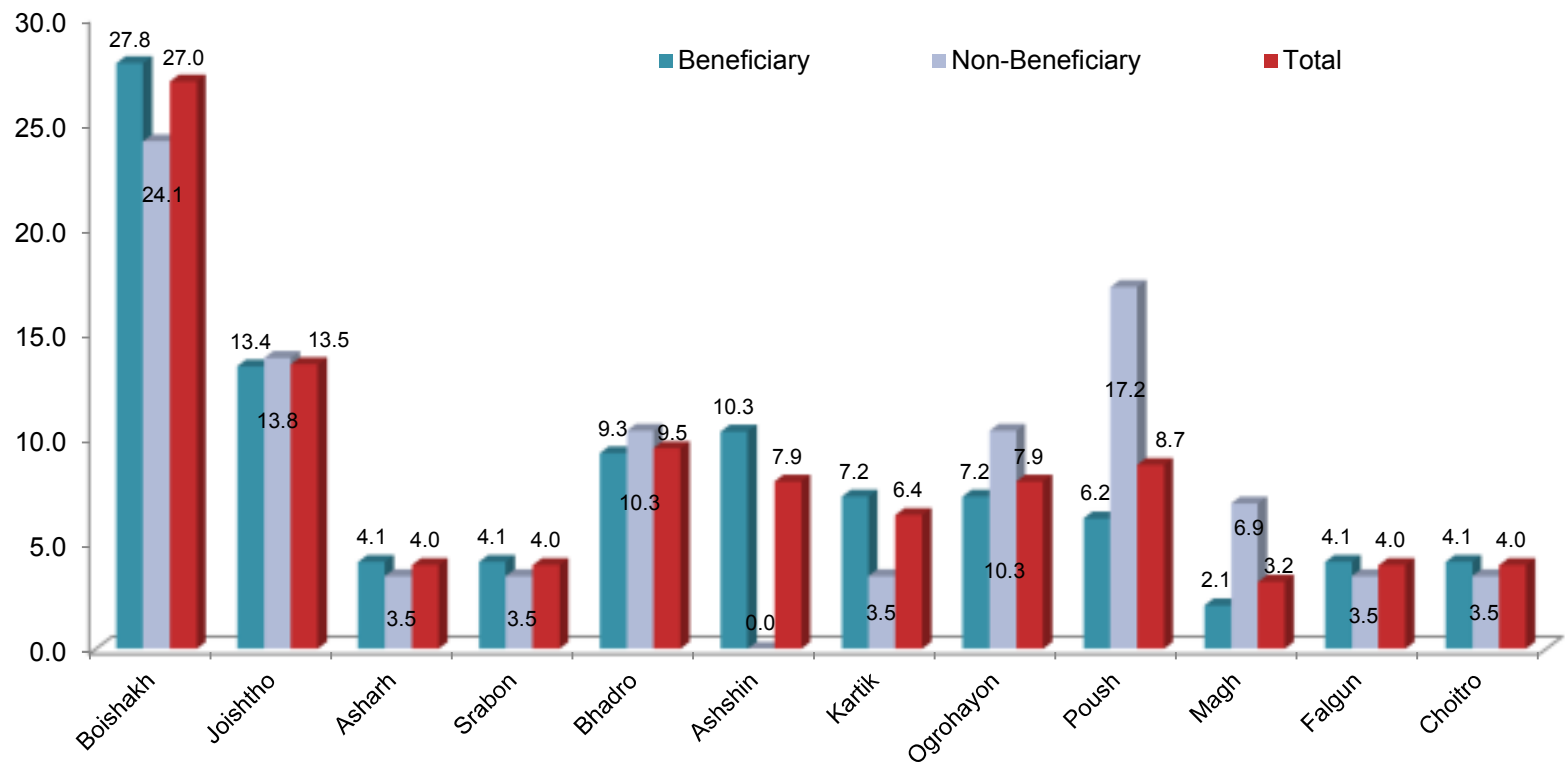


Coping Mechanism

- Respondents reported to have faced natural disasters such as flood, heavy rain fall, drought, cyclone, riverbank erosion, and landslide.
- Beneficiaries of the project claimed to be better prepared in the present to face those disasters.
- According to FGD participants, people are generally aware and prepared for the adversities. As they enjoy employment benefits through EGPP, beneficiaries can take appropriate measures rapidly to address the potential and actual sufferings caused by the disasters.
- As the workers worked to (re)construct the roads, raise the height of the ground level of houses, build and repair shelter houses, beneficiaries of the project including other villagers have become less vulnerable to the disasters.
- Most of the FGD participants are of the opinion: *“EGPP has significant achievements in helping the poor, especially reducing slack season uncertainty and disaster vulnerability.”*

Migration Issues

Figure: Migration Pattern of Households by Bengali Calendar Month





Empowerment of Women

The changes (positive) among women brought about by EGPP can be categorised at three different levels.

