

Spectre Problems of Food Distribution Systems and Impact on Household Food Security Status in Two Southern Islands in Bangladesh



By

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In addition to total food production of a country, food distribution systems affected by local production and outside supply are important causes of food insecurity at household level. Food distribution system is affected by many visible and invisible forces. These are not equally important in all places. So far, no study has been conducted to determine which of these factors are more critical than others in different geographical locations. Besides, information regarding food security parameters is not sufficient to understand the food security dynamics in Bangladesh, especially in the remote offshore islands. Considering these necessities a study entitled “*Spectre Problems of Food Distribution Systems and Impact on Household Food Security Status in Two Southern Islands of Bangladesh*” has been undertaken.

The overall objective of this research is to analyze and compare the food distribution system and household food security in two southern islands and those of the mainland of Bangladesh.

Information of this study was collected through a field survey conducted during January to March 2008. Necessary statistical tools were used to analyze data and from the research results following conclusions and policy recommendations were made:

1. Selection Process: No major gaps in the selection process were observed in both the VGD and VGF programs. But it is revealed from the research that a lot of vulnerable households (control groups) were found in the study areas who are outside of the safety net program. So it is recommended to increase the coverage of the programs for the betterment of food insecure destitute people.
2. Political affiliation: Community-based targeting is biased on Political affiliation and opportunism observed in both food aided programs VGD and VGF in the two southern islands (Hatiya and Sandwip) but the situation is better in the mainland (Homna). As it is a matter of concern so corrective measure should be taken.
3. Leakage: Quantity of leakage and distance of “distribution centre” from Upazila Headquarter are positively correlated. It is therefore recommended that transportation and handling costs from the LSD to distribution centre should be assessed for each union.

4. Preference of cash: A significant difference between *ration entitlement* and *ration received* under the existing safety net programs were reported by the respondents of the study areas. Preference for receiving cash instead of food commodities under VGD program was reported by 77.8% of total respondents. This is because of inaccuracies in weighing and quality of supplied food grains.
5. Vulnerability: In terms of Household Food Insecurity Access Scale Score it was found that respondents of the off-shore islands are more vulnerable than those of the mainland. It is recommended that special attention should be taken for reducing food vulnerability in island areas.
6. Possession of SSNP Card: At the time of interview most of the respondents were not able to show their VGD and VGF cards and they reported that the cards were kept by UP officials. It is therefore recommended that a laminated SSNP (VGD, VGF etc.) card should be provided to the program beneficiaries and should be made mandatory to keep it under lock inside the master bed room.
7. Role in poverty alleviation: Both the programs are playing vital role in improving household food security and alleviating poverty of the rural food insecure destitute females, these programs should be geared up with adequate resources support.
8. Monitoring of SSNP: In the remote pocket of island areas, the monitoring system is not effective and regular but in the mainland it is quite satisfactory. Due to weak monitoring, the goal of the program will not be achieved properly. So attempts should be made to establish or strengthen monitoring activities and ensure effective site visits at the time of relief distribution. The monitoring and evaluation of these food aided program is inevitable to make the program more effective and target oriented.

ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AEO	Agricultural Extension Officer
BADC	Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation
BARC	Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BRRRI	Bangladesh Rice Research Institute
BARI	Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute
DAE	Department of Agricultural Extension
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
HFIAS	Household Food Insecurity Access Scale
HYV	High Yielding Variety
IRRI	International Rice Research Institute
LSD	Local Supply Depot
NFPCSP	National Food Policy Capacity Strengthening Programme
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PI	Principal Investigator
PIO	Project Implementation Officer
SSAO	Sub-Assistant Agricultural Officer
SSNP	Social Safety Net Program
TAT	Technical Assistance Team
UAO	Upazila Agricultural Officer
UFO	Upazila Food Officer
UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer
UP	Union Parishad
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VGD	Vulnerable Group Development
VGf	Vulnerable Group Feeding
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The different dimensions of food security -availability, economic access, physical and social access and utilization of safe and nutritious food- have evolved over the years. The world is facing many security problems in the 21st century. Food security is one of them. Food has already added as a security threat towards world peace. Most of the developing countries are facing this problem. Now in Bangladesh food security is a burning issue. Policy makers in Bangladesh are gravely concerned about food insecurity that affects the country from time to time. In fact, there are many areas in the country that are chronically food insecure due to several reasons. The most important causes of food insecurity at household level are food distribution systems affected both by local production and outside supply. Distribution system is affected by many visible and invisible forces. They are not equally important in all places. So far, no study has been conducted to determine which of these factors are more critical than others in different geographical locations. Besides, information regarding food security parameters is not sufficient to understand the food security dynamics in the country, especially in the remote offshore islands areas. Considering these necessity we want to investigate “Spectre Problems of Food Distribution Systems and Impact on Household Food Security Status in Two Southern Islands of Bangladesh”.

The overall objective of this research is to analyze and compare the food distribution system and household food security in two southern islands and those of the main lands of Bangladesh.

Chapter 2

METHODOLOGY

The study was performed based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data/information were collected through questionnaire survey. Secondary data were collected mainly from Upazila Offices, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), published reports from the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), Bangladesh Agriculture Research Institute (BARI), Bangladesh Rich Research Institute (BRRI), Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC), World Bank and other sources. Questionnaire survey was conducted for generating information to know the present status of Public Food Distribution along with respondents' socio-economic condition and their Household Food Security Status.

2.1 Site selection

The study population consists of households residing in designated off-shore island areas in Hatiya of Noakhali and Sandwip upazila of Chittagong and in mainland Homna upazila in the Comilla district.

Data were collected from 630 respondents of different categories as shown in Table 1.

Interview schedules containing direct questions and some scales were administered among the respondents, like Vulnerable Group Development (VGD), Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) holder (beneficiary groups), control group i.e. non-beneficiary group (who were outside the safety net program but had the similar socio-economic conditions) and different farm categories such as Small, Marginal, Medium and Large categories of farm households. The samples were equally distributed across the selected upazilas and unions. There were 7 different types of respondents in each district. From each district one representative upazilla was selected and for each upazilla 2 unions were purposively selected for the study. From each union 15 households were taken from in each upazila and thus 30 households were interviewed from each upazila.

2.2 Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire was designed on the basis of knowledge of some similar previous questionnaires as well as in line to achieve the objectives of the study. It was aimed to make the questionnaire a structured, target oriented and at the same time flexible enough to accommodate the general impression of the respondent about the overall information about parameters of PFDS and household food security status in the study areas.

Table 1: Geographical Distribution of Sample Households

District	Upazila	Name of Unions	No. of Households (per Union)	Type of respondents	No. of respondent Households	%
Noakhali	Hatiya	Jahajmara and Sonadia	15	VGD	30	
				VGF	30	
				Control Group	30	
				Marginal Farm	30	
				Small Farm	30	
				Medium Farm	30	
				Large Farm	30	
Sub-Total					210	33.33
Chittagong	Sandwip	Musapur and Rahmatpur	15	VGD	30	
				VGF	30	
				Control Group	30	
				Marginal Farm	30	
				Small Farm	30	
				Medium Farm	30	
				Large Farm	30	
Sub-Total					210	33.33
Comilla	Homna	Joypur and Mathabhanga	15	VGD	30	
				VGF	30	
				Control Group	30	
				Marginal Farm	30	
				Small Farm	30	
				Medium Farm	30	
				Large Farm	30	
Sub-Total					210	33.33
Total					630	100

The questionnaire was framed and finalized with inputs from the TAT members of NFPCSP. The questionnaire was pre-tested during the early field visits and also necessary

adjustments were made as per comments received from the audience during presentations at the seminar held at FPMU meeting room and NFPCSP organized workshops.

2.2.1 Administration of the Questionnaire Survey

The field operations were conducted and data collection phase was closely supervised by the Principal Investigator himself and the Research Assistants of the project. The field survey was conducted during January 2008 to March 2008.

To conduct the survey at the field level, local enumerators were recruited having minimum qualifications of graduation (B.A./B.Sc./B.Com). They were trained by the Principal Investigator of the project. The training phase lasted for two days which included class room training and field demonstrations.

The filled-in questionnaires of the survey was edited and coded by the project officials under the close supervision of the PI and the collected data was entered into the computer by the trained Data Entry Operators.

2.3 Selection of Respondents

Respondents' selection at different geographical locations was made in consultation with the UAO, UFO, PIO, UP Chairmen, local elites and the concerned SAAO of the selected sites. First the list of the VGD and VGF beneficiaries from respective UP office was collected and then 15 beneficiaries from each category and 15 households were randomly selected. Control Group was considered as those who had similar socio-economic conditions but out of the SSNP. Moreover, a total of 60 farmers were randomly selected from four farm categories based on farm size and socio-economic conditions.

2.4 Presentation of the Preliminary Findings in the Workshop

Participated in the workshops on Informed Policy Making for Food Security: Research in support of the National Food Policy, held during 5-6 December 2007 at the Conference Room of LGED, Dhaka and on Research in support of the National Food Policy: Review of Preliminary Findings, during 7-8 July 2008 held at BIAM Auditorium, New Eskaton, Dhaka organized by NFPCSP.

2.5 Analytical Tools

Nine food security items were fitted in the scale to the single parameter **Household Food Insecurity access scale for measurement of food access** (Jennifer 2007, Melgar-Quinonez 2004, Perez-Escamilla et. al. 2004, and Coates 2005). Different *descriptive statistics namely-mean, median, mode, percentage, regression etc.* and *inferential statistics namely, test of hypothesis etc.* were used to explain the results of the fieldwork.

2.5.1 Food Security Indicator Tabulation Plan

Food Security Indicator Tabulation Plan provides guidance on analyzing the data to create Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS) indicators. It assumes that the questions are part of a population-based survey instrument and could be applied to all the households in the sample.

The HFIAS module yields information on food insecurity (access) at the household level. Four types of indicators can be calculated to help understand the characteristics of and changes in household food insecurity (access) in the surveyed population. These indicators provide summary information on:

- Household Food Insecurity Access-related **Conditions**: *these indicators provide specific, aggregated information about the behaviors and perceptions of the survive households.*
- Household Food Insecurity Access-related **Domains**: *these indicators provide summary information on the prevalence of households experiencing one or more behavior in each of the three domains reflected in HFIAS-Anxiety and uncertainty, insufficient quality and insufficient food intake and its physical consequences.*
- Household Food Insecurity Access **Scale Score**: *the HFIAS score is a continuous measure of the degree of food insecurity in the household in the past four weeks of survey time.*
- Household Food Insecurity Access **Prevalence**: *the final indicator is a categorical indicator of food insecurity status.*

Chapter 3

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Social safety net programs are important tools to help the destitute of Bangladesh. Coady, (2004) stated that “Social safety nets for poverty reduction have become important tool for achieving poverty alleviation and have been proven to perform well in several developing countries. However, broad based growth through appropriate economic policies is needed in order to benefit from the short-term poverty alleviation programs designed through social safety nets”.

Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (World Food Summit, 1996). Food security is a complex, multidimensional concept, measuring food insecurity has been an ongoing challenge to researchers and practitioners alike. Until very recently, most household-level measures of food access, such as income and caloric adequacy, have been technically difficult, data-intensive, and costly to collect.

USAID Title II and Child Survival and Health Grant programs require relatively simple, but methodologically rigorous, indicators of the access component of household food insecurity (access) that can be used to guide, monitor and evaluate program interventions. Over the past several years, USAID’s Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance (FANTA) project has supported a series of research initiatives to explore and test different options for meeting this need.

