



**The European Union's Development Cooperation
Instrument for Bangladesh**

Establishing Vulnerable Peoples' Rights and Access to social safety net programmes (EVPRA) Project

Grant contract: DCI-NSAPVD/2015/367-926

BASELINE SURVEY



This project is funded by



This project is implemented by World Vision in collaboration with
Pollisree and PUMDO

BASELINE SURVEY REPORT

**Establishing Vulnerable Peoples' Rights and Access to
social safety net programmes (EVPRA) Project**

Conducted by



Sutra Consulting, India

in association with Innovision Consulting, Bangladesh.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AFID	Allowances for Financially Insolvent and Disabled
AWDD	Allowances for Widowed, Deserted and Destitute Women
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BDHS	Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey
BNP	Bangladesh Nationalist Party
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CCT	Conditional cash transfers
CFW	Cash for Work
CHT	Chittagong Hill Tract
CP	Child Protection
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSPro	Census Survey Processing system
DFID	Department for International Development
DPEO	District Primary Education Officer
DRRO	District Relief and Rehabilitation Officer
ED	Executive Director
EU	European Union
EVPR	Establishing vulnerable peoples' rights and access to social safety net programmes
FFW	Food for Work
FGD	Focussed Group Discussion
FSSAP	Female Secondary School Assistance Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
HDI	Human Development Index
HH	Household
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
ILO	International Labour Organisation
KII	Key Informant Interview
LA	Local Authorities
LDC	Least Developed Country
LFS	Labour Force Survey
MIS	Management Information System
MFI	Microfinance Institution
MOE	Margin of Error
MP	Member of Parliament
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSSS	National Social Security Strategy
NWDP	National Women Development Policy
OAA	Old Age Allowance
PIO	Programme Implementation Officer
PMIU	Project Management Implementation Unit
PSEP	Primary Education Stipend Project
PUMDO	Peoples Union of the Marginalized Development Organization
SHG	Self-help Group

SSNP	Social Safety Net programme
UNDP	United Nation Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNO	Upazila Nirabhi Officer
UP	Union Parishad
UPEO	Upazila Primary Educational Officer
UPZ	UpazilaParishads
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VGD	Vulnerable Group Development Programme
VGf	Vulnerable Group Feeding
WFP	World Food Programme
WV	World Vision

GLOSSARY AND DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS:

Indigenous minorities: Native people originating naturally in a particular place and with old, historical ties with a territory, and generally marginalised in contemporary life. Mostly ethnic minorities, they are known to be deprived of the mainstream economic growth-led development, and for this reason are especially protected by the Constitutional provisions in many countries. In Bangladesh, examples of indigenous peoples are Chakmas, Santals, Munda, etc. Indigenous minority groups are also referred to as tribals in South Asia and in this report.

Vulnerable: The state of being in need of special care, support, or protection because of age, gender, disability, ethnicity, religion, and other identities, or at risk of abuse or neglect.

Awareness: Knowledge or perception of a fact. There are varying degrees of awareness from being merely conscious of something to being well-informed about it. Awareness is also a matter of self-perception. Here awareness of SSNP is defined as the simple knowledge that a scheme exists under which some kind of benefit is due to the citizens and that the same is operated by the local governments of Bangladesh.

Access: The ability to avail of certain services with or without hurdles. Access can be easy or difficult. Lack of access indicates being completely shut out of a service that's due.

Satisfaction: Generally refers to the degree of happiness regarding a service/product benchmarked against the expectation of the user. Satisfaction is a qualitative term and is generally mapped on degree or extent (i.e. on a scale).

Religious minorities: Refers to the population that belongs to a religion that's not shared by the majority population. E.g. Christians are a religious minority in Bangladesh.

Governance: In the context of development, governance refers to the act of governing/running a scheme, programme, policy or suchlike to the targeted population as laid out in its principles in a manner in which its intended developmental objectives are achieved. Examples of mal-governance include corruption, nepotism, favouritism, lack of transparency/accountability and poor quality, among others.

1. EXECUTIVESUMMARY

Introduction

The Establishing Vulnerable Peoples Rights and Access to Social Safety Net Programmes (EVPRA) project is a four year grant project funded by the European Union. EVPRA began in January 2016 and is implemented in the Districts of Joypurhat and Dinajpur in Rajshahi and Ranjpur Divisions respectively, in Northern Bangladesh. EVPRA is implemented by World Vision in partnership with Pollisree and PUMDO (Peoples Union of the Marginalized Development Organization) in close collaboration with local civil society organisations (CSOs), communities and government.

The overall objective of EVPRA is to empower local, indigenous CSOs, Local Authorities (LAs) and communities to promote access to Social Safety Net Programmes (SSNPs) for the most vulnerable communities by enhancing transparency and accountability in the provision of SSNPs in the target districts. The expected outcomes of the intervention are the strengthening of organisational capacity and the sustainability of targeted local indigenous CSOs; promotion of the transparency and accountability of existing government SSNPs and an increase in the total number of vulnerable people accessing to SSNPs from the government.