- **Firstly**, the changes induced by program participation at the family level.
- **Secondly**, the changes on beneficiaries themselves.
- **Lastly**, the interaction of women with people beyond their home and society at large.

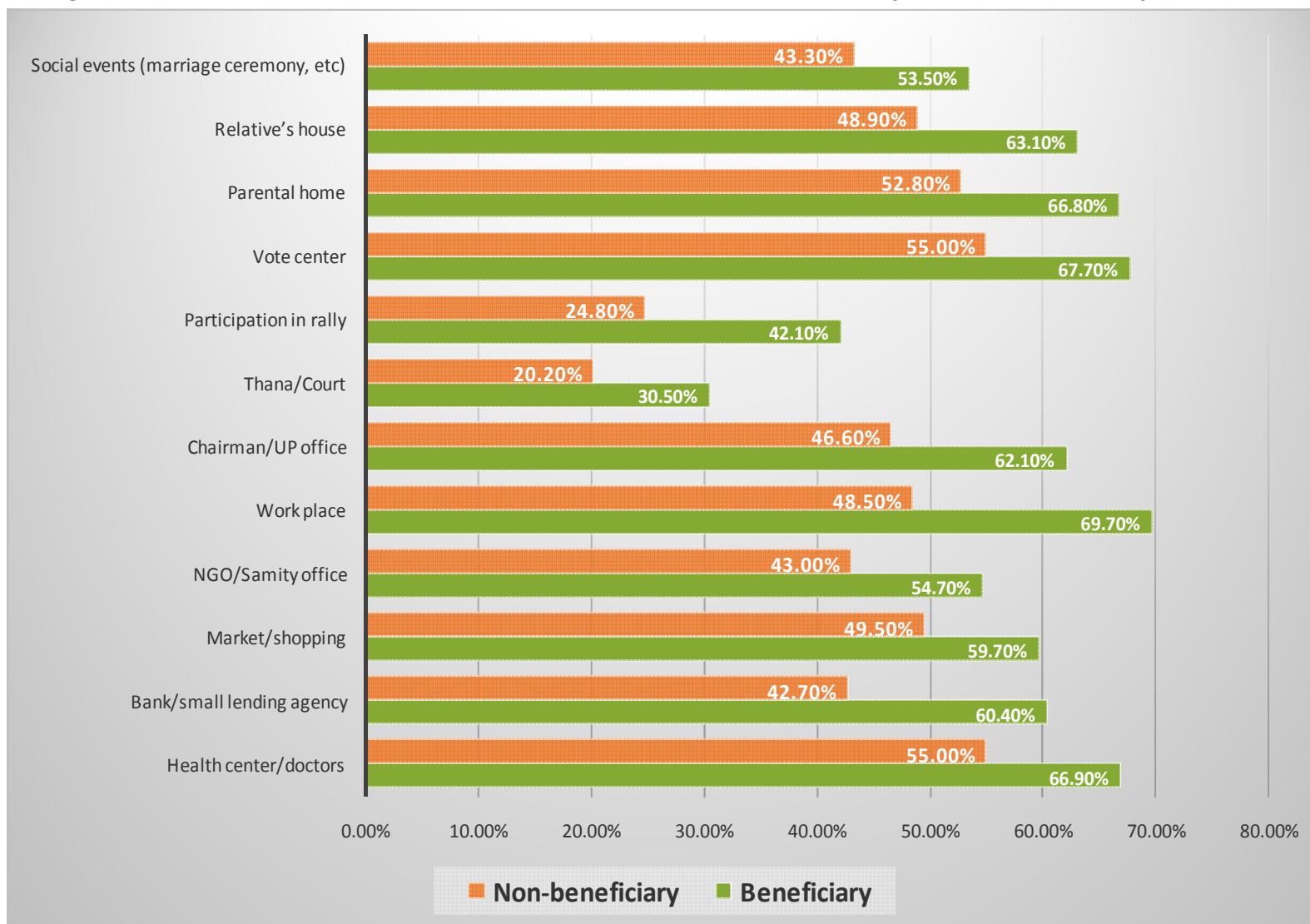
Other Issues

- Participation in EGPP can promote changes in attitudes and social behavior
- Participation of women in EGPP reduces poverty, their dependence on others, increases family income and thus raises women's status in the family.
- One key indicator of women empowerment is that wherever there is a need, they can go for healthcare, work, socialization, and visiting family and friends
- Women involved in EGPP are generally valued more in the family and the society because they are able to contribute to the maintenance of the family-it has given them honour and status in the family and prestige in the society.
- During FGDs participants maintain that women's position in the family has improved significantly since they are being perceived to be income-earners and contributors to family sustenance.
- More importantly, they use the income primarily on their children's well-being.
- This has given them a stronger voice in the family and has changed their relationship with other family members. All these have contributed to their enhanced status in the family and society

Empowerment of Women (Contd.)