A guide for implementing one such option, the Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS), which is an adaptation of the approach used to estimate the prevalence of food insecurity in the United States (U.S.) annually. The method is based on the idea that the experience of food insecurity (access) causes predictable reactions and responses that can be captured and quantified through a survey and summarized in a scale. Qualitative research with low-income households in the U.S. provided insight into the following ways that households experience food insecurity (access) (Radimer et al., 1990, Radimer et al., 1992, Wehler et al., 1992, Hamilton, 1997):

- Feelings of *uncertainty* or *anxiety* over food (situation, resources, or supply);
- Perceptions that food is of insufficient *quantity* (for adults and children);
- Perceptions that food is of insufficient *quality* (includes aspects of dietary diversity, nutritional adequacy, preference);
- Reported *reductions* of food intake (for adults and children);
- Reported *consequences* of reduced food intake (for adults and children); and
- Feelings of *shame* for resorting to socially unacceptable means to obtain food resources.

The eighteen-question U.S. Household Food Security Survey Module (US HFSSM) asks respondents to describe behaviors and attitudes that relate to these various aspects, also called ‘domains’, of the food insecurity experience (Hamilton et al., 1997). For example, a question relating to perceptions of insufficient *quantity* asks whether any adults had to eat less than they thought they should. The *uncertainty*-related questions include one about whether the respondent worried that the household’s food would run out. Responses to the US HFSSM are summarized in a scale to provide a continuous indicator of the degree of a household’s food insecurity. Cutoff points on the scale enable categorical classification of whether households are food secure or not. These data are used to monitor food assistance programs and to report on national prevalence of household food insecurity.

Recent field validation studies of this approach to measuring food insecurity (access) more directly, by constructing measures based on households’ experience of the problem, have demonstrated the feasibility and usefulness of the approach in very different, developing country contexts (Webb et al., 2002, Coates et al., 2003, Frongillo and Nanama, 2003). The measures constructed were strongly correlated with common indicators of poverty and food consumption as well as with indicators currently used by Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs) to monitor their food security-related activities. They were also sensitive to changes in the households’ situation over time, making them valid and useful for assessing program impact. There are other studies where US HFSSM questions have been translated, with some adaptation, to developing country settings and found to be correlated with poverty and food consumption indicators (Melgar-Quinonez, 2004, Perez-Escamilla et al., 2004). Furthermore, based on a review of evidence from 22 different scale applications, a paper examining commonalities in the experience and expression of food insecurity (access)

across cultures identified four domains and several sub-domains of food insecurity (access) that appear to be universal across different countries and cultures. The paper recommended that questions related to these domains be used as the basis of future food insecurity (access) scale measures (Coates, 2005).

Coats *et al*, (2007) stated that “based on this growing body of evidence, FANTA and its partners have identified a set of questions (Household Food Insecurity Access Scale Generic Questions) that have been used in several countries and appear to distinguish the food secure from the insecure households across different cultural contexts. These questions represent apparently universal domains of the household food insecurity (access) experience and can be used to assign households and populations along a continuum of severity, from food secure to severely food insecure. The information generated by the HFIAS can be used to assess the prevalence of household food insecurity (access) (e.g., for geographic targeting) and to detect changes in the household food insecurity (access) situation of a population over time (e.g., for monitoring and evaluation). The questions can be added to a standard baseline and final evaluation survey. When using the scale to determine impact, it is important to follow the standard sampling methods commonly used in Title II evaluations”.

The literature reviewed above indicates that for food security studies like the present study, the parameters and analytical tools mentioned above would be suitable to get better results to achieve the objectives of the study.

Chapter 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Demographic Characteristics

Demographic characteristics are important to assess the impact of development interventions. Moreover, demographic characteristics can be used as useful indicators in making comparison among different categories of the respondents. Therefore, attempt has been made to analyze the household category, family size, age composition of population in different geographical locations of the study areas.

Table 2: Population in the sample households in Hatiya, Sandwip and Homna upazilla

Population Groups	Upazila									Total		Average N=4816
	Hatiya			Sandwip			Homna			Male	Female	
	Male N=810	Female N=841	Sub-Total N=1651	Male N=799	Female N=823	Sub-total N=1622	Male N=747	Female N=796	Sub-Total N=1543	N=2356	N=2460	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
VGD	11.9	10.5	11.1	11.9	11.2	11.5	11.6	10.2	10.9	11.8	10.6	11.2
VGF	13.2	13.2	13.2	12.9	12.5	12.7	12.2	11.7	11.9	12.8	12.5	12.6
Control group	12.7	13.4	13.1	10.9	13.1	12	11.9	11.1	11.5	11.8	12.6	12.2
Marginal farm	11.2	11.3	11.3	10.1	9.96	10	10.4	11.3	10.9	10.6	10.9	10.7
Small farm	13.6	13	13.3	13.4	13.6	13.5	12.7	15.1	13.9	13.2	13.9	13.6
Medium farm	14.8	16.9	15.9	19.1	18.7	18.9	18.5	19.3	18.9	17.4	18.3	17.9
Large farm	22.6	21.8	22.2	21.7	20.9	21.3	22.6	21.4	22	22.3	21.3	21.8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Field survey (2008)

Results presented in Table 2 shows that population in different locations and among the categories are different within same number of households. Populations in the islands are higher than the main lands. It has been observed that in the main land Homna, there are 1543 population while in the Hatiya and Sandwip population are 1651 and 1622 respectively. Irrespective of locations, females are higher in number than male in the study areas.

In Hatiya, large farm category has the highest (22.2%) population and VGD card holders have the lowest population (11.1%). Irrespective of location and gender, population increased with the increase of farm size (Table 2).

Table 3: Population by age groups in Hatiya, Sandwip and Homna upazilla

Age Group (in years)	Upazilla			Land status		Total (N=4816)
	Hatiya (n=1651)	Sandwip (n=1622)	Homna (n=1543)	Island (n=3273)	Main land (n=1543)	
0-14	44.76	37.55	36.68	41.19	36.68	39.74
15-60	53.97	60.23	61.05	57.07	61.05	58.35
60+	1.27	2.22	2.27	1.74	2.27	1.91
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Non-earning	46.03	39.77	38.95	42.93	38.95	41.65
Earning	53.97	60.23	61.05	57.07	61.05	58.35
Dependency ratio	85.30	66.02	63.80	71.39	75.21	63.80

Source: Field Survey (2008)

The age structure of the people is an important factor that has influence on socio-economic status of people. It has been observed that the highest dependency ratio in Hatiya (85.3%) followed by Sandwip (66.02%) and Homna (63.8%) and dependency ratios are statistically significant at 0.05 but in terms of land status dependency ratios are not significant. The dependency ratio was found 63.8% irrespective of location (Hatiya, Sandwip and Homna) where as the national rural dependency ratio is 74.2% (HIES 2005) (Table 3).

Table 4: Household category wise broad age composition and demographic ratio

Age Group	Household category							Total
	VGD	VGF	Control group	Marginal farmer	Small farmer	Medium farmer	Large farmer	
0-14 years	14.68	12.43	11.91	10.50	12.85	17.19	20.43	100
15-60 years	8.72	12.78	12.46	10.89	14.23	18.58	22.35	100
60+ years	14.13	11.96	10.87	10.87	7.61	10.87	33.70	100
Non-earning	54.55	40.95	40.48	40.81	38.74	39.37	40.19	
Earning	45.45	59.05	59.52	59.19	61.26	60.63	59.81	
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
Dependency ratio	120.00	69.36	68.00	68.95	63.25	64.94	67.20	

Source: Field Survey (2008)

A measure showing the number of dependents (aged 0-14 and over the age of 60) to the total population (aged 15-60). This indicator gives insight into the amount of people of non-working age compared to the number of those of working age. A high ratio means those of working age - and the overall economy - face a greater burden in supporting the aging

population. The VGD household have 120 percent dependency ratio. This implies that for every 100 economically active persons, in average 120 are economically dependent persons. The highest dependency ratio (120%) was observed in VGD household followed by VGF (69.36%), Marginal farm (68.95%), Control group (68%), Large farm (67.2%), Medium farm (64.94%), and Small farm 63.25% respectively (Table 4).

4.2 Socio-Economic Characteristics

This section describes the socio-economic status of the respondents in respect to their literacy, level of education, employment status and major occupation.

In the Hatiya sample, most of the people are housewife (21.93%) which was due to the greater proportion of female in that region. Among the population 15.08% were engaged in agriculture. A very little proportion (1.76%) is engaged in business. As the Hatiya and Sandwip upazillas are nearby the sea and hence 2.79% of the sampled populations are engaged in fishing. Agricultural labor and non-agricultural labor are 5.21% and 3.94%, respectively. But skilled labourers are only 0.55% of the total population in the study area sample.

Table 5: Distribution of Sample Household by Profession

Professions	Upazilas						Average	
	Hatiya		Sandwip		Homna			
	Primary N=1651	Secondary N=230	Primary N=1622	Secondary N=277	Primary N=1543	Secondary N=320	Primary	Secondary
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Agriculture	15.08		15.84		15.81		15.57	
Business	1.76		0.80	0.72	1.49		1.35	0.27
Fishing	2.79	3.91	2.40	3.97	1.43	0.87	2.22	2.99
Shop-keeping	1.15	5.22	1.05	5.05	1.94	3.48	1.37	4.61
Tailoring	0.73	4.35	0.80	4.69	1.30	6.96	0.93	5.29
Skilled labour	0.55	3.48	0.74	4.69	0.91	4.35	0.73	4.21
Agriculture labour	5.21	32.17	4.44	41.52	4.60	36.09	4.75	36.91
Non-Agriculture labour	3.94	46.09	6.66	37.18	4.73	43.48	5.11	41.93
Service	0.42		0.37		0.58		0.46	
Student	16.60		15.17		15.81		15.86	
House-wife	21.93	2.17	24.60	1.44	23.91	3.48	23.46	2.31
None	29.19	0.87	26.26		26.25		27.26	0.27
Others (Begging)	0.67	1.74	0.86	0.72	1.23	1.30	0.91	1.22
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Field survey (2008)

About 16.60% of the populations are student in the Hatiya sample. Among the secondary profession, the most dominant one is non-agricultural labors (46.09%) among the sample households in the Hatiya sample.

Individuals from sampled households are engaged in as many as 12 vocational activities either as primary or secondary profession (Table 5). About 50.72% do not have any profession as they are housewives (23.46%) and none (27.26%) that includes children or disabled due to illness or old age or unemployed. The ratio between working and non-working population in other words dependency ratio seems to be very high (1: 2.52) in the study area. In Sandwip, more than half of the populations are not working. It has been observed that 26.26% people have no profession and 24.60% are housewives (Table 5). Agriculture is the dominant profession in Hatiya (15.84%) while 15.16% are student, 4.44 % are agricultural and 6.66 % are non-agricultural labors. None of the agricultural professionals are engaged in business. Similar trend was observed in Homna. It has been observed that more peoples in islands are engaged in fishing than the main land peoples. Relative study on the profession among the peoples of three upazilas revealed that the majority of the sampled people have no specific profession. It was observed that the person who has no primary profession is 29.19%, 26.26% and 26.25%, respectively in Hatiya, Sandwip and Homna upazila (Table 5).

