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Abstract

**Rural Development in Bangladesh over Three Decades: Findings from Mahabub Hossain Panel Data and the Way Forward[1]**

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This paper on Mahabub Hossain Panel Data (MHPD) portrays the historical context, sampling evolution, survey structure and methodology, and academic and policy contributions with some lessons learned for the next step forward. The MHPD was initiated in 1988 and maintained by the late Dr. Mahabub Hossain, a well-known agricultural and development economist, while he was working with a number of reputed organizations in Bangladesh (BIDS as Director General and BRAC as Executive Director) and in the region (IRRI as Head of Social Science Division). The MHPD has tracked rural households over a time span of nearly three decades (1988-2014) with 5 waves of household surveys covering over 2,800 households, and has collected a wide range of information on household composition, schooling of household members, assets, cropping intensity and patterns including cost and return, employment and income, consumption, participation in different government and non-government programs. To produce this document, we reviewed several books and journal articles authored by Mahabub Hossain and related academic papers and documents and collate information on MHPD, including (i) mapping out information on past and ongoing panel or cross-sectional household survey data series in Bangladesh; (ii) undertaking the review of all past rounds of MHPD survey documents such as survey implementation plans, questionnaires, codebooks, databases, and processed data; (iii) consulting relevant stakeholders, including the past implementers of the surveys and the users of the data as needed to validate documented information; (iv) taking stock of the contribution of MHPD to academic literature and policy development; and (iv) drawing a number of lessons learned for future data collection and policymaking. The paper aims to i)serve as a comprehensive reference document for scholars and policymakers who wish to understand MHPD for possible use in their research, 2) provide a comprehensive baseline from which we can consider ways to further enhance MFPD to continue contributing to understanding the economic and social issues of today and near future. By compiling all associated research work based on MHPD, the report also offer a historical landscape of the social and economic development of Bangladesh and a credible explanation for the Bangladesh development model for global comparison.

Key Words: Bangladesh, Rural Development, Panel Data, Evidence making policy making

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