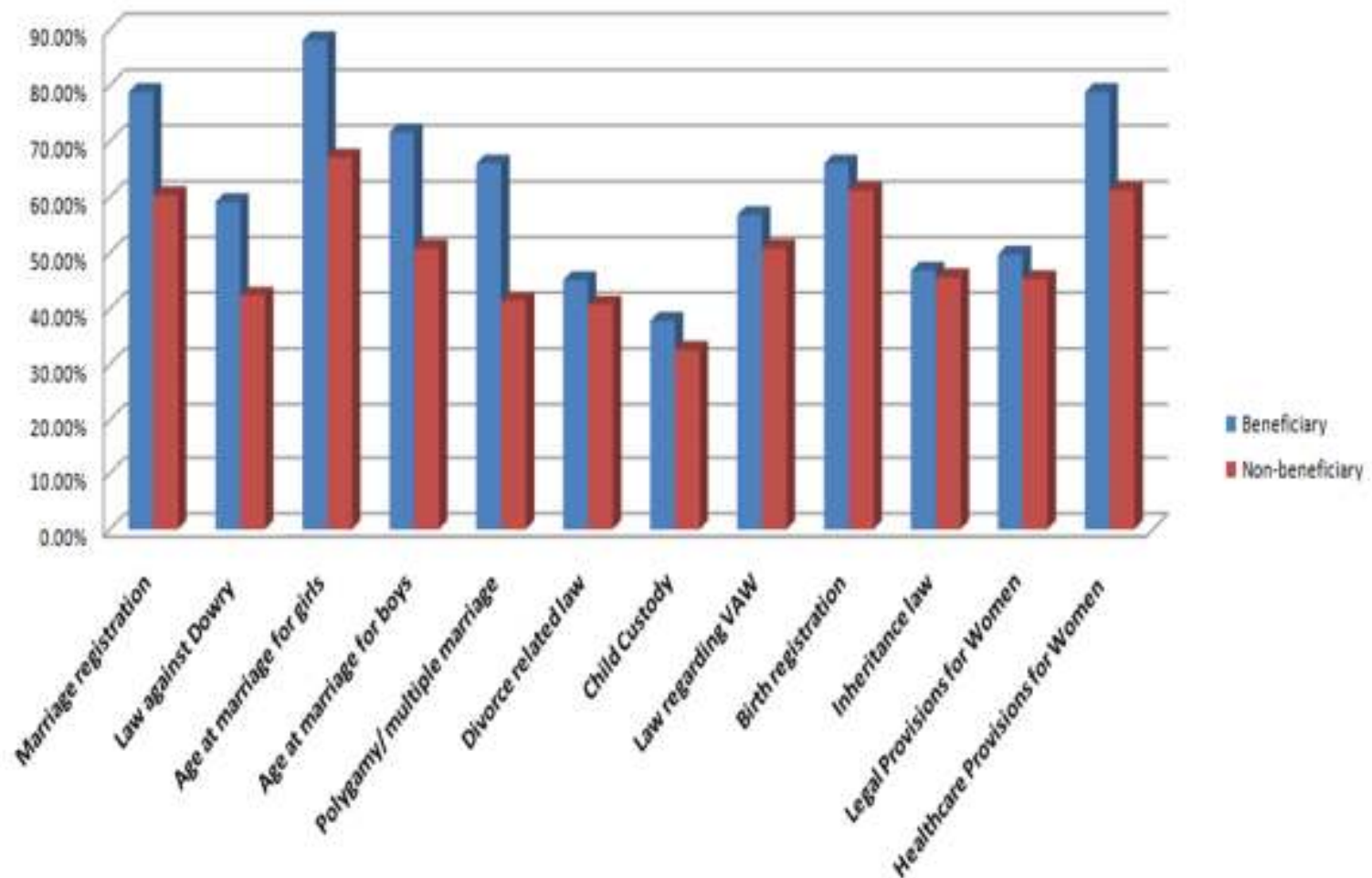
The mobility of non-beneficiary women is much worse compared to their beneficiary counterparts-on the average 10-15 percentage points less as shown in the figure below

Figure : Whether respondents can visit alone different places: Beneficiary and non- Beneficiary women (%)



Empowerment of Women (Contd.)