4.3 Education

Table 6: Distribution of Sample Household by Education Level

Level of Education	Upazila			Total
	Hatiya	Sandwip	Homna	
	%	%	%	%
Age <5 years	18.72	13.93	14.32	15.70
Primary	34.28	34.09	33.44	33.95
Secondary	4.48	4.25	4.80	4.51
SSC Passed	0.55	0.55	0.71	0.60
HSC Passed	0.36	0.37	0.52	0.42
Graduate	0.18	0.12	0.26	0.19
Can sign only	3.82	3.33	2.53	3.24
Illiterate	37.61	43.34	43.42	41.40
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Field survey (2008)

Education level of the samples households was examined and categorized into four categories as ‘Educated’ which includes- primary, secondary, SSC passed, HSC passed,

Graduate; ‘Can signature only’; ‘Illiterate’ –those can not read or write and ‘no schooling children’ - those who are below five years age, not reached the age to go to school. In the study areas, among the households sampled, a considerable portion of sampled population is illiterate (41.4%) followed by primary educated (33.95%), secondary education (4.51%) and can signature only (3.24%). A negligible number of people is reports being highly educated (Table 6).

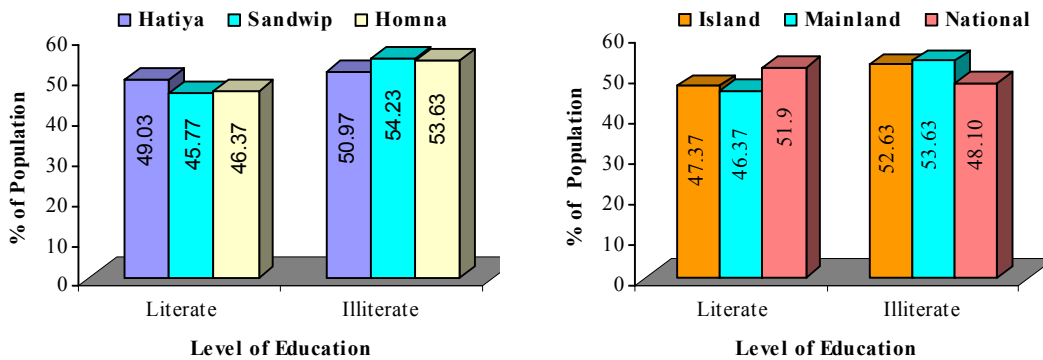


Fig. 1: Literacy and illiteracy status of study locations compared with National literacy rate

The educational status presented in Table-6 indicates that all persons who are categorized into a particular educational level have not necessarily completed the same level. For example, those respondents whose educational status is ‘primary’ are not necessarily those who passed primary education.

The rate of literacy and illiteracy status of study areas has been presented in Fig.-1. The rate of literacy among the study locations were 49.03 percent in Hatiya upazilla, 46.37 percent in Homna upazilla and 45.77 percent in Sandwip upazilla. The literacy rate between ‘island’ and ‘main land’ were 47.37 percent and 46.36 percent respectively which is below the National literacy rate of 51.9 percent (HIES, 2005).

The education levels also varied with different household categories. In VGD and VGF group none found above primary education. Among the entire group, most of the people were illiterate (41.4%) followed by primary educated (33.95%), secondary education (4.51%) and can signature own name only (3.24%). The education levels were better in large farm group (Table 7). A negligible number of peoples are highly educated.

Table 7: Educational level by household categories in the study areas

Level of Education	Household category							Total N=4816
	VGD	VGF	Control group	Marginal farm	Small farm	Medium farm	Large farm	
	n = 539	n = 608	n = 588	n=517	n=653	n=861	n=1050	
Age <5 years	22.45	13.65	13.95	12.96	16.69	15.45	15.33	15.70
Primary	27.46	55.10	43.71	30.95	22.82	28.69	32.29	33.95
Secondary			0.51	4.84	6.74	6.16	8.76	4.51
SSC passed				0.58	0.77	1.28	0.95	0.60
HSC passed					0.31	1.16	0.76	0.42
Graduate						0.46	0.48	0.19
Can sign only	2.41	5.26	6.97	1.35	2.91	1.05	3.33	3.24
Illiterate	47.68	25.99	34.86	49.32	49.77	45.76	38.10	41.40
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Field survey (2008)

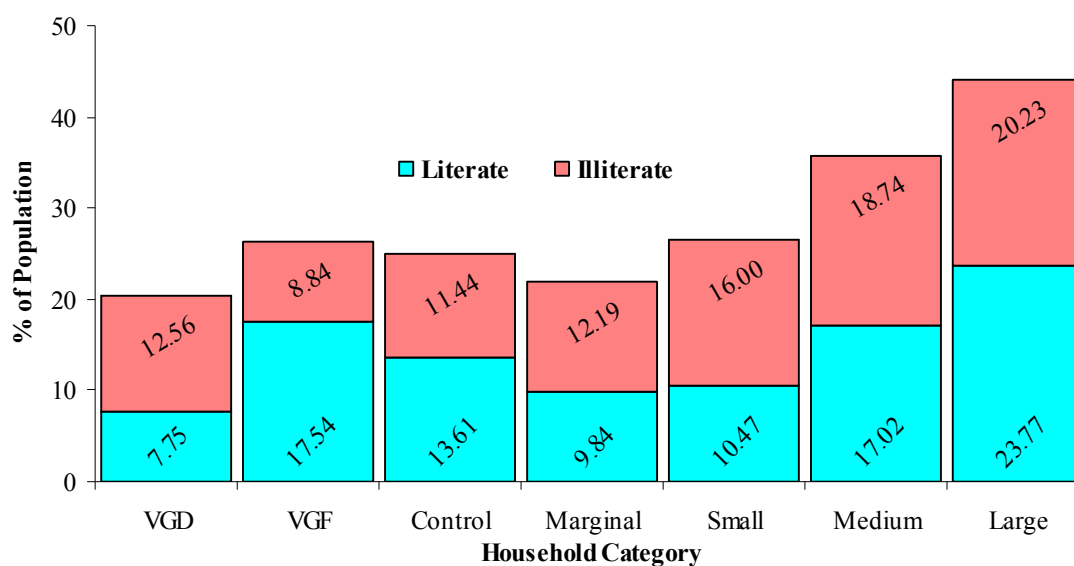


Fig. 2: Household category-wise literacy and illiteracy rates in the study areas

Household category-wise literacy rate has been presented Fig. 2. In the study areas, among the different household categories the highest literacy rate (23.77%) was observed in large farm, 17.54 percent in VGF household, 17.02 percent in medium farm, 13.61 percent in control group, 10.47 percent in small farm, 9.84 percent in marginal farm and 7.75 percent in VGD household. Literacy rates and farm size is correlated with positive direction.

4.4 Health

Table 8: Distribution of Health Status by Gender

Health Status	Upazilla									All upazilla		
	Hatiya			Sandwip			Homna					
	Male	Female	Mean	Male	Female	Mean	Male	Female	Mean	Male	Female	Mean
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Good health	95.31	95.72	95.52	93.49	96.11	94.82	94.24	94.97	94.62	94.35	95.61	95.00
Disabled for work	0.12	0.24	0.18	0.50	0.24	0.37	0.54	0.63	0.58	0.38	0.37	0.37
Occasionally sick	1.85	1.78	1.82	2.00	0.73	1.36	1.87	1.51	1.69	1.91	1.34	1.62
Frequently sick	2.72	1.90	2.30	3.38	2.67	3.02	2.95	2.76	2.85	3.01	2.44	2.72
Always sick	0.00	0.36	0.18	0.63	0.24	0.43	0.40	0.13	0.26	0.34	0.24	0.29
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Field survey (2008)

The health status in the study areas revealed that most of the people (95%) are in good health where only 0.29% of the people found to be sick round the year. It has been observed those greater portions of females are in good health than male in all the study areas. In Hatiya upazila among the population 95.5% are in good health. Only 0.18% is disabled. In Sandwip upazilla, 94.8% people are in good health where 0.43% are always sick (Table 8). Similar trend was observed in Homna upazila but in this region, the disabled people for work are higher than other two other upazilla.

Table 9: Health Status of people between the respondents of Island and Mainland

Health Status	Status of area				Total	
	Island		Mainland			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Good health	3115	95.17	1460	94.62	4575	95.00
Disabled for work	9	0.27	9	0.58	18	0.37
Occasionally sick	52	1.59	26	1.69	78	1.62
Frequently sick	87	2.66	44	2.85	131	2.72
Always sick	10	0.31	4	0.26	14	0.29
Total	3273	100.00	1543	100.00	4816	100.00

Source: Field survey (2008)

There were two types of land in the study areas viz. island and mainland. Among them island people bears relatively better health than mainland people. It might be due to the better weather with fresh air, availability and consumption of fresh & cheap fishes in those regions, in addition to other unknown factors. The people were more active for work with less sickness in the island compared to mainland (Table 9).