The purpose of the baseline evaluation is to outline the current socio-economic, political and governance context for project implementation in order to present robust baseline data for key project indicators which will allow the project team to adequately monitor and evaluate on an ongoing basis, the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the project. The evaluation will also present recommendations for ongoing project monitoring and learning. In presenting the current situation in the target districts, this baseline report will also provide a critical review of the appropriateness of target figures in the logframe and provide specific benchmarks for key project indicators in the indicator tracking table. Furthermore the evaluation will identify previously unidentified needs, opportunities, challenges and threats not originally contemplated in the project's design, methodology and/or indicators.

Baseline Objectives

To explore the abovementioned socio-economic, political and governance factors, the baseline survey focused on the following themes:

- a) The demographic and socio-economic background of communities in the selected Upazilas for the survey including ethnicity, gender, disability, vulnerability, income status, savings/debt, occupational spread, land ownership, incidence of natural disasters, etc.
- b) Community awareness of SSNPs, and specifically community members' understanding of beneficiary selection processes, the eligibility criteria of the different SSNP schemes, procedural practices, grievance and redress systems.
- c) Access to SSNPs and particularly the 9 SSNPs targeted by the EVPRA project
- d) Confidence and ability within communities to interact with local governments; the extent of perceived vulnerability, discrimination and inequality in access to SSNPs; and degrees of community participation in CSOs and other community-based organisations (CBOs).
- e) Overall governance of SSNP delivery to eligible beneficiaries including analysis of the quality/quantity of services, extent of malpractices, if any, satisfaction levels in community on SSNP delivery.
- f) The challenges and barriers faced by all stakeholders in the overall governance of SSNPs
- g) The capacity of CSOs to partner with the government and support effective SSNP delivery

Methodology

The EVPRA baseline survey was conducted in four selected upazilas of Dinajpur and Joypurhat Districts, namely Birampur, DinajpurSadar, Fulbari, JoypurhatSadar and Panchbibi. The survey used a mixed methods approach, beginning with a literature review of project reports, policy documents, journals and media reports; a quantitative survey of 953 households (HHs) selected through random sampling, due to inability to extract data from local government; and qualitative semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) with 72 project stakeholders in government and civil society. The household respondents include 51.2% females, 16.5% widows, 40.7% religious minorities, 26.2% tribal/indigenous minority, 24.7% unemployed and HHs belonging to different income level brackets. 37% of the respondents self-reported as beneficiaries of SSNPs, whilst the remaining (i.e. 63%) reported that they do not access SSNPs. Self-reporting was used due to lack of comprehensive data of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries at the upazila level.

Stakeholders for the qualitative research comprised Union and Upazila Parishad members/chairmen, Members of Parliament (MPs) and NGOs executive personnel. The study tools deployed are provided in the Annexes.

Key findings and conclusions

I) The demographic and socio-economic background of communities

- ❖ 52.2% of all respondents were females. 60% of the respondents were Muslims and 25% of all respondents were from indigenous minorities/tribals. 59.5% of all respondents were illiterate, with as many of two-thirds of all respondents from indigenous minorities found to be illiterate.
- ❖ Most sampled households are either farmers or wage labourers with food accounting for more than half of total household expenditure, followed by education and health expenses. On an average about 2/3rd of all households would like social safety nets focused on food rations, indicating the need for EVPRA to prioritise SSNPs providing free grains (e.g. VGD, FFW, etc.)
- ❖ SSNP cash allowances provided to all beneficiaries as little as 2-8% of their household income and amounted to less than 20% of households' monthly expenditure on food alone, indicating the inadequacy of SSNPs to meet consumption needs, and the need for EVPRA to focus on improving quantity of SSNP allowances.
- ❖ About 25% of all respondents were unemployed, with the highest incidence of unemployment in Panchbibi and JoypurhatSadar. This would mean very high dependence on SSNPs. Accordingly EVPRA may focus more on unemployed HHs.
- ❖ At an average of 80.35 decimals¹, agriculture land-holding size is 1.8 times higher among non-tribals than tribals (44.93 decimals) which indicates land-based alienation, and higher poverty and vulnerability among the indigenous minority population. This makes the EVPRA focus on indigenous minorities pertinent. Among the tribal/indigenous populace, 53.2% were Santhal, 18.4% Sanatan and 7.6% Oraon.
- ❖ The disabled population in Dinajpur and Joypurhat districts is only 1.5%, which is statistically marginal. The sample of respondents for this study did not have representation of disabled population. In particular this is because a pre-defined strata was not applied in the sample due to lack of Union wise data on disabled people available in the public domain at the time of the survey design. To target the disabled more strategically moving forward, and to ensure their inclusion, EVPRA should conduct door to door listing, or approach local government or the Ministry of Social Welfare that conducts the Disability Detection Survey.

¹A **decimal** is a unit of area in India and Bangladesh approximately equal to 1/100 acre (40.46 m²).