Figure : Knowledge and Level of Awareness regarding Different Issues and Support Services



Beneficiary women are much more aware than non-beneficiary women regarding different legal aspects and support services

Empowerment of Women (Contd.)

“Less-educated or illiterate, women who previously were not financially self-reliant, became beneficiaries of the project; being involved in this project they became aware of their rights”

-- DRRO, Magura

“I can now decide how to spend the money I earn, whether to invest in agriculture”

-- Fatema Begum, Abiara,
Bagerhat





Importance in the Family

Yes, now that we work for the project, we support our family more. Because of that our status in the family has improved; importance has changed. Previously we were not given that much of an importance. Now they think we have learned a lot

-- Female participants of an FGD in Batnatoli, Khagrachori



Decision Making Role of Women

Child Marriage

- Female beneficiaries claimed to play important role in preventing child marriage.
- Female members/ beneficiaries contribute to making important decisions regarding marriage of their children.
- Opinions of female beneficiaries are especially considered regarding the marriage of children. However, in most cases husbands and wives jointly take the final decision.

Community/Political Participation

- Female beneficiaries of the project also appeared to have gained noticeably in terms of participation in community affairs and in some cases political affairs.
- Women workers report to have overcome shyness and lack of confidence in speaking at a public meeting.
- As female beneficiaries frequently interact and work with Chairmen and Members, they learn more and can express important viewpoints at different meetings.
- Participation of women in village meetings has increased and opinion of women is now given due importance.
- *“We express our opinion at public meetings. One of our fellow workers was elected Member of local Union Parishad (UP). We voted for her.”*
-- FGD participants in Gangachara, Rangpur



Use of forced savings

Fatema Begum, a female beneficiary in Roumari, Kurigram, paid TK 2000 from her earnings to pay the fee of “form fill up” for her son.

- Many of the villagers spend money to pay for their children’s *health care* or higher education.

-- Participants of an FGD,
Bhandaria in Piriojpur



Notable Achievements

- Women enjoy more freedom to earn and spend as they like
- Most of them invest their earnings to run small business, e.g., poultry farming
- Successfully repay loans
- Confidently raise their voice at public meetings
- Better informed about social welfare programs

Socio-Economic Impact on Female Beneficiaries

“A woman, who lives in the same village from where the Chairman also comes, used to beg for living. But she stopped begging as she began working for EGPP”

-- Participants of an FGD in Baintola,
Bagerhat

“While not working for this project, we could not purchase quality clothing. In the past, rarely could we buy new clothes. Now that we earn money, we can afford to purchase new clothes more frequently”