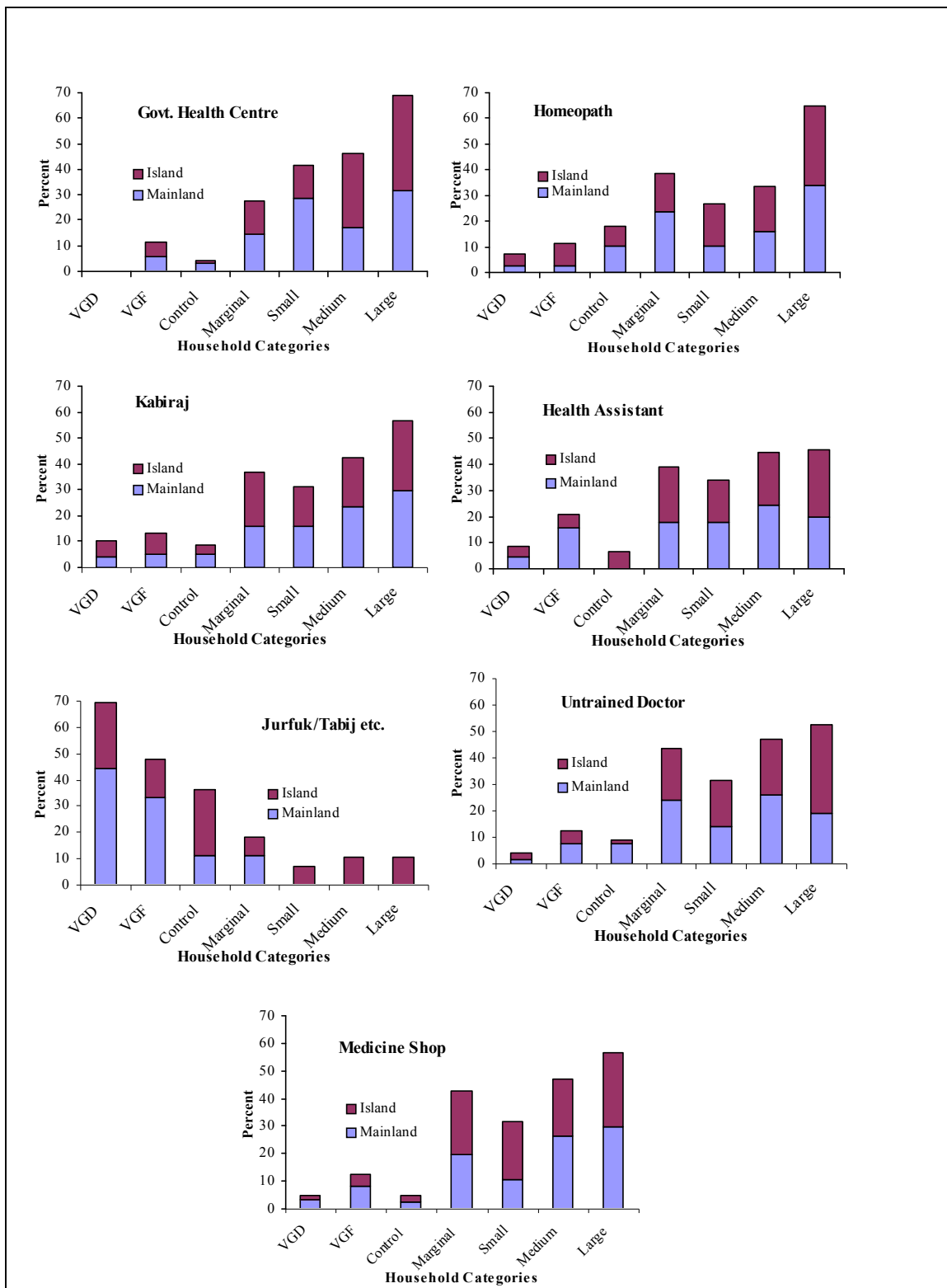


Fig. 3: Consultation with physicians by category in the mainland and islands

In the study, different types of physicians-qualified and quacks- are reported to have been involved in the medical treatment of respondents. It was observed that among the VGD, VGF and control group farmers, most of the people preferred *Jhar fuk*¹, *Tabij*², *Panipara*³, *Ojha*⁴ followed by *Kabiraj*⁵ for their health treatment. Marginal farmers prefer to have health treatment mostly from medicine shops and from untrained doctors (*quacks*) rather instead of consulting any qualified physicians. Small, medium and large farmers prefer to take health treatment mostly from the Government health centers followed by medicine shops and from untrained doctors. Considerable amounts of people of these groups also depend on *Homeopath* and *Kabiraj*. It reveals that among the seven different household categories, large farmers are more aware about health and take medical treatments (Fig.3).

Table 10: Health status of the people of sample households

Household category	Health Status					Total
	Good health	Disabled for work	Occasionally sick	Frequently sick	Always sick	
	%	%	%	%	%	
VGD	11.19	27.78	10.26	9.16	14.29	11.19
VGF	12.66	16.67	12.82	10.69	14.29	12.62
Control group	11.98	11.11	15.38	18.32	14.29	12.21
Marginal farmer	10.73	5.56	11.54	11.45	7.14	10.74
Small farmer	13.81	0.00	11.54	9.16	0.00	13.56
Medium farmer	17.99	5.56	15.38	16.79	21.43	17.88
Large farmer	21.64	33.33	23.08	24.43	28.57	21.80
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Field survey (2008)

Among three different household categories, maximum number of people of good health belongs to large farmers followed by medium farmers. The lowest number of people with good health was observed among marginal farmers. The peoples disabled for work are also found mostly among large farmers. VGD and VGF households were also considerably disabled for work.

¹ Some people believe that one who is more pious in the society if release breath on body may cure him/herself.

² Tabij is something people hold in body from some one with the belief that may cure him/herself.

³ Panipora is that reading something from the holy books release breath on water, that may helpful to cure him/herself

⁴ Ojhas are said to be able to cure poisonous bite from snakes and other animals.

⁵ Kobiraj prepare medicines from the herbs.

Occasionally sick people are also found in all of the categories of households. Among the households, most of the occasionally sick people are found among large farmers. Large farmers also become sick frequently than others. The people remained always sick were also observed to be the highest among large farmers (Table 10).

4.5 Employment

Table 11: Distribution of Level of Employment Months by Gender

Level of employment	Upazilas									All upazillas		
	Hatiya			Sandwip			Homna			Male	Female	Mean
	Male	Female	Mean	Male	Female	Mean	Male	Female	Mean			
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1-4 Months	23.37	5.00	14.24	17.51	3.34	10.26	14.79	2.23	8.34	18.60	3.51	10.94
5-6 Months	16.18	17.27	16.72	15.54	1.88	8.55	16.90	2.67	9.60	16.19	7.09	11.57
7-11 Months	57.75	17.73	37.85	61.93	10.23	35.47	62.91	10.47	36.00	60.84	12.72	36.42
12 Months	2.70	60.00	31.19	5.03	84.55	45.73	5.40	84.63	46.06	4.37	76.68	41.06
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Field survey (2008)

Employment duration varies due to gender in the study areas. It has generally been found that the rates of employment of men are higher than women in all the upazilas. In Hatiya upazila most of the people are employed over 7-11 months period. A little portion of the people had employment for full period of the year. But in case of Sandwip upazila, the trend is different. In this upazila the maximum portion of the people has employment for whole year (46.7%) which is followed by 7-11 month duration (35.5%). In Homna upazilla, similar trend was observed. In this upazilla 46.1% of the people have year round employment. The people which have 1-3 months of unemployment are around 10.5% (Table 11).

It has been observed that among the respondents, the higher the education level, the lower the engagement in short term employment. In the study area, short term employments are mostly done by primary educated person followed by illiterate people. Bachelor degree holder people do not accept any short term employment. The people who has completed the secondary and higher secondary education also had a little engagement over short term employment. Similar trend was also observed for medium term employment (5-6 and 7-11 month employment). But in these types of employments are mostly done by the illiterate people and primary educated people. Illiterate people also got the highest employment

(69.74%) over whole period of a year than any other educated people (Table 12). It was revealed from the study that the illiterate and primary educated people got the highest employment in these regions.

Table 12: Distribution of level of Employment by Level of Education

Level of education	Level of Employment								Total	%
	1-4 Months	%	5-6 Months	%	7-11 Months	%	12 Months	%		
Primary	144	48.81	111	35.58	256	26.07	188	16.98	699	25.93
Secondary	10	3.39	7	2.24	84	8.55	66	5.96	167	6.19
S. S. C	3	1.02	5	1.60	6	0.61	14	1.26	28	1.04
H. S.C	2	0.68	2	0.64	7	0.71	9	0.81	20	0.74
Bachelor	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.10	8	0.72	9	0.33
Literacy	8	2.71	12	3.85	26	2.65	50	4.52	96	3.56
Illiterate	128	43.39	175	56.09	602	61.30	772	69.74	1677	62.20
Total	295	100.00	312	100.00	982	100.00	1107	100.00	2696	100.00

Source: Field survey (2008)

5. Social Safety Nets Programs

5.1 Food Distribution at the Beneficiaries Level

Social Safety Nets Programs (SSNP) is generally devoted to the hardcore poor. There are a number of Social Safety Net Programs being operated in the country. In this research, information on Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) and Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) has been collected and an attempt has been made to analyze different aspects of public food distribution systems.

5.1.1 Reasons for Inclusion

The VGD program in Bangladesh is the world's largest development intervention of its kind that exclusively targets women. About 500,000 ultra poor rural women in the country receive supports under the VGD program as monthly ration of 30 kg of rice over a period of 24 months, which focus on improving food security and the nutritional well-being of participants in the most food insecure destitute of the country.

The guideline for implementing the VGD program stipulates that the *Union Parishad* VGD selection committee, with assistance of collaborating NGOs, should use the selection process for selection of VGD women (MCWA 2002). Distribution of characteristics that

make them eligible for VGD program has been presented in Table 13. The qualification to have a VGD card are to meet at least four and preferably all five criteria such as i) household members consumed two or fewer meals per day, ii) households own less than 0.15 acres of land, iii) household housing conditions including sanitation are very poor, iv) household income from daily or casual labor is extremely low, and v) households are headed by woman with no adult male income earner or other source of income. To get a VGF card, poor, vulnerable & holding no other cards are the major criteria. Results of the study reveals that 92.22% is female head of households among them separated 36.67% who either divorced, abandoned by husband or whose husbands are disabled. Geographical location-wise distribution of households shows that the highest rate of separated and divorced was 43.33% and 36.67% in both the islands (Hatiya and Sandwip) and the mainland (Homna) had the lowest percentage of head of household was 30% in the same category. All of the VGD beneficiaries did not have VGD card before and holding only one card in the household. It may be concluded that the selection process was strictly followed to identify beneficiaries in the study areas.

Table 13: Reasons for inclusion in VGD Program (n=30 and N=90)

Characteristics	Upazila						Total	
	Hatiya		Sandwip		Homna			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Female head of households	28	93.33	27	90.00	28	93.33	83	92.22
Very poor	27	90.00	28	93.33	25	83.33	80	88.89
Separated / divorced	13	43.33	11	36.67	9	30.00	33	36.67
Widow	12	40.00	6	20.00	10	33.33	28	31.11
Landless	24	80.00	28	93.33	26	86.67	78	86.67
No earner	11	36.67	14	46.67	20	66.67	45	50.00
Crippled			1	3.33				0.00
Disabled/illness	1	3.33	1	3.33	2	6.67	4	4.44
Old age			2	6.67		0.00		0.00
Did not have a VGD card before	30	100	30	100	30	100	90	100
Holding one card in the household	30	100	30	100	30	100	90	100

Source: Field survey (2008)

Results presented in Table 14 shows that 62.22% of head of households are female in VGF beneficiaries. Among them 70% are in Homna followed by Hatiya 63.33% and Sandwip 53.33%. This program was operated among the destitute of them reported 76.67% are poor, 13.33% are Separated, 8.89% are widow, 33.33% households had no earner and all of

beneficiaries households had not a VGD card before and household enjoying only under VGF program.

Table 14: Reasons for inclusion in VGF Program (n=30 and N=90)

Characteristics	Upazila						Total	
	Hatiya		Sandwip		Homna			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Female head of household	19	63.33	16	53.33	21	70.00	56	62.22
Very poor	24	80.00	23	76.67	22	73.33	69	76.67
Separated	4	13.33	3	4.11	5	10.00	12	13.33
Widow	4	13.33	4	5.48	0		8	8.89
Landless	15	50.00	18	24.66	13	26.00	46	51.11
No earner	7	23.33	16	21.92	7	14.00	30	33.33
Crippled	0	0.00	2	2.74	0		2	2.22
Disabled/illness	0	0.00	2	2.74	0		2	2.22
Old age	2	6.67	5	6.85	3	6.00	10	11.11

Source: Field survey (2008)

5.1.2 How selected for the current program

Respondents' description on the basis of their selection into the safety net program (Table 15) indicates that persistent expression of demand by applicants played a very important role. Political leaders and Union Parishad Chairman/members jointly played role in 46.7% cases; Political Leaders and Village Leaders helped in the selection process 4.4% cases, Village Leader and UP Chairman/member helped 5.6% cases and only UP

Table 15: How selected for the current VGD program

Who helped for selection to the current program	Upazila						Total (N=90)	
	Hatiya (n=30)		Sandwip (n=30)		Homna (n=30)			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Political leader & UP Chairman/members	12	40.0	14	46.7	16	53.3	42	46.7
UP Chairman/member	7	23.3	1	3.3	6	20.0	14	15.6
All of them	4	13.3	8	26.7	1	3.3	13	14.4
Village leader & Up Chairman/members	1	3.3	3	10.0	1	3.3	5	5.6
Political leader & Village leader	2	6.7			2	6.7	4	4.4
Political Leader	1	3.3	1	3.3			2	2.2
Village Leader			1	3.3			1	1.1
Total	27	90	28	93.3	26	86.7	81	90.0

Source: Field survey (2008)

Chairman/members played role in 15.6% cases. In case of VGD beneficiary selection process 53.3% cases included influenced by the Political Leaders. In the VGD program 90% respondents reported that they were included in the program with the assistance of said people. Only 10% indicated that they were included in the program without asking

anybody. Political affiliation and opportunism were found in food aided programs like VGD in irrespective of geographic location at islands (Hatiya and Sandwip) and main land (Homna) in Bangladesh.