II) Community awareness of SSNPs

- ❖ 92% of all respondents have heard of SSNPs. However only some are aware of their functional details as for example, more than 87% of respondents were unaware of grievance redress mechanisms. The most prominent source of information and awareness of SSNPs is by word-of-mouth from neighbours and within the community (84.3% of all HHs). This indicates the need for EVPRA to focus on community-led participatory models of intervention including the use of peer-to-peer communications.
- ❖ The most and least known SSNPs are Old Age Allowance (OAA) and Maternity Allowances for Pregnant and Lactating Mothers (MAPLM) respectively. This means awareness drives for SSNP schemes can orient its focus on schemes based on current awareness levels. For instance, MAPLM needs greater visibility while OAA doesn't require as much in comparison. But all SSNPs reflect similar issues on governance, which means the intervention logic of improving service delivery and satisfaction is intact.
- ❖ 25%, a quarter of the respondents, are not aware of the eligibility criteria and 87.3% are unaware of grievance redress mechanisms. This reiterates the need for EVPRA to conduct awareness drives focused on the functional details of SSNPs.

III) Governance of SSNPs and satisfaction with delivery

- ❖ Almost two-thirds (66%) of the respondents have never participated in or contributed to the selection of beneficiaries. Birampur, the upazila with the greatest share of literate people and the highest share of newspaper readers, has the maximum share of respondents who have partaken in beneficiary selection. EVPRA can work towards effecting changes at the upazila level for mandatory inclusion of communities. The intervention can use mobile phone-led communication/campaigns to sensitise communities about this.
- ❖ None of the respondents have ever been part of any local government committee, indicating lack of community inclusion/participation in local governance and the need for this to be addressed to achieve EVPRA's overall objective of empowering indigenous CSOs, LAs and Communities to promote vulnerable peoples' social development. Like above, EVPRA can advocate to effect policy changes and to make recommendations regarding the composition of local government committees so that communities and indigenous CSOs directly play a role with LAs in local governance.
- ❖ 46.6% of all households report having tried but failed to access SSNPs, 67.82% of them due to non-cooperation from Union/Upazila Parishads. This means the EVPRA logic of strengthening the Local Authorities (LAs) is apt.
- ❖ Only 33.3% - a third - of all respondents say they have witnessed an awareness/advocacy drive on SSNPs to sensitise the community and 30.2% of the respondents do not approach the local governments directly for information. Among those who did, 37.7% reported a negative experience at the Unions. DinajpurSadar has the highest share of households who reached out to local governments directly. 26.2% of them received satisfactory responses. Thus, EVPRA's work with LAs can focus on sensitising public officials at the Upazila and Union levels and helping them work better for the community.
- ❖ Only 54.6% of all non-beneficiaries, compared with 75.6% of all beneficiaries, reported a positive outcome on reaching out to Union Parishads for information on SSNPs. In this context, EVPRA's intervention with Unions should focus not just on increasing their capacity for providing better access to SSNPs by existing beneficiaries, but also a better experience at the local government for all citizens in the Union.
- ❖ More than half (50.8%) of all respondents allege that inducements/favours can help people access SSNPs. 2 out of every 5 respondents (40%) reported knowledge of incidence of bribery in SSNP delivery, while 36.3% have felt discriminated against. The feeling of discrimination is higher among tribals (44.8%). EVPRA can strengthen the transparency and objectiveness of the beneficiary selection processes (through

use of technology for one) at the Union level, while conducting workshops targeted at indigenous peoples regarding their rights and entitlements.

- ❖ There is an almost universal view at both Union and Upazila government level that the demand for SSNPs far outstrips supply, and that both the number of beneficiaries and the quantity of allowances needs to be drastically revised upwards. Concerns over quality were not identified as significant as concerns over quantity, however this is explored later in the Section on Baseline Findings. The other challenges are nepotism, political influence and inclusion/exclusion errors. EVPRA can work with the Upazila to advocate for and effect changes in SSNP processes. The use of a Management Information System (MIS) for beneficiary selection and maintenance of updated lists, and dialogue and advocacy with Central ministries to improve budgetary funding is important.

IV) CSO capacity

- ❖ More than half the respondents (51.3%) are not part of CSOs, and among those who are, all those respondents reported income support as the outcome of CSO participation. The female share of participation in CSOs is substantially lower than the male share in Panchbibi, while it is more or less gender-neutral elsewhere. Except in Panchbibi, females in all respondents feel substantially more vulnerable and disempowered than their male counterparts, possibly linked to the finding that female participation here is the least among all upazilas. This indicates the need for EVPRA to drive membership of CSOs, especially amongst females.
- ❖ There seems also low awareness of the benefits of participation in CSOs. EVPRA can focus on driving membership in CSOs, because the survey shows that there is a link between CSO participation and empowerment of communities. EVPRA's CSO membership drives should be complemented with awareness drives aimed at sensitising the public about the benefits of CSOs.
- ❖ 83.1% of all respondents revealed they have never received a training from CSOs on SSNPs. This means EVPRA must work towards CSO capacity to deliver trainings on SSNPs. For that, CSOs should first have sufficient internal knowledge and skilled staff. This warrants specific focus as planned under the EVPRA intervention.
- ❖ CSOs have been unable to partner with the government in SSNP delivery or influence policy/strategy due to lack of networking, inability to find representation in local government tables, inadequate/missing management practices, lack of funding – even though CSO personnel are high on commitment and overall understanding of SSNP governance aspects and challenges. Thus EVPRA should hold workshops aimed at inculcating good management practices and impart skills to CSO personnel on networking with government.