-- a female beneficiary in Jalikhati,
Shatpakia



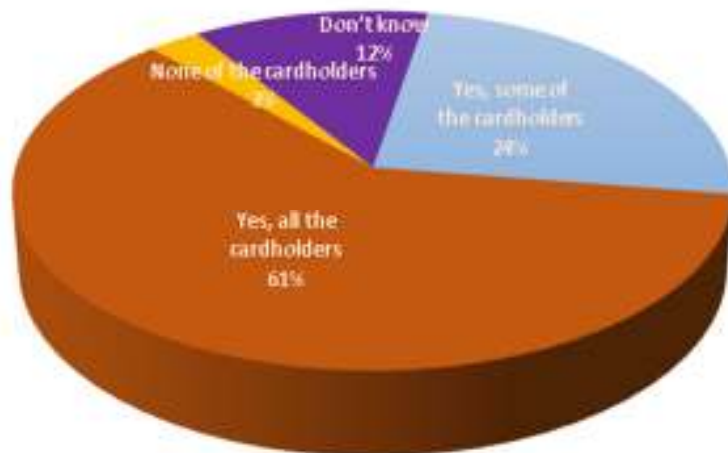
Part Three

Selection Process and Perception of Beneficiaries about EGPP

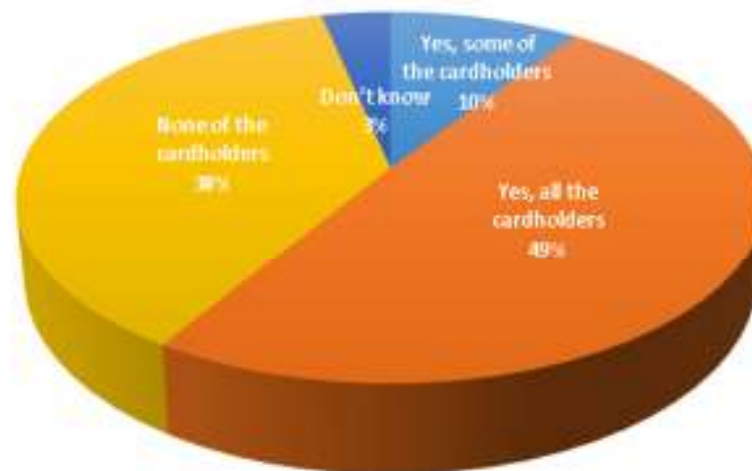
Fairness of Selection Process

- In selecting EGPP beneficiaries, biases can arise in two different forms.
- Firstly, this may be in the form of selection bias towards the non-poor and non-eligible—a non eligible HH may be included in the program targeted exclusively for the vulnerable HHs
- Secondly, an eligible HH may not be included because of nepotism or corruption of selection committee.
- **Three-fifths of the cardholders (60.8%)** are of the opinion that selection was fair enough for all the cardholders, while **about a fourth (24.6%)** maintain that selection was fair for some of the cardholders .
- By contrast, **only a half (49.3%)** of non-beneficiaries maintain that selection was fair for all of the cardholders, while **37.6%** of the non-beneficiaries are of the opinion that none of the cardholders are from eligible category.

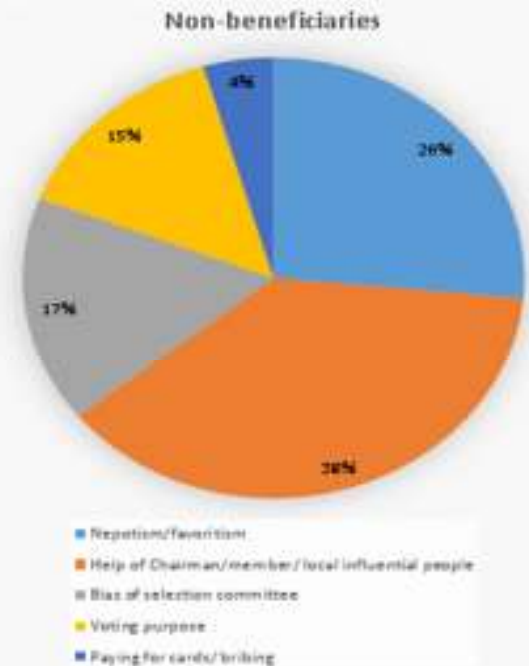
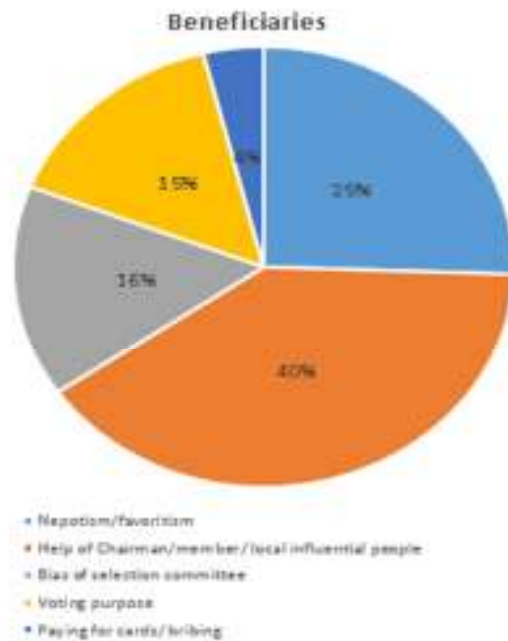
Beneficiaries



Non-beneficiaries



Reasons for Getting EGPP Card by Non-eligible Persons



The main reasons for giving EGPP cards to non-eligible persons include:

- nepotism (mentioned by 42.7% of beneficiaries and 46.8% of non-beneficiaries),
- bias of selection committee (mentioned by 26.1% and 29.6% respectively),
- bias of chairman/member/ local elite/influential persons (66.6% and 66.6% respectively),
- voting purpose (25.4% and 25.8% respectively), and through bribing (6.5% and 8% respectively).

Coverage of EGPP

- Only an insignificant proportion of beneficiaries (17.7%) and non-beneficiaries (10.6) maintain that all the deserving households in the union/ward have been provided with EGPP cards.
- More than four-fifths of the beneficiaries & non-beneficiaries are of the opinion not all eligible households are covered by the EGPP.
- More than two-fifths of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries (45%) opined that **the number of beneficiaries should be increased by more than 50% to cover all eligible households,**
- Almost a similar proportion of beneficiaries & non-beneficiaries (42%) are of the opinion that **between 25-50% increase in number of beneficiaries will be needed**
- While around a tenth of the beneficiaries (11.9%) and non-beneficiaries (10.5%) think that less than 25% increase in the number of beneficiaries will be enough to cover all eligible households.