Respondents' description on the basis of their selection into the VGF program (Table 16) indicates that persistent expression of demand by applicants played a very important role. Political leader and Union Parishad Chairman/members jointly played role in 22.2% cases, Political Leaders and Village Leaders helped in the selection process in 1.1% cases, Village Leaders and UP chairman/members helped in 11.1% cases and only UP Chairman/members played role 11.1% cases. In case of VGF beneficiary selection process 24.4% cases influenced by Political Leaders. In the VGF program 83.3% respondents reported that they were included in the program with the assistance of said people. Only 16.7% indicated that they were included in the program without asking anybody. Political affiliation and opportunism found in food aid program VGD in irrespective of geographic location at islands (Hatiya and Sandwip) and main land (Homna) in Bangladesh but it was found less than that of VGD program. These findings are certainly a matter of concern and corrective measure should be taken.

Table 16: How selected for the current VGF program

Who helped for selection to the current program	Upazila						Total (N=90)	
	Hatiya (n=30)		Sandwip (n=30)		Homna (n=30)			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Political leader & Village leader			1	3.3			1	1.1
Political leader & UP Chairman/members	4	13.3	8	26.7	8	26.7	20	22.2
Village leader & Up Chairman/members	3	10.0	3	10.0	4	13.3	10	11.1
Political Leader			1	3.3			1	1.1
Village Leader	4	13.3	1	3.3	5	16.7	10	11.1
UP Chairman/member	5	16.7	1	3.3	4	13.3	10	11.1
All of them	9	30.0	13	43.3	1	3.3	23	25.6
Total	25	83.33	28	93.3	22	73.3	75	83.3

Source: Field survey (2008)

5.1.3 Possession of ration card

One of the operating rules of the VGD program states clearly and firmly that the women must keep their VGD cards in their homes, and this requirement is written on the card. It must however be noted that an overwhelming 47.78 % of VGD respondents reported that they did not possess their VGD card at the time of interview, when asked about the reasons

they indicated that the UP Officials kept their cards. In fact, there were no cards presented by the VGD respondents of Sandwip, but 2.22% VGD beneficiary claimed that they possess their VGD cards but at the time of interview, respondents could not show them as they were missing. In Hatiya 16.67% respondents kept their VGD cards *i.e.* half of the VGD respondents of Hatiya showed their VGD card at the time of interview (Table 17). In the main land (Homna) all the VGD respondents showed their cards at the time of interview, indicating that in main land operating rules are followed strictly.

Table 17: Possession of VGD cards at different geographical locations

Possession of VGD cards	Upazila						Total	
	Hatiya		Sandwip		Homna			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Card kept at home	15	16.67	2	2.22	30	33.33	47	52.2
Card is kept by UP officials	15	16.67	28	31.11	-	-	43	47.8
Total	30	33.33	30	33.33	30	33.33	90	100.0

Source: Field survey (2008)

Analysis has showed that 88.89% of VGF respondents reported that they did not possess their VGF cards at the time of interview, when they were asked about the reasons they indicated that the UP Officials kept their cards and 11.11% of respondents claimed that they possessed at their VGF cards but at time of field investigation none could show VGF cards (Table 18). The situation was found almost similar in islands and main land areas irrespective of geographical locations.

Table 18: Possession of VGF cards at different geographical locations

Possession of VGF cards	Upazila						Total	
	Hatiya		Sandwip		Homna			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Card kept at home	3	3.33	3	3.33	4	4.44	10	11.1
Card is kept by UP officials	27	30.00	27	30.00	26	28.89	80	88.9
Total	30	33.33	30	33.33	30	33.33	90	100.0

Source: Field survey (2008)

5.1.4 Beneficiaries' Assessment of the Weight of Ration Received

All of the VGD beneficiaries (100%) reported that they knew about their official entitlement and most of them had weighed it to check. The place where they weighed their

VGD ration is presented in Table 19 more than half (56%) of the beneficiaries reported that they weighed their ration at home after cleaning, followed by 20% of them weighed at home before cleaning, 10% were asked someone weigh for her, 7.78% of beneficiaries weighed their ration at the distribution site and 6.67% of the VGD respondents never weigh their ration. Clearly, the three locations are not too different in terms of modal place of ration weigh. The results reveal that VGD respondents are very much aware about their ration entitlement.

Table 19: VGD beneficiaries' assessment of the Weight of rice received

Place of ration weigh	Upazila						Total	
	Hatiya		Sandwip		Homna			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Beneficiaries weighed it at the site	2	6.67	2	6.67	3	10.00	7	7.78
Asked someone weigh it for her	3	10.00	1	3.33	5	16.67	9	10.00
Weighed it at home before cleaning	5	16.67	9	30.00	4	13.33	18	20.00
Weighed it at home after cleaning	17	56.67	16	53.33	17	56.67	50	55.56
Did not weigh	3	10.00	2	6.67	1	3.33	6	6.67
Total	30	100	30	100	30	100	90	100

Source: Field survey (2008)

5.1.5 Quantity of Ration Received

The inputs of the VGD program include a monthly 30 kg of wheat/rice and a saving facility and training program. VGD beneficiaries' assessment of ration receipts are considerable variation with ration receipts recorded in their ration cards. Program wise amount of ration received at different geographical locations has been presented in Fig. 4 & 5. Amount of ration received is one of the interesting characteristics of beneficiaries. All the respondents were asked about taking weight or not after receiving the ration. Almost all the VGD participants reported themselves to be knowledgeable of program entitlements. However, this knowledge does not ensure receipt of full entitlement of rations. In case of VGD beneficiaries on an average, ration received was 26.37 ± 0.575 kg of rice against their official entitlement of 30 kg. It has been noted that the average amount of ration received was found 23.8 kg by a IFPRI study in 2003. The lower leakage rate may due our study period was in under emergency rule in Bangladesh. The location-wise average amount of VGD rations were 26.95, 26.37 and 25.80 kg at Homna, Sandwip and Hatiya upazila respectively.

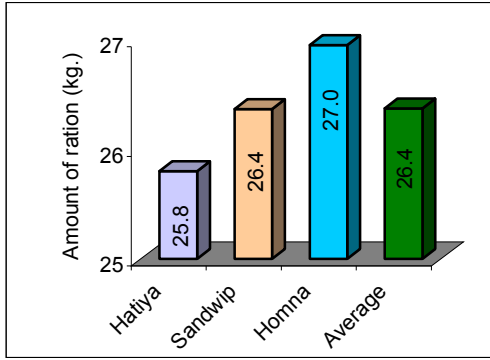


Fig. 4: Amount of VGD ration received at different locations
Source: Field survey (2008)

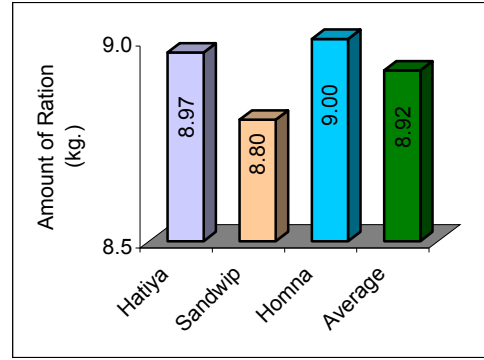
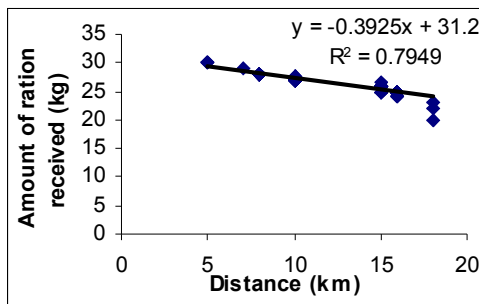


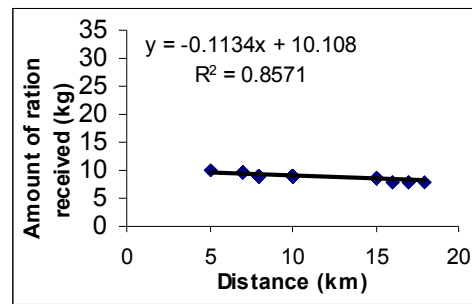
Fig. 5: Amount of VGF ration received at different locations
Source: Field survey (2008)

In case of VGF beneficiaries on an average, ration received was 8.92 ± 0.18 kg of rice against their official entitlement of 10 kg in each of a distribution. The location wise average amount of VGF rations were 9.00, 8.97 and 8.80 kg at Homna, Hatiya and Sandwip upazila respectively (Fig. 4&5).

Regression analysis shows that the distances from Local Supply Depot (LSD) to beneficiaries household significantly contribute to the variation in amount of ration received for both VGD and VGF programs. It has been estimated that 79% ($R^2 = 0.79$) of total variation in amount of ration received is explained by our estimated linear regression equations in case of VGD and 85% ($R^2 = 0.85$) in VGF ration distributions (Fig. 6). The quantity received by the beneficiaries decreases with the distance to the “distribution centre” from LSD.



VGD Households from LSD



VGF Households from LSD

Fig. 6: Relationship between distance and amount of ration received by VGD and VGF Households from LSD.
Source: Field survey (2008)

5.1.6 Beneficiaries Opinion regarding poverty reduction by VGD and VGF programs

Opinion of the beneficiaries regarding poverty reduction by VGD and VGF was examined.

Table 20: Effect on poverty of VGD program, according to its beneficiaries (N=90)

Poverty reduction Indicators	Upazila						Total	
	Hatiya		Sandwip		Homna		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Save from starving	22	24.4	27	30.0	19	21.1	68	75.6
Creates job at the time of famine	5	5.6	14	15.6	6	6.7	25	27.8
Fulfill the demand of cash money selling ration	6	6.7	10	11.1	4	4.4	20	22.2
Save the poor to loan from money lender	13	14.4	12	13.3	15	16.7	40	44.4
Save from selling land and other properties at the of calamities	2	2.2	2	2.2	2	2.2	6	6.7

Source: Field survey (2008)

The different effects of the VGD and VGF interventions have been presented in Table 20 and 21, respectively. This reveals that VGD (75.6%) and VGF (77.8%) participation prevented most of the respondents from starving. Saving the poor from having to ask for loans from money lenders was also another important advantage as was reported by the respondents of the VGD and VGF card holders.

Table 21: Effect on poverty of VGF program, according to its beneficiaries (N=90)

Poverty reduction Indicators	Upazila						Total	
	Hatiya		Sandwip		Homna		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Save from starving	21	23.3	28	31.1	21	23.3	70	77.8
Creates job at the time of famine	3	3.3	5	5.6	6	6.7	14	15.6
Fulfill the demand of cash money selling ration	1	1.1	2	2.2			3	3.3
Save the poor to loan from money lender	14	15.6	12	13.3	10	11.1	36	40.0
Save from selling land and other properties at the of calamities	1	1.1	3	3.3	2	2.2	6	6.7

Source: Field survey (2008)

5.1.7 Monitoring about food distribution program by officials

Monitoring of any program is important and it has been revealed that VGD and VGF programs are regularly monitored by the concerned high officials. As regards means of monitoring VGD relief distribution, the highest 32.2% of the beneficiaries mentioned that at the time of relief distribution no other officials were present to monitor the food distribution, except the UP officials. About one fourth (24.4%) of respondents reported that at the time of relief distribution Upazila Agriculture Officer (UAO) monitored the relief operation, 15.6% of cases was monitored by Upazila Food Officer (UFO), 12.2% by

Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO), 10% of respondents reported that food distribution monitored by Project Implementing Officer (PIO) and 5.6% of cases reported that the relief operation was monitored by donor representatives (Table 22). As regards means of monitoring VGD relief distribution by geographical locations of the country, it is found that in all three locations union council officials were the main monitoring actors in public food distribution programs. Such percentage was 14.4% for Sandwip, 13.3% for Hatiya and 4.4% for Homna. In Hatiya island, the monitoring officials were 8.9% by UAO followed by 4.4% of UFO, 3.3% of UNO, 2.2% by donor representative and 1.1% of PIO. In Sandwip island, such percentages were 11.1% by UAO, 2.2% by each of UFO, PIO, donor representatives and only 1.1% by UNO where as in main land Homna the monitoring percentages were 22% by UAO, 14% by UFO, 11% by UNO, 9% by PIO and 1.1% by donor representative. The study revealed that the concerned monitoring officials were more active in the main land than islands areas; this is because the monitoring officials did not visit relief distribution site frequently at the remote pockets which are located in islands areas in Bangladesh.