2. BACKGROUND OF SSNPs IN BANGLADESH AND DINAJPUR AND JOYPUKHAT DISTRICTS: SOCIO-ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND GOVERNANCE CONTEXT ANALYSIS

2.1 Introduction

With about half the working population engaged in agriculture and 91.5% of the rural population employed in the informal sector, Bangladesh fares poorly in socio-economic development indicators, with a Human Development Index Rank of 142 out of 188 countries in 2015. A Least Developed Country (LDC) since 1975, Bangladesh has a high incidence of poverty. Last estimated at 25.6 percent in June 2014 by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), the poverty head count ratio at national poverty line in 2010 was 31.1 percent².

About 12.4 percent of Bangladeshis are classified as ‘ultra-poor’ according to the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) carried out in 2010. The proportion of rural population living in extreme poverty was 21% as of 2010.

In Bangladesh, the existing Social Safety Net Programmes (SSNPs) are one of the key tools used in the country’s persistent fight against poverty. An estimated 16 million people have been lifted out of poverty in the past decade³.

The welfare and social safety net programme has evolved since its inception and is now represented by a wide range of schemes (an estimated 97 of them) accounting for about a fifth of the national budget (Budget, 2015). Disbursement for social safety net has risen from less than 1% of GDP in the late 1990s and 1.60% of GDP in 2007-08 to 2.5% of GDP in 2012-13 (Bangladesh Economic Review, 2012). The aim is to have increase this share to 2.3% within the next five years (GoB, 2015)⁴.

In the early 1990s, Conditional Cash Transfers (CCTs) were launched in the form of food-for-education programme and in the late 1990s allowance programmes focused on vulnerable women. In early 2000s, there was a broadening of programmes with focus on combining protection and promotion goals.

Subsidies currently account for a major chunk (34.5%) of the total safety net umbrella. According to the World Bank’s *The State of Social Safety Nets 2015* report, SSNPs in Bangladesh such as stipends for primary students and the public works programme (Employment Generation Programme for the Poorest) have a wide reach, in terms of scale. Together these two schemes cover within its scope 9 million people. The Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) programme assisted by WFP currently reaches out to 3.75 million women. SSNPs in Bangladesh have led to increased school enrolment and attendance especially among girls in secondary schools and closing the gender gap; additional employment generation; provision of food during crisis; building infrastructure; and increased access to and utilisation of maternal health care services⁵.

However Bangladesh continues to be an LDC with massive human development challenges, as reflected in its poor HDI rank. The national socio-economic picture and particularly that in the two districts of Dinajpur and Joypukhat are discussed in a subsequent section, following a brief political analysis.

2.2 Polity and politics

The political history of Bangladesh after independence begins in 1971 with the independence of Bangladesh from Pakistan. Bangladesh is politically speaking a **parliamentary democracy**. The unicameral Parliament is directly elected, every 5 years and every individual older than 18 is entitled to cast his vote. At this moment, the Bangladesh parliament is known to have little less than 350 members, out of which 50 seats are

² HIES, BBS, GoB

³ <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2013/06/20/bangladesh-reduced-number-of-poor-by-16-million-in-a-decade>

⁴ Bangladesh Seventh Five Year Plan FY 2016 to FY 2020 (Final Draft – 13 Oct. 2015)

⁵ Honorati, Maddalena; Gentilini, Ugo; Yemtsov, Ruslan G. 2015. The state of social safety nets 2015. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2015/07/24741765/state-social-safety-nets-2015>

reserved for women parliamentarians. The head of the Bangladesh government is the prime minister, who is also responsible for the formation of the cabinet and for running the affairs of the state on a daily basis. The prime minister is appointed by the parliament but he must be invested with the confidence of the parliament or at least a majority of the parliamentarians. The head of the state, as in many other types of democracies is the president. However, the Bangladesh politics confine the president to a ceremonial and rather powerless post. He is however elected by the parliament.

The two main parties in Bangladesh are the **left-leaning Awami League** and the **right-leaning Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)**. Other parties include Jatiya Party, Jatiyo Samajtantrik Dal, Workers Party and Liberal Democratic Party in addition to several minor parties⁶. **Currently the Awami League is in power** at the national level with 234 of the total 300 Parliamentary directly elected seats. A remaining **50 seats are reserved for women** and are elected by the aforesaid elected members. Currently 37 of these members belong to the Awami League, thus taking AL's total count to 274 out of 350 seats.

The **administrative structure** of Bangladesh consists of **Divisions** (7), **Districts** (64), **Upazila Parishads** (496) and **Union Parishads** (4451). The EVPRA intervention concerns itself with 2 districts, namely Joypurhat and Dinajpur and five upazilas under them. These two districts are politically dominated by Awami League, or the AL-led coalition. In four out of five upazilas (i.e. Joypurhat Sadar, Fulbari, Birampur, Dinajpur Sadar), the AL was in power during the time of the study. Panchbibi was ruled by Jamaat-e-Islami, which is backed by the BNP. At the national level, Members of Parliament from both Dinajpur and Joypurhat districts belong to the Awami League-led coalition which is in power at the Centre.