Perception of Beneficiaries

Source of Information

- **An overwhelming majority** (93.9%) mentioned about their respective UP member or chairman.
- The second most important category was the *Sarder* in charge of the project (18.3%) as the source of information.
- Other sources included: PIC member, other beneficiaries of EGPP, and other villagers, etc.

Whether any Payments Made for Getting the Card

- **An overwhelming majority** (97.6 and 98.2% of male and female respectively) mentioned that they did not pay any money for getting the card.
- Those who had to make payments, **55.8% informed** that UP member/ chairman took the money/ bribe for arranging work for them in the project. The average amount paid was Tk.615.

Suggestions for solving the problems related to beneficiary selection

- Giving priority to destitute/ helpless women (mentioned by **66.2% of beneficiaries and 60.1% of non-beneficiaries**)
- Formation of village level Committee for Beneficiary Selection (**39.9% and 40.5% respectively**), before finalizing the list,
- Discuss about the beneficiary list in open meeting (**20.5% and 19.4% respectively**)

Work Profile of Beneficiaries

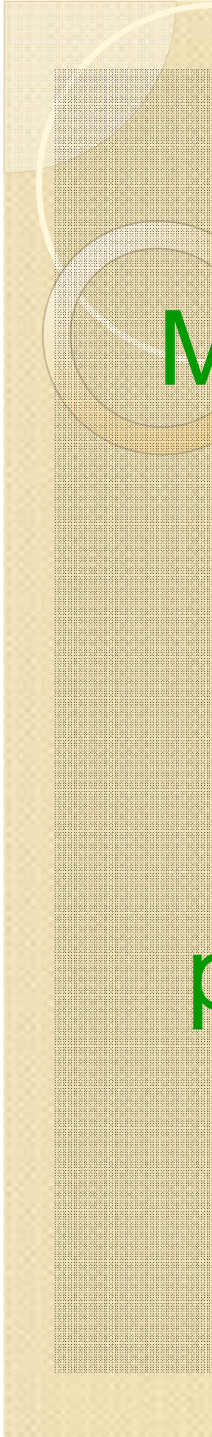
- The mean number of days worked during phase I (Oct-Dec, 2016 period) was **39 days** for both male and female beneficiaries, while the average number of days worked during EGPP phase II (during Mar-Apr, 2017) was **37 days for males and 38 days for females**.
- Total wage received per beneficiary during Oct-Dec, 2016 period was **Tk. 7093 for male and 7029 for female beneficiaries**, while during Mar-Apr, 2017, it was **Tk. 6738 for male and Tk. 6748 for females**.
- Savings in bank during Oct-Dec, 2016 period was **Tk. 899. and Tk. 886** for males and females respectively. During Mar-Apr, 2017, it was **Tk.854 for males and Tk.840** for female respondents.
- The average no. of days worked per week during both period is **5 days**.

Table : Work Profile of Laborer under EGPP Programme

Work Profile of Laborer under EGPP programme		
Average	Beneficiary Group	
	Male	Female
Total working day (Oct-Dec-2016)	39	39
Total wage received (Oct-Dec-2016)	7093	7029
Savings in bank account(Oct-Dec-2016)	899	886
Total working day (Mar-Apr-2017)	37	38
Total wage received (Mar-Apr-2017)	6738	6748
Savings in bank account (Mar-Apr-2017)	854	840

Satisfaction about Wage Rate

- Vast majority of the workers (85.1%) expressed dissatisfaction about the wage rate. The reasons included:
 - lower than market wage rate (94.3 percent),
 - delay in payments (19 percent),
 - wage is not paid on daily basis(23.2 percent),
 - don't understand about calculation of wage (4.8 percent),
 - work measurement is not transparent(4.6 percent) etc.
- However, most of the workers argued that even if the rate is lower , they are willing to work because there exists little or no chance of getting other work during slack period.
- This is consistent with the main objective of the programme, that is, to provide support to the marginal and jobless workers during the agricultural slack season.



Mostly Fair Selection Process according to FGD participants

“The families that consist of adult male members who are physically unfit to work as labors, have no income-earning members in the family, widows, or who have disable children, were selected as the beneficiaries.”