Table 22: Distribution of relief monitoring officials in VGD program (N=90)

Monitoring Officer	Upazila						Total	
	Hatiya		Sandwip		Homna			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
UNO	3	3.3	1	1.1	7	7.8	11	12.2
UAO	8	8.9	10	11.1	4	4.4	22	24.4
UFO	4	4.4	2	2.2	8	8.9	14	15.6
PIO	1	1.1	2	2.2	6	6.7	9	10.0
Donor representative	2	2.2	2	2.2	1	1.1	5	5.6
UP officials only	12	13.3	13	14.4	4	4.4	29	32.2
Total	30	33.3	30	33.3	30	33.3	90	100.0

Source: Field survey (2008)

As regards means of monitoring VGF relief distribution, 34.4% of the beneficiaries mentioned that at the time of relief distribution no other officials were present to monitor the food distribution, except the UP officials. About 28% of respondents reported that at the time of relief distribution UFO monitored the relief operation, 15.6% of cases monitored by UAO, 7.8% by UNO, 10% of respondents reported that food distribution monitored by PIO and 4.4% of cases reported that the relief operation was monitored by donor representatives

(Table 23). In case of VGF relief distribution, a similar picture to the VGD relief distribution was observed.

Table 23: Distribution of relief monitoring officials in VGF program (N=90)

Monitoring Officer	Upazila						Total	
	Hatiya		Sandwip		Homna			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
UNO			1	1.1	6	6.7	7	7.8
UAO	3	3.3	4	4.4	7	7.8	14	15.6
UFO	7	7.8	9	10.0	9	10.0	25	27.8
PIO	3	3.3	1	1.1	5	5.6	9	10.0
Donor representative	1	1.1	1	1.1	2	2.2	4	4.4
UP officials only	16	17.8	14	15.6	1	1.1	31	34.4
Total	30	33.3	30	33.3	30	33.3	90	100.0

Source: Field survey (2008)

5.1.8 Type of monitoring in food distribution

Distribution of mode of monitoring VGD ration has been presented in Table 24. The analysis of data indicates that there were considerable variations in types of monitoring systems. One third of beneficiary reported that *sometimes* monitored in VGD ration distribution followed by 32.2% of *never*, 22.2% reported system was monitored *always* and 12.2% reported that food distributions were monitored *frequently*.

Table 24: Mode of monitoring of the distribution in VGD program (N=90)

Type of Monitoring	Upazila						Total	
	Hatiya		Sandwip		Homna			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Never	12	13.3	13	14.4	4	4.4	29	32.2
Sometimes	12	13.3	10	11.1	8	8.9	30	33.3
Frequently	4	4.4	5	5.6	2	2.2	11	12.2
Always	2	2.2	2	2.2	16	17.8	20	22.2
Total	30	33.3	30	33.3	30	33.3	90	100.0

Source: Field survey (2008)

Distribution of mode of monitoring VGF ration has been presented in Table 25. The results reveals that monitoring VGF ration distribution had considerable variation regarding type of monitoring such as 34.34% of VGF beneficiaries reported the system was never

monitored, 28.9% claimed that the system was monitored always, 18.9% opined that monitored sometimes and 17.8% expressed that system was monitored frequently.

Table 25: Mode of monitoring in VGF program (N=90)

Type of Monitoring	Upazila						Total	
	Hatiya		Sandwip		Homna			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Never	16	17.8	14	15.6	1	1.1	31	34.4
Sometimes	3	3.3	10	11.1	4	4.4	17	18.9
Frequently	4	4.4	4	4.4	8	8.9	16	17.8
Always	7	7.8	2	2.2	17	18.9	26	28.9
Total	30	33.3	30	33.3	30	33.3	90	100.0

Source: Field survey (2008)

Data concerning the relationship between mode of monitoring and monitoring officials have been furnished in Table 26 for both VGF and VGD programs.

Table 26: Distribution of SSNP beneficiaries according to mode of monitoring and monitoring officials (N=180)

Mode of monitoring	Monitoring Officials												Total		
	UNO		UAO		UFO		PIO		Donor representative		UP officials only				
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Never												60	33.3	60	33.3
Sometimes	2	1.1	15	8.3	17	9.4	7	3.9	6	3.3				47	26.1
Frequently	4	2.2	12	6.7	6	3.3	2	1.1	3	1.7				27	15.0
Always	12	6.7	9	5	16	8.9	9	5.0						46	25.6
Total	18	10	36	20	39	21.7	18	10.0	9	5.0	60	33.3	180	100.0	

Source: Field survey (2008)

Interestingly, it has been observed in one third cases there was no official monitoring at all. This is matter for concern. Among the remaining two thirds, the highest portion (21.7%) of monitoring the SSNP activities by UFO followed by UAO was 20%, UNO was 10%, PIO was 10% and 5% done by donor representatives. To ensure proper public food distribution it should be taken under close monitoring to achieve the goal of SSNP.

5.1.9 Distribution of SSNP beneficiaries by their choice of cash or commodities

Data concerning the preference of receiving cash and commodities in both VGD and VGF program have been furnished in Table 27 and 28. Receiving cash instead of food

commodities under VGD was preferred for 77.8% of the respondents and for 20% under VGF. It was reported that receiving commodities as ration under VGD was preferred in 22.2% of the cases where as for VGF was 80%. It was observed that almost opposite preference in VGD and VGF program; this may be because VGF program was launched mainly to provide food aid and relief during crises or the lean seasons. On the other hand, VGD beneficiaries enjoy this program for the period of two years and they acquired different types of experience to receiving commodities of food ration.

Table 27: Preference of receiving cash and commodities in VGD program (N=90)

Type of preference	Upazila						Total	
	Hatiya		Sandwip		Homna			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Cash	26	28.9	19	21.1	25	27.8	70	77.8
Food	4	4.4	11	12.2	5	5.6	20	22.2

Source: Field survey (2008)

Table 28: Preference of receiving cash and commodities in VGF program (N=90)

Type of preference	Upazila						Total	
	Hatiya		Sandwip		Homna			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Cash	3	3.3	11	12.2	4	4.4	18	20.0
Food	27	30.0	19	21.1	26	28.9	72	80.0

Source: Field survey (2008)

5.1.10 Causes of cash preference under SSNP

Reasons of cash preference by VGD beneficiaries have been presented in Table 29. VGD and VGF card holders prefer cash instead of food because using cash allows them to meet other expenses of their daily life. The highest percentage, (75.6%), of VGD card holders preferred cash over food as this way, the issue of ration leakage was avoided. 63.3% reported preferred to have cash money because it takes less time to get money compare to commodity, 62.2% preferred cash as it allowed them to buy food as per their needs, 54.4% preferred cash as it enabled them to buy other essentials 47.8% preferred to have in cash for less amount of ration received than entitlement and 42.2% preferred cash because it allowed them to buy non essential items (such as betel and tobacco).

Reasons of cash preference by VGF beneficiaries have been presented in Table 230. It reveals from the results that the main causes for cash preference by the VGD card holders to meet other expenses of their daily life followed by other preferences.

Table 29: Causes for cash preference under VGD program (N=90)

Causes for cash preference	Upazila						Total	
	Hatiya		Sandwip		Homna			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Allows to buy food as per needs	20	22.2	16	17.8	20	22.2	56	62.2
Allows to buy other essentials	17	18.9	15	16.7	17	18.9	49	54.4
Allows to buy non essentials	13	14.4	11	12.2	14	15.6	38	42.2
Take less time to get cash money	22	24.4	14	15.6	21	23.3	57	63.3
Loss in partial sell of commodity	25	27.8	19	21.1	24	26.7	68	75.6
Less received than entitlement	18	20.0	11	12.2	14	15.6	43	47.8

Source: Field survey (2008)

The highest percentage (17.8%) of VGF card holders preferred cash for buying as per need, 16.7% preferred cash because it takes less time, 15.6% preferred cash for buying high contingent cost, 10.0% preferred cash for meet contingent cost and 6.7% preferred cash for less amount of ration received than entitlement. It may be concluded that a large number of VGD and VGF beneficiaries experienced various hassles regarding collection of commodities and to overcome those problems beneficiaries prefer to get cash money rather than food commodities.

Table 30: Causes for cash preference under VGF program (N=90)

Causes for cash preference	Upazila						Total	
	Hatiya		Sandwip		Homna			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Buying as per need	2	2.2	10	11.1	4	4.4	16	17.8
High contingent cost	3	3.3	8	8.9	3	3.3	14	15.6
Meet contingent cost	1	1.1	6	6.7	2	2.2	9	10.0
Take less time	1	1.1	10	11.1	4	4.4	15	16.7
Less received than entitlement	1	1.1	5	5.6	0	0.0	6	6.7

Source: Field survey (2008)

6. Food Security

6.1 Households Food Access Related frequency-of-occurrence Questions

6.1.1 Worry about food (Q#1)

This question asks the respondent to report their personal experience with uncertainty and anxiety about acquiring food during the previous month. All the respondents (100%) of Control group, VGD, VGF and Marginal farm households reported their personal experience with uncertainty and anxiety about acquiring food during the previous month of the survey time. Irrespective of household category it was observed that worry about acquiring food during the previous month was reported by 12.5%, 7.29% and 5.21% by Small, Medium and Large farm households (Fig. 7).

6.1.2 Unable to eat preferred foods (Q#2)

One domain of food insecurity (access) is having limited choices in the type of food that a household eats. This question asks whether any household member was not able to eat according to their preference due to lack of resources. Preference can refer to the form of a particular food (i.e., whole rice vs. broken rice), type of staple (i.e., millet vs. corn) or a high quality food (i.e., a piece of meat or fish). Preferred foods may or may not be nutritionally high quality. It was reported by 16.85% from each of VGD, VGF and Control group household were not able to eat according to their preferences. Farm households also reported such experience and it was 15.73% for Marginal, 14.98% for Small, 12.55% for Medium and 6.18% for Large category of farm (Fig. 7).

6.1.3 Eat just a few kinds of foods (Q#3)

This question asks about dietary choices related to variety – i.e., whether the household had to eat an undesired monotonous diet (little diversity in the different types of foods consumed). At the aggregate level the highest proportion (19.87%) was reported by Control group and VGF households, 18.10%, 15.01%, 13.25%, 11.04% and 2.87% of households from VGD, Marginal, Medium and Large farm respectively (Fig. 7).