2.3 Socio-economic analyses of target districts

The two districts of Dinajpur and Joypurhat together are home to about 4 million people – a vast majority of them living in rural areas. On average, households in both districts are about four-members strong. In terms of **demography and level of urbanisation**, there is not much to attribute difference between the two districts, except that Dinajpur is almost three times more populated than Joypurhat. Less than 15% of both districts are urbanised respectively.

The incidence of **poverty** is high in both districts. As per 2010 estimates by World Bank-WFP, 21.3% of the population in Dinajpur were living in extreme poverty compared to about 13% in Joypurhat. The share of population below the poverty line was also higher in Dinajpur (37.9%) than Joypurhat (26.7%).

There isn't significant difference between the two districts on **literacy** rates, but both districts share between 4-6 percentage points of difference between male and female literacy rates. The number of primary schools, secondary schools and technical/vocational institutions are about three times higher in Dinajpur than Joypurhat in line with the population statistics. Importantly, the number of NGO-run primary schools is higher than the number of government schools in both districts, indicating the direct developmental role of civil society in plugging voids left by the state. It is worth noting that the presence of madrasahs is quite high revealing substantial religious (Islamic) influence on the educational system. Attendance rates among school going children (5-19 years) seems gender-neutral, with slightly higher than 2/3rd of all children in both districts attending schools – irrespective of gender.

The share of population in the two districts who fall under different **vulnerable groups** are 6.75% (elderly), 1.5% (disabled), 5.22% (widowed), 21.96% (religious minority⁷) and 2.23% (ethnic/indigenous) in Dinajpur and 8.65% (elderly), 1.5% (disabled), 5.27% (widowed), 10.34% (religious minority) and 2.26% (ethnic/indigenous) in Joypurhat. The main ethnic minority groups in these districts are Santhal and Oraon.

⁶ A total of 41 political parties are registered as per the Election Commission, Bangladesh website (accessed on 16 June, 2016)

⁷ Hindus, Christians, Buddhists

Table 1 Demography, poverty and education in Dinajpur and Joypurhat

Parameter	Indicator	Dinajpur	Joypurhat
Demography	Population	29,90,128	9,13,768
	Sex ratio (number of females per 100 males)	102	101
	Average size of HH	4.14	3.74
	Urbanization (% of population living in urban areas)	13.17%	14.46%
Poverty	% of population suffering extreme poverty	21.3%	12.9%
	% of population under poverty line	37.9%	26.7%
Education and skills	Literacy rate	52.4%	57.5%
	Male literacy rate	55.7%	61.4%
	Female literacy rate	49.1%	53.5%
	Number of govt. primary schools	861	263
	Number of NGO run schools	992	300
	Number of govt. secondary schools	6	4
	Number of madrasah	326	128
	Female children (5-19 years) attending school	68.43%	68.86%
	Male children (5-19 years) attending school	67.17%	69.42%
	Females aged 20-29 years attending school	4.44%	3.5%
	Males aged 20-29 years attending school	11.22%	11.53%
	No. of technical and vocational institutions	23	7
Vulnerable groups	% of elderly (>60)	6.75%	8.65%
	% of disabled population	1.5%	1.5%
	% of widowed population	5.22%	5.27%
	Religious minority (% of population)	21.96%	10.34%
	% of ethnic population	2.23%	2.36%
Child health	Underweight Children (%)	33%	30%
	Severely Underweight Children (%)	7%	6%
	Stunted Children (%)	41%	37%

Sources: District Statistics 2011, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (2013), Zila-level poverty estimates, World Bank-WFP, 2010; Population and Housing Census 2011 & Zila Reports, WFP-IFAD, 2012, Population Monograph, Vol-4

While as much as a third of the total child population in Dinajpur and Joypurhat are underweight, **access to healthcare** in general can be understood through the Census, 2011 data which focused on the supply side dynamics of basic healthcare services. While in Dinajpur the availability of health infrastructure is substantially higher, this is because the population in the district is three times higher than Joypurhat.

However, in terms of adequacy of infrastructure, both in terms of physical infrastructure and human resources, both districts fare poorly. In Dinajpur there is approximately one bed for every 2,500 of the population, as against the WHO-recommended one bed for every 1,000 people. The situation is worse in Joypurhat where the availability of beds is 1 for every 3,050 people. Against the recommended 23 doctors and nurses per 10,000 population, Dinajpur only has around 5 doctors (in government facilities plus private practitioners) per 10,000 population. The concomitant share in Joypurhat is little over three. For nurses the share is better but still way below what WHO prescribed as necessary to deliver essential maternal and child health services. The Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (BDHS), 2014⁸ which provides vaccination figures per division, indicates that 90% and 83.6% of children in Rangpur and Rajshahi are fully vaccinated. However, as expected only about 70% of all children in the lowest wealth quintile were fully vaccinated.

The detailed health infrastructure, including immunization centres, available in the two districts is provided in Table 3 below.