-- Sharmila Singha, Sreepur union, Magura District

Salient features of the selection process

The poorest people enlisted and prioritized

Local Chairmen, Members, and other well-known villagers identified the most deserving candidates

Lottery process was employed sometimes to randomly select beneficiaries

Needs to be more transparent, e.g., by making the list public and arranging open meetings with stakeholders before finalization of the list

Drawbacks

- Every worker had to pay TK 1000: 4 of 13 FGD participants in Kahara, Sunamganj
- Members and Chairmen had to select beneficiaries from a list made by the previous representatives in Gongachora, Rangpur



Wage

- EGPP rate (TK 200) too low compared to the market rate (at least TK 400)
- Recommend raising it to TK 350 to 400
- Additional TK 50-100 for team leaders /sarders

Banking

01

All beneficiaries
opened a bank
account

02



Some regularly
visit banks to
collect wage

03

Bank officials
come to nearby
UP complex to
pay twice in a
month

04

Beneficiaries at
times send
cheques via local
UP members



“PIC Chairman reportedly forced workers to pay 200-300 Taka every time they collect TK 2000. If they failed to pay that amount, PIC Chairman did not allow workers to collect their wages. Workers had to pay PIC Chairman, *Sarder* TK 200-300 in every ten days. Moreover, workers were threatened not to be included as employees if they did not want to pay that amount”

– FGD participants in Bialichori, Rangamati

Irregularities at Banks





Irregularities at Banks (contd.)

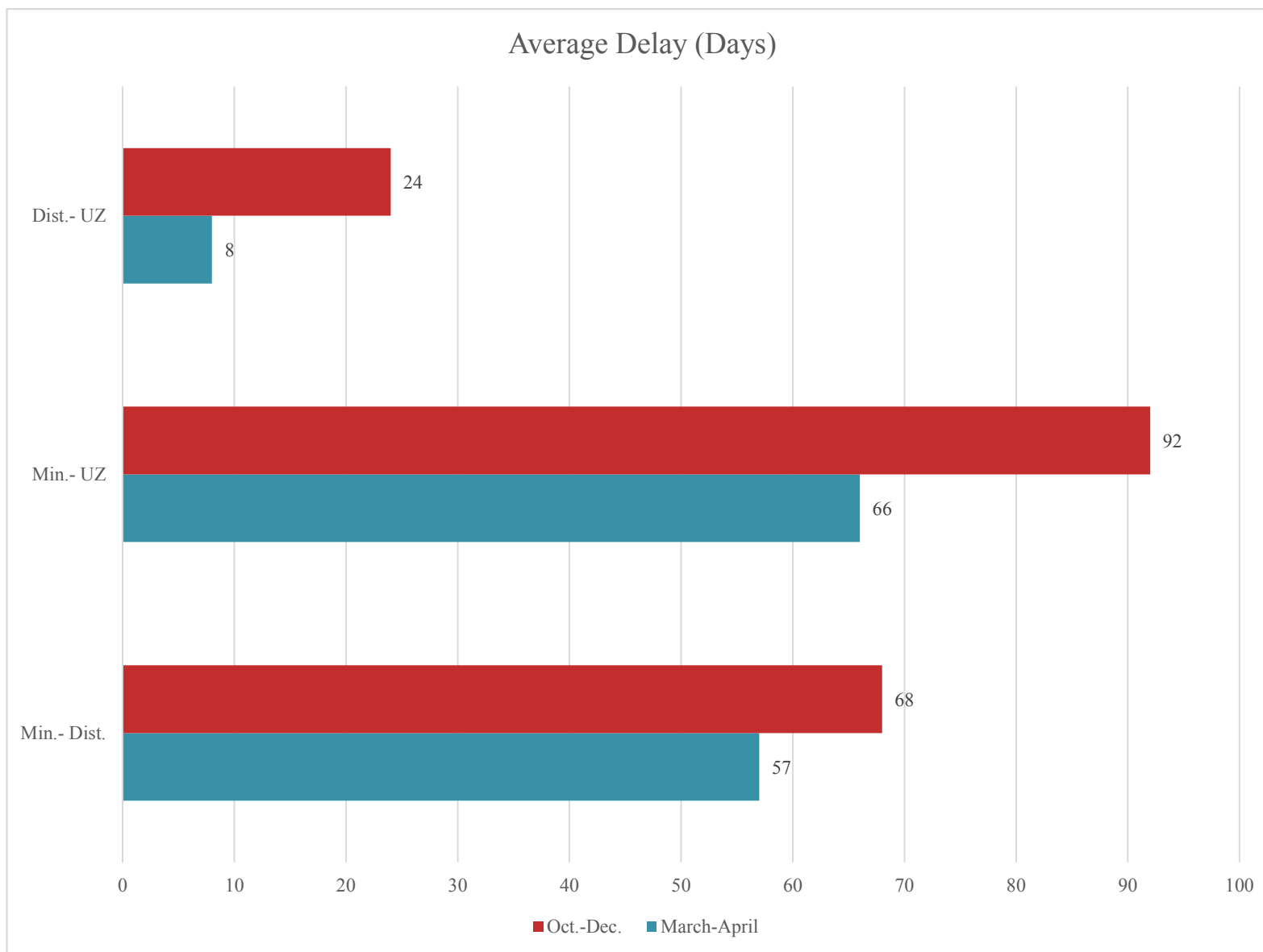
“Workers had to tip the bank officials.”