6.1.4 Eat foods they really do not want eat (Q#4)

This question, which also captures the dimension of limited choices, asks whether any household member had to eat food that they found socially or personally undesirable due to a lack of resources. Often these are foods or food preparations that are consumed only under hardship. Different people may consider different foods to be undesirable. The

respondent needs to answer on behalf of all household members; according to his/her own perception of the types of food household members ate during the previous four weeks. As regards eat foods they really do not want eat the largest proportions (18.79%) observed in VGD, VGF and Control group households but in all other households experienced with varying proportions such as 14.61% in Marginal, 12.73% in Small, 10.02% in Medium and 6.26% in Large farm households (Fig.7).

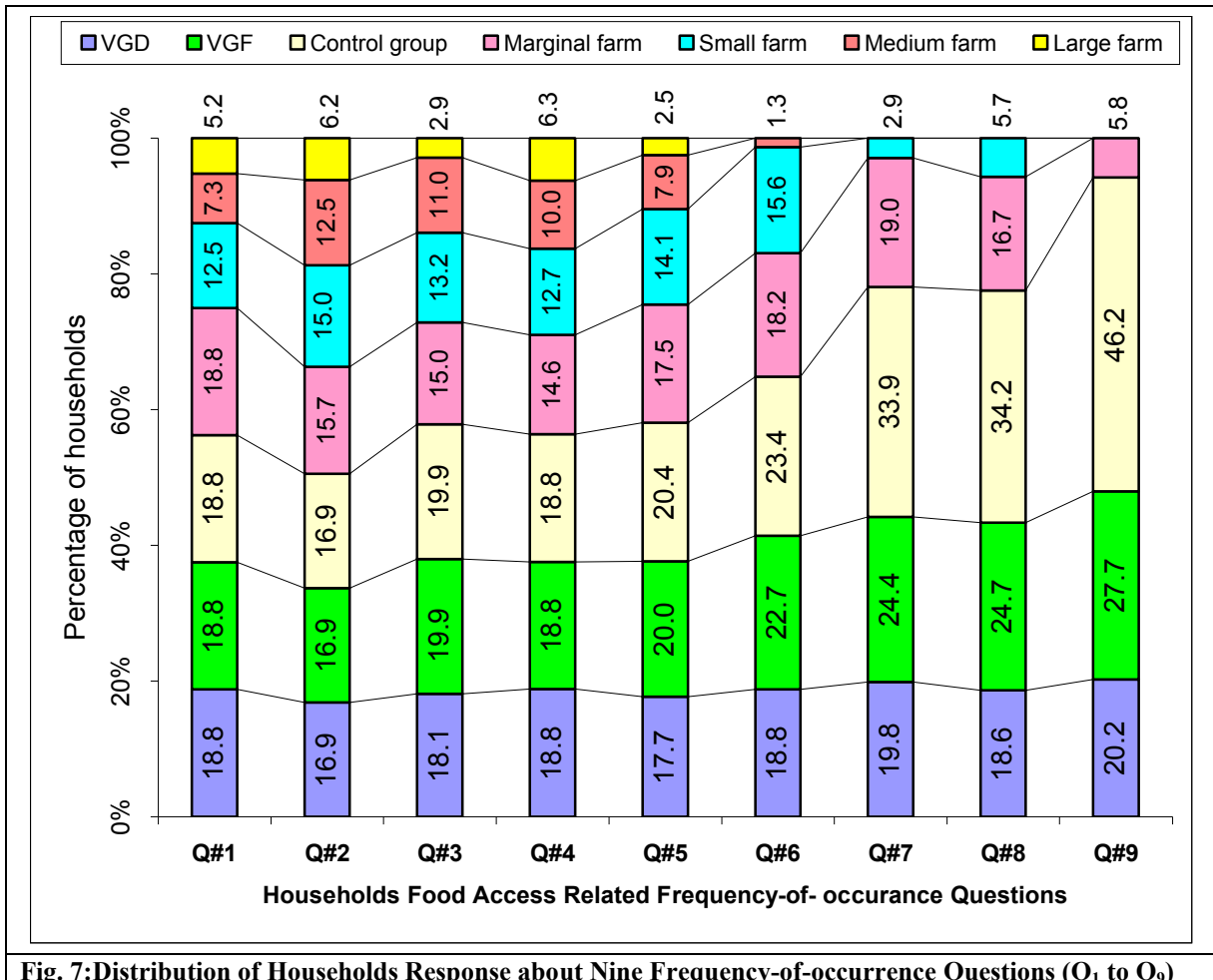


Fig. 7: Distribution of Households Response about Nine Frequency-of-occurrence Questions (Q₁ to Q₉)
Source: Field survey (2008)

6.1.5 Eat a smaller meal (Q#5)

This question asks whether the respondent felt that the amount of food (any kind of food, not just the staple food) that any household member ate in any meal during the past four weeks was smaller than they felt they needed due to a lack of resources. The respondent answered according to his or her perception of what constitutes enough food for the needs

of the household members. At this point it was found varying proportions in surveyed households. Information about eat a smaller meal by proportion of respondents has been furnished in (Fig. 7). VGF households represent the highest proportions (21%) followed by Control group (20%), VGD (18%), Marginal (17%), Small (14%), Medium (8%) and Large farm are very few in numbers.

6.1.6 Eat fewer meals in a day (Q#6)

This question asks whether any household member, due to lack of food, had to eat fewer meals than the number typically eaten in the food secure households in their area. The proportion of different household categories observed a wide variation (Fig.7). There is no such experience about eat a fewer meals by respondents of Large farm household and the lowest proportion of respondents was observed in Medium farm. The highest proportion (23.44%) was reported by Control group followed by VGF (22.66%), VGD (18.75%), Marginal (18.23%) and Small farm (15.63%).

6.1.7 No food of any kind in the household (Q#7)

This question asks about a situation in which the household has no food to eat of any kind in the home. This describes a situation where food was not available to household members through the households' usual means (e.g., through purchase, from the garden or field, from storage, etc.). The highest proportions were in control group (33.8%) followed by VGF beneficiaries (24.38%), VGD beneficiaries (19.83%), Marginal farm (19.01%) and a very small proportion of Small farm. But none can found such experience by Medium and Large farm households (Fig. 7).

6.1.8 Go to sleep hungry (Q#8)

This question asks whether the respondent felt hungry at bedtime because of lack of food or whether the respondent was aware of other household members who were hungry at bedtime because of lack of food. The highest proportion in Control groups (34.22%) followed by VGF (24.71%), VGD (18.63%), Marginal (16.73%) and Small farm (5.70%) and no one can found such experience by Medium and Large farm households (Fig. 7).

6.1.9 Go a whole day and night without eating (Q#9)

This question asks whether any household member did not eat from the time they awoke in the morning to the time they awoke the next morning due to lack of food. The highest proportions were reported control group (46.24%) followed by VGF (27.75%), VGD beneficiaries (20.23%) and 5.78% of respondent belonging to Marginal farm households (Fig. 7).

6.2 Household Food Insecurity Access-related Conditions

The HFIAS module yields information on food insecurity (access) at the household level. Four types of indicators can be calculated to help understand the characteristics of and changes in household food insecurity (access) in the surveyed population. These indicators have been explained in Methodology (section 2.5.1).

These indicators provide specific, disaggregated information about the behaviors and perceptions of the surveyed households. For example, if a program is providing assistance in growing staple crops and improved storage facilities, it might be useful to understand what percent of households had run out of food.

Table 31: Household Food Insecurity Access-related Condition (N=630)

Household category	% of household that ran out of food			% of household that ran out of food
	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	
VGD	3.11	14.40	1.17	18.68
VGF		9.34	13.62	22.96
Control group	0.39	4.67	26.85	31.91
Marginal farm	4.67	3.89	9.34	17.90
Small farm	2.33	0.39	3.89	6.61
Medium farm	0.78	0.39	0.78	1.95
Large farm				
Total	11.28	33.07	55.64	100

Source: Field survey (2008)

The indicators present the percent of households that responded affirmatively to each question, regardless of the frequency of the experience. Thus they measure the percent of households experiencing the condition at any level of severity. Each indicator can be further disaggregated to examine the frequency of experience of the condition across the surveyed

households. Those in the control group, that is, those who did not get any card, ran out of food at least sometimes in 31.91% of the cases, followed by the VGF beneficiaries (22.96%) and VGD (18.68%). Marginal farmers ran out of food at least sometimes to the same extent as VGF and VGD card holders (Table 31).

6.3 Household Food Insecurity Access-related Domains

These indicators provide summary information on the prevalence of households experiencing one or more behaviors in each of the three domains reflected in the HFIAS - Anxiety and uncertainty, Insufficient Quality, and Insufficient food intake and its physical consequences. Results of Table 32 shows that VGD and VGF card holders, control households and farmers cannot eat their preferred food. But with the increase of farm size ability to eat their preferred food increases.

Table 32: Household Food Insecurity Access-related Domains by households that not able to eat preferred food (N=630)

Household category	% of households that not able to eat preferred food			
	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Total
VGD	7.87	6.55	2.43	16.85
VGF	3.37	11.05	2.43	16.85
Control group	0.94	7.68	8.24	16.85
Marginal farm	4.49	9.18	2.06	15.73
Small farm	4.12	6.93	3.93	14.98
Medium farm	6.37	5.62	0.56	12.55
Large farm	6.18			6.18
Total	33.33	47.00	19.66	100

Source: Field survey (2008)

Table 33: Household Food Insecurity Access-related Domains by households that eat a limited variety of food (N=630)

Household category	% of households that eat a limited variety of food			
	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Total
VGD	4.63	8.63	4.00	17.26
VGF	3.37	11.16	4.42	18.95
Control group	1.26	10.11	7.58	18.95
Marginal farm	6.74	5.89	1.68	14.32
Small farm	5.05	6.53	2.95	14.53
Medium farm	6.95	5.68	0.63	13.26
Large farm	2.74			2.74
Total	30.74	48.00	21.26	100

Source: Field survey (2008)

6.4 Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS) Score

The HFIAS score is a continuous measure of the degree of food insecurity (access) that a household has to food, is driven from the responses given to the set of nine standard questions on perceptions of food vulnerability and response to food insecurity in the household over the past four weeks (30 days). The question ask how frequently over the past month the respondent or household members either felt or behaved in a particular way in the face of food vulnerability or insecurity – never (code 0), rarely (code 1), sometimes (code 2) and often (code 3). First, a HFIAS score *variable* is calculated for each household by summing the codes for each frequency-of-occurrence question. The HFIAS can be derived ranging from 0 (food secure) to 27 (severely food insecure). Fig. 8 presents the household category-wise average HFIAS score in each of population groups examined. The higher the score, the more food insecurity (access) the household experienced. The lower the score, the less food insecurity (access) a household experienced. Farm households in Hatiya, Sandwip and Homna are shown to be somewhat more food secure than households of VGD, VGF and control group. It was interestingly observed that Control group in all three upazilas face relatively high level of food insecurity followed by VGF, VGD, Marginal farm, Small farm, Medium farm and Large farm irrespective of geographical locations. The positive effect of the safety net programs specially VGF and VGD has been reported by the respondents of the islands and main lands which lead to suggest that with the expansion of such safety net, more food insecure peoples could be bring under the food secured conditions. Here control group peoples mean the peoples those who are eligible to have VGD or VGF cards but are not card holders.