⁸https://www.k4health.org/sites/default/files/bdhs_2014.pdf

Table 2 Health infrastructure in Joypurhat and Dinajpur

District (Zila)	Government health facility / hospital / clinic							Community
	No. of bed	No. of doctors	No. of nurses	No. of technicians	No. of other staff	No. of immunization centres	No. of community clinics	No. of physicians/ practitioners
Dinajpur	1176	183	255	66	1093	1067	270	1369
Joypurhat	300	53	117	25	323	715	95	221

Source: Population Census, 2011

Health infrastructure in Joypurhat and Dinajpur

The national Labour Force Survey (LFS) of 2013 reiterates that **employment** in Bangladesh is predominantly in the agricultural sector with more than half of the total working age population engaged in cultivation and fisheries. The unemployment rate is high at about 5%. Not only is female unemployment substantially higher, but their dependence on agriculture is much higher than the male workforce. In addition, Bangladesh is home to as many as 8.4 million unpaid family workers⁹ in contrast to only 2.1 million males, the LFS 2013 finds. 86% of these female unpaid family workers are from rural households.

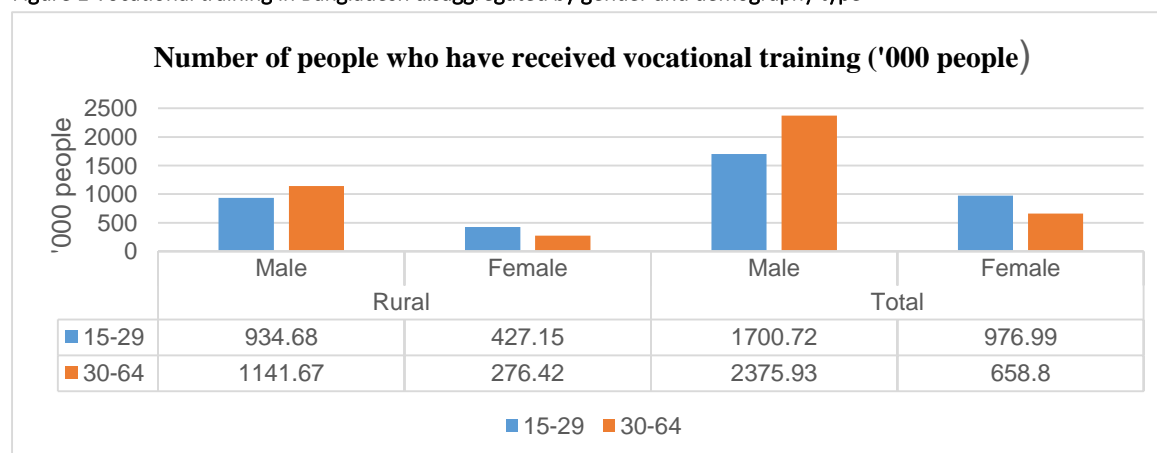
Table 3 Sectoral share of workforce

	Male	Female
Agriculture	52.8%	64.4%
Industry	16.5%	21.1%
Service	30.7	14.5%
Unemployed	3%	7.3%

Source: Labour Force Survey, 2013 – BBS, GoB

The Labour Force Survey carried out in 2010 which provides a disaggregation of districts indicates that **51.43% of the workforce in Dinajpur and 52.71% in Joypurhat are engaged in agriculture**. There is not much difference in occupational break-up among districts.

The skills situation in Bangladesh also reflects a gender skew with the number of males who have received vocational training exceeding the number of females who have by a wide margin, both in rural areas and in the country as a whole. But notably about half of all trainings are conducted in rural areas, which comprise less than a third of the total population of the country.

Figure 1 Vocational training in Bangladesh disaggregated by gender and demography type

Source: Labour Force Survey, 2013

⁹Unpaid family worker is usually a person who works without pay for economic activities operated or carried out by a person living in the same household.

2.4 Gender dynamics:

Although the values for some indicators such as sex ratio and attendance in schools disaggregated by gender (see Table 2 above) reveals that gender inequality does not present itself as a challenge immediately before/after birth or during school-going age, the prevalence of **gender inequality among adults** happens to be prevalent. Although, women's opportunities and participation in public space have witnessed improvements in the recent decades in Bangladesh, and progress in closing the gender gap in school enrolments at the primary and secondary levels is visible¹⁰, there is **still a long way to go** in terms of empowering women and enabling them to utilise their human capabilities. We have already seen that as many as 8.4 million women in Bangladesh are working as unpaid family workers and that 7.3% of the working age female population are unemployed.

The fact that attendance in school in females – while as high or more than males in the age group 5-19 – the same is not true for those between the ages of 20 and 29. In this age bracket, the attendance rate for females is much less than half of that of males in both districts (see Table 2). Also, notably, both in Joypurhat and Dinajpur, 15-19 years is the only age-group where female attendance rate in schools is *lower* than that of males (47.69% against 56.84% and 48.62% against 51.89% respectively)¹¹. Likewise, **women make up less than half of the total number of people who have received vocational trainings** (see Figure 1 above). This means several adult females are either engaged in household work without pay, or are married off early.