– a Member in Manikchori,
Khagrachori

“Some UP members kept 500
Taka from the labors when they
withdrew cash.”

– A social worker and a
school teacher in Ekri, Pirojpur

Challenges (Timing)





Concluding Remarks

On the basis of findings from quantitative and qualitative data and based on our field observation, the following conclusions can be made:

- The main strength of EGPP is that it could reach the target group of the vulnerable sections in the community and has been effective in enabling the beneficiaries to improve their socio-economic conditions to a large extent. The female are found to be benefitted disproportionately more than the male.
- Findings from the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data reveal that EGPP is not very well targeted. The selection process is found to be questionable, which was not transparent rather depended on the relationship with members of selection committee to some extent. The formation of selection committee is sometimes politically biased, which results in miss targeting of beneficiaries.
- Results show that the program is an effective means for ensuring economic solvency, increasing health awareness, ensuring alternative source of income and increasing self-reliance.
- The main objective of EGPP program is to increase employment opportunity for the vulnerable and poor segments of the rural population. The program successfully meets this objective as it is evident that the beneficiary households have more employed people compared to the similar non-beneficiary households during the EGPP seasons.
- Contrary to the existing belief on low productivity of public work programs, this study reveal that the EGPP workers may earn higher wages from non-EGPP employment compared to non-EGPP workers from similar employment, even during the EGPP season.
- Another objective of the EGPP program is to improve food security of the vulnerable population. The findings reveal that EGPP has positive impact on income and food consumption.
- The female beneficiaries enjoy higher mobility, are more conscious about own healthcare, and have more knowledge on child marriage compared to similar women from non-beneficiary households.



Concluding Remarks (Contd.)

- The time given for beneficiary selection is too short to prepare a comprehensive list of eligible candidates. Moreover, due to manpower and budget constraint of the upazila level EGPP officials (i.e. the PIO and the Sub-Assistant Engineer in charge of EGPP), they cannot verify all the candidates mentioned in the list.
- There have been complaints of bribery in the process of selection of EGPP beneficiaries. Not everyone has been successful in getting an EGPP card even after paying money as demanded, as reported by the FGD participants. The FGD findings and our field observation show that bribery is common in Barisal, Chittagong and Khulna division.
- FGD findings and field observation also show that some economically better-off households having diversified sources of income received EGPP cards, while some of the eligible poor households have been left out.
- There was delay in initiation of work in both phases. The main reason for late start is the delay in distributing funds.
- It has been observed that the selection committee has to face tremendous political pressure in preparing the list of potential beneficiaries, especially in areas where the local government representatives i.e. chairman/members are supporters of opposition political party
- Due to manpower constraint of the upazila level EGPP officials (i.e. the PIO and the Sub-Assistant Engineer in charge of EGPP), they cannot verify all the candidates mentioned in the preliminary list. Thus, they have to rely on the opinion of local leaders for finalization of the list.
- The chances of being included in the preliminary list primarily depend on the impression of UP chairman/member local level influential people

Recommendations

- There is immediate need to revise the beneficiary list. Same set of people have been working for the last 3-4 years. Updating the list of beneficiaries regularly to replace relatively better off workers with more deserving candidates
- Before finalization of beneficiary list, names included in the preliminary list should be discussed in an open meeting to avoid/minimize inclusion or exclusion error.
- Work week to be 6 days instead of 5. This will finish phase II earlier and avoid clash with *boro* harvesting time. It will also save days for beneficiaries to be used elsewhere.
- Wage rate to be revised in light of inflation- increasing the wage to TK 350
- Instead of a uniform wage, district-wise wage rate may be determined
- Number of beneficiaries to be increased -at least by 50 percent.
- There is an urgent need for strengthening monitoring by PIO office.
- Implementing the proposed time-plan so that workers find work in lean seasons



Thank you