Table 34: Household Food Insecurity Access-related Domains by have to eat foods really did not want to eat (N=630)

Household category	Response		How often did this happen			% of households that eat a limited variety of food			
	No	Yes	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Total
VGD		90	39	38	13	8.14	7.93	2.71	18.79
VGF		90	45	31	14	9.39	6.47	2.92	18.79
Control group		90	14	45	31	2.92	9.39	6.47	18.79
Marginal farm	29	61	16	29	16	3.34	6.05	3.34	12.73
Small farm	20	70	22	43	5	4.59	8.98	1.04	14.61
Medium farm	42	48	27	18	3	5.64	3.76	0.63	10.02
Large farm	60	30	21	9		4.38	1.88		6.26
Total	151	479	184	213	82	38.41	44.47	17.12	100

Source: Field survey (2008)

It revealed that the respondents of the off-shore islands had maximum HFIAS score than of main land. So Island areas are more food insecure than that of main land. The HFIAS score has been presented in Fig. 8 and Fig. 9.

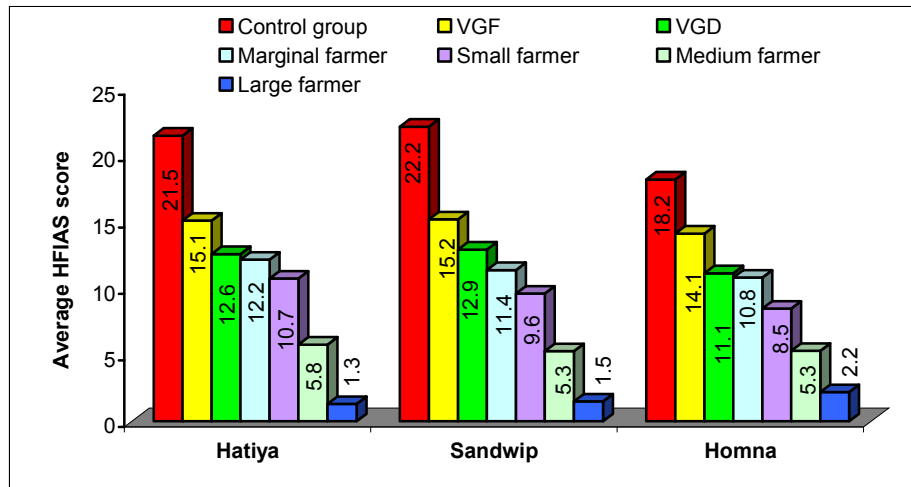


Fig. 8 :Geographical location wise HFIAS score
Source: Field survey (2008)

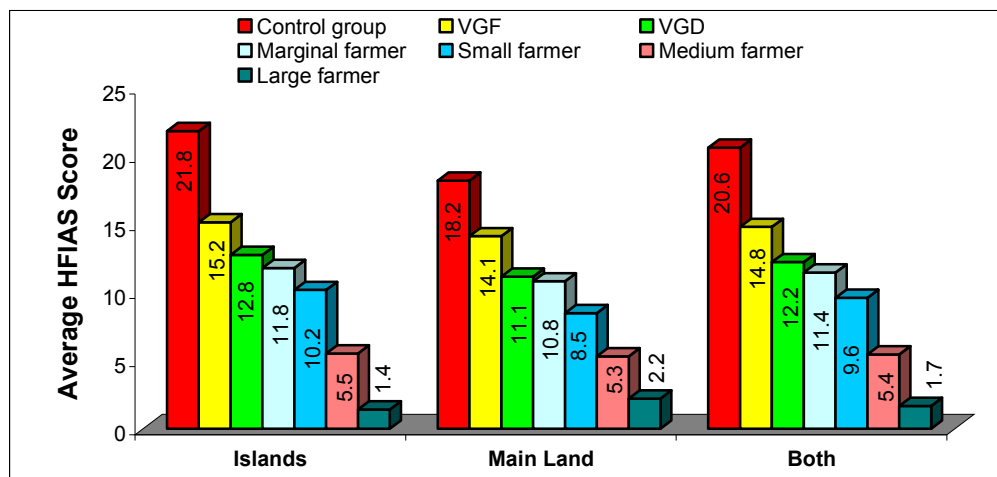


Fig. 9: HFIAS score in terms of islands and main lands
Source: Field survey (2008)

6.5 Household Food Insecurity Access Prevalence

The final indicator is a categorical indicator of Food Insecurity Status. The Household Food Insecurity Access Prevalence (HFIAP) Status indicator can be used to report household food insecurity (access) prevalence and make geographic targeting decisions.

The HFIAP indicator categorizes households into four levels of household food insecurity (access): Food secure and Mild, Moderately and Severely food insecure (Fig.: 10-16). Households are categorized as increasingly food insecure as they respond affirmatively to more severe conditions and/or experience those conditions more frequently.

A food secure household experiences none of the food insecurity (access) conditions, or just experiences worry, but rarely. A mildly food insecure (access) household worries about not having enough food sometimes or often, and/or is unable to eat preferred foods, and/or eats a more monotonous diet than desired and/or some foods considered undesirable, but only rarely. But it does not cut back on quantity nor experience any of three most severe conditions (running out of food, going to bed hungry, or going a whole day and night without eating). A moderately food insecure household sacrifices quality more frequently, by eating a monotonous diet or undesirable foods sometimes or often, and/or has started to cut back on quantity by reducing the size of meals or number of meals, rarely or sometimes. But it does not experience any of the three most severe conditions. A severely food insecure household has graduated to cutting back on meal size or number of meals often, and/or experiences any of the three most severe conditions (running out of food, going to bed hungry, or going a whole day and night without eating), even as infrequently as rarely. In other words, any household that experiences one of these three conditions even once in the last four weeks (30 days) is considered severely food insecure.

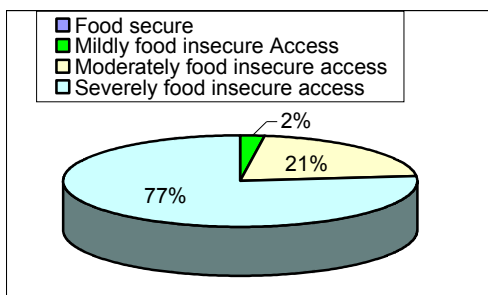


Fig. 10: Food Security Status of VGD Households

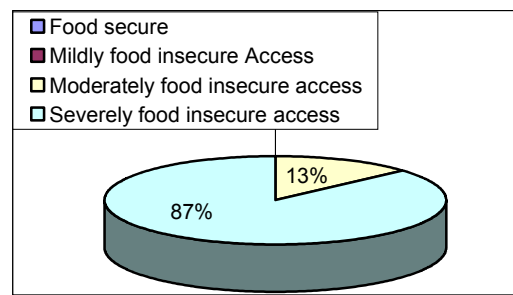


Fig. 11: Food Security Status of VGF Households

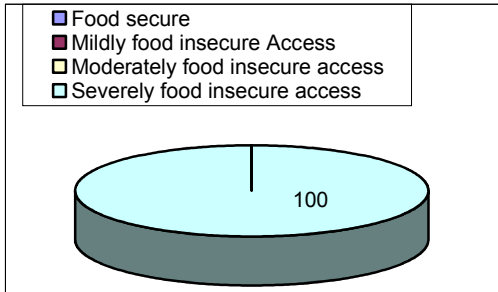


Fig. 12: Food Security Status of Control Groups' Households

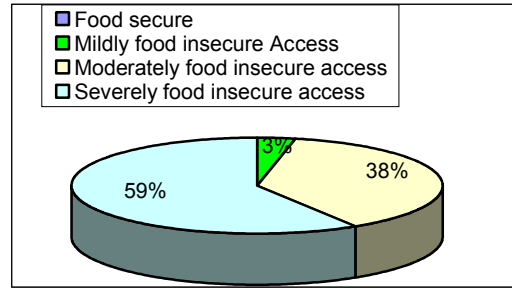


Fig. 13: Food Security Status of Marginal Farm Households

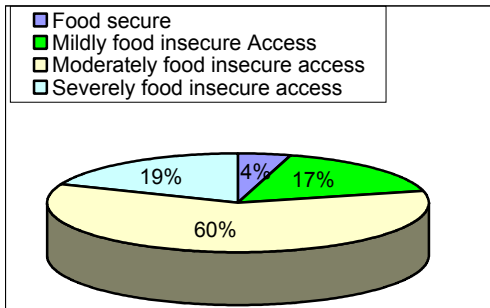


Fig. 14: Food Security Status of Small Farm Households

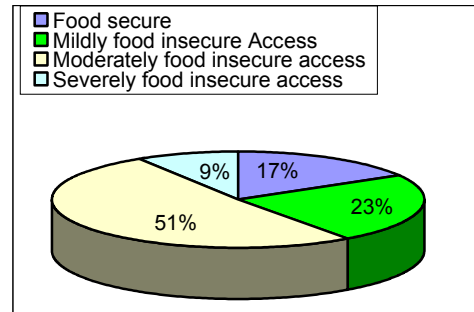


Fig. 15: Food Security Status of Medium Farm Households

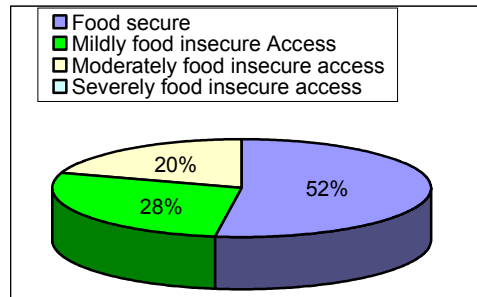


Fig. 16: Food Security Status of Large Farm Households
Source: Field survey (2008)

Chapter 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Selection Process: No major gaps in the selection process were observed in both the VGD and VGF programs. But it is revealed from the research that a lot of vulnerable households (control groups) are outside of the safety net program. So it is recommended to increase the coverage of the programs for the betterment of food insecure destitute people.
2. Political affiliation: Community-based targeting is biased on Political affiliation and opportunism observed in both food aided programs VGD and VGF in the two southern islands (Hatiya and Sandwip) but the situation is better in the mainland (Homna). As it is a matter of concern so corrective measure should be taken.
3. Leakage: Quantity of leakage and distance of “distribution centre” from Upazila Head Quarter are positively correlated. It is therefore recommended that transportation and handling costs from the LSD to distribution centre should be assessed for each union.
4. Preference of cash: A significant difference between *ration entitlement* and *ration received* under the existing safety net programs were reported by the respondents of the study areas. Preference for receiving cash instead of food commodities under VGD program was reported by 77.8% of total respondents. This is because of inaccuracies in weighing and quality of supplied food grains.
5. Vulnerability: In terms of Household Food Insecurity Access Scale Score it was found that respondents of the off-shore islands are more vulnerable than main land. It is recommended that special attention should be taken for reducing food vulnerability in island areas.
6. Possession of SSNP Card: At the time of interview most of the respondents did not able to show their VGD and VGF cards and they reported that the cards are kept by UP officials. It is therefore recommended that a laminated SSNP (VGD, VGF etc.) card should be provided to the program beneficiaries and should be made mandatory keep it under lock in the master bed room.

7. Role in poverty alleviation: Both the programs are playing a vital role in improving household food security and alleviating poverty of the rural food insecure destitute females, these programs should be geared up with adequate resources support.
8. Monitoring of SSNP: In the remote pocket of island areas, monitoring system is not effective and regular, but in the mainland it is quite satisfactory. Due to weak monitoring, the goal of the program will not be achieved properly. So attempts should be made to establish or strengthen monitoring activities and ensure effective site visits at the time of relief distribution. The monitoring and evaluation of these food aided program is inevitable to make the program more effective and target oriented.

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