According to UNICEF's report 'Ending Child Marriage – Progress and Prospects'¹², child marriage (under 15 girls) is highest in Bangladesh, and that more than **a third of all females in Bangladesh** currently aged 20-49 were married off when they were 15-18 years of age. An equal share of them were **married even before 15**. This is directly linked to income levels as the median age of females (currently between 25-49 years) is only 15 for the poorest quintile of the population, while its 17 for the richest quintile. Child brides in Bangladesh (and elsewhere) are also much less likely to receive medical care during pregnancy than adult brides, the UNICEF report says. The BDHS, 2014 says that "an early start to childbearing greatly reduces women's educational and employment opportunities and ... hurts their job prospects, which often lowers their status in society." The survey also reveals that **teenage pregnancy and child-rearing is highest in Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions (37 percent of women between 15-19 years, in both districts)**

Female participation in society and community is also limited and so is the access of females to mass media including radio, TV, newspapers and magazines. Only 1.9% and 0.3% of women aged 15-49 access mass media at least once a week in Dinajpur and Joypurhat respectively. However, the shares are in line with national level figures presented in the 'ICT Use and Access by Individuals and Households' survey of 2013 which reveals that only 5.6% and 4.8% of all Bangladeshis in fact have access to computer and internet respectively. In rural areas, internet usage is lower at 2.5%. **Access to ICT is lowest in Rangpur and Rajshahi divisions.** 87.7% of all people and **85.5% of rural households do however own mobile phones.**

The share of females who access modern ICT is also notably low. No female respondent in Dinajpur in the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (2012-13)¹³ of women and children reported having used a computer or internet in the last one year. The concomitant share in Joypurhat is slightly better at 6.2% (used computer in past 1 year) and 2.6% (used internet in past 1 year).

Female participation in cooperatives is also substantially lower than males in both the districts, with only 5,642 female members of co-ops (against 47,771 male members) in Joypurhat and 45,136 (against 1,24,358) in Dinajpur.

However, as is already widely documented, the microfinance (MFI) revolution in Bangladesh is largely a women-centric phenomenon with more than 90% of the 21 million clients of MFIs being women¹⁴. Likewise,

¹⁰<http://interactions.eldis.org/node/135>

¹¹http://bbs.gov.bd/WebTestApplication/userfiles/Image/PopCenZilz2011/Zila_Joypurhat.pdf (page 23)

http://bbs.gov.bd/WebTestApplication/userfiles/Image/PopCenZilz2011/Zila_Dinajpur.pdf (page 23)

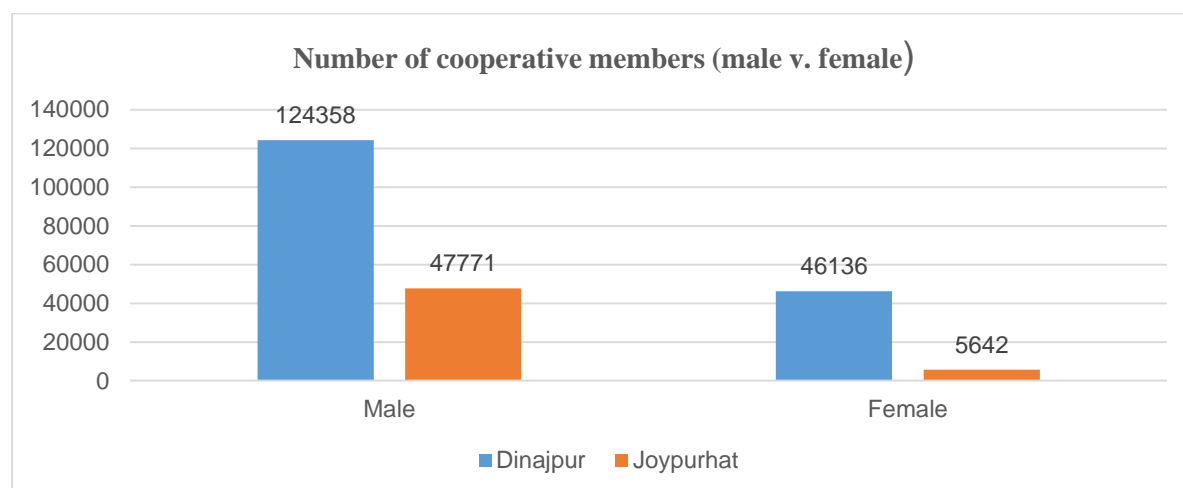
¹²http://www.unicef.org/media/files/Child_Marriage_Report_7_17_LR..pdf

¹³<http://www.bbs.gov.bd/WebTestApplication/userfiles/Image/LatestReports/MICS%202012-13-District.pdf>

¹⁴<http://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/ijef/article/view/12321>

according to World Bank's Global Financial Inclusion Index (Findex, 2014), 35% of women in Bangladesh hold bank accounts, which is higher than the South Asia average. However, this is not true of digital finance where few women have been brought under coverage so far¹⁵. This directly links to low ICT usage by women. Also, there may be some truth to the fact that **while an overwhelming majority of the households have a mobile phone, they may be handled by men** (more than 90% of the mobile votes cast from Bangladesh in a global survey came from males)¹⁶.

Figure 2 Number of cooperative members (male vs female)



2.5 Summary/Conclusion

Employment in Bangladesh is predominantly in the agricultural sector with more than half of the total working age population engaged in cultivation and fisheries and the unemployment rate is at around 5%. Female unemployment is higher, and their dependence on agriculture is much higher compared to males.

The incidence of poverty is high in both districts. As per 2010 estimates by World Bank-WFP, 21.3% of the population in Dinajpur were living in extreme poverty compared to about 13% in Joypurhat. The share of population below the poverty line was also higher in Dinajpur (37.9%) than Joypurhat (26.7%). In terms of demography, on an average, households in both districts are about four-members strong. The level of urbanisation is low at less than 15% with little attribute difference between the two districts.

At 52.4% and 57.3% in Dinajpur and Joypurhat, literacy rates are low and female literacy rates in both districts are 4-6 percentage points lower than their male counterparts.

In terms of adequacy of health infrastructure, both on physical infrastructure and human resources, the two districts fare poorly. Availability of beds per capita as also doctors, nurses, health centres are much lower than WHO prescribed standards.

Although on indicators such as sex ratio and attendance in schools gender inequality does not present itself as a challenge the prevalence of gender inequality among adults happens to be prevalent, with female participation in society/communities, their ICT awareness/usage and employment patterns revealing a substantial gender skew.

¹⁵<http://www.cgap.org/blog/digital-finance-bangladesh-where-are-all-women>

¹⁶<http://www.globaldashboard.org/2013/10/06/women-gender-imbalance-world-mobile-phone-voting/>

2.6 Governance and Legislative framework for SSNPs

2.6.1 Introduction

The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh provides for dignity, basic human rights and social equality.

The policy framework at national level governing the social security of vulnerable peoples in Bangladesh is extensive, with a range of laws in place to address inequalities and specific vulnerabilities and threats to women, children, the aged, disabled and indigenous minorities. Notably, policies governing SSNPs is national and applies uniformly to all districts and upazilas. The objectives of the national laws meanwhile are realised partly through the SSNPs.

The **Perspective Plan 2010-2021**¹⁷ is one of the Government of Bangladesh's (GOB) policy documents that provide an overarching view of the government's outlook for the country in the near term. The Plan focuses on the foundations of long run stability and prosperity. To that end, **Vision 2021** which is outlined in the Perspective 2010-2021 Plan, **focuses on (a) ensuring the rule of law, (b) avoiding political partisanship, and (c) building a society free from corruption**, principles which it hopes to guide implementation of development programmes. Social protection, poverty reduction and sustainable development are also among the priorities the government has set for itself within the Perspective Plan/Vision 2021. Recognising that risks and vulnerability are mainstream problems in Bangladesh, the Vision 2021 document states that **SSNPs which have been an integral part of the anti-poverty strategy will remain so for the next decade**. However it also recognises problems in delivery and lays down some future plans, which are discussed later in the Section below on Challenges in SSNP delivery.

2.6.2 An Introduction to EVPRA SSNPs

EVPRA is focused on 9 SSNPs in particular. These are as follows; Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF), Vulnerable Group Development (VGD), Food-for-work (FFW), Monthly Allowance for Poor Lactating Mothers (MAPLM), Allowances for Widowed, Deserted and Destitute (AWDD), Old Age Allowance (OAA), Allowances for Financially Insolvent Disabled (AFID), Primary Education Stipend Project (PSEP), Female Secondary School Allowance Programme (FSSAP). **The SSNPs – and by extension none of the schemes in particular – are laws in themselves**, and are thus not legally protected rights of citizens. However, the Legislative Framework section below, describing the overarching regulatory and policy designs focused on the target groups for the SSNPs are discussed. The SSNPs are a set of programmes – one of the instruments – to implement these legislations.

An introduction and background to these SSNPs is outlined below:

- **Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF)** was the first SSNP of Bangladesh, which was introduced by World Food Programme (WFP) during the famine in 1974 and is now being implemented jointly by the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) and WFP. Among all SSNPs, it has the highest number of beneficiary households. Under VGF 10 kg food grains are allocated to extremely vulnerable beneficiaries during select times of religious festival like EID for Muslims and PUJA for Hindus. Notably, the beneficiary are not fixed, the local government selects them just before the distribution of grains.

¹⁷http://bangladesh.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/bangladesh.gov.bd/page/6dca6a2a_9857_4656_bce6_139584b7f160/Perspective-Plan-of-Bangladesh.pdf

- **Vulnerable Group Development (VGD)** programme is a job-generating scheme focused on women between the ages of 18 and 49. Introduced in 1975, the VGD programme provides loan and training in addition to food to vulnerable women. Beneficiaries receive stipulated amounts of wheat per month (30 kgs) along with livelihood-linked training that are administered by the nodal ministry, i.e. Ministry of Women and Child Affairs. Beneficiaries should not own more than 15 decimals of land or any income generating asset. Only one VGD beneficiary per household is allowed.
- **Food-for-work (FFW)** distributes food grains (rice and wheat) as compensation against works in labour-intensive infrastructure building programmes. There is no specific entitlement, and the FFW is one of the channels of the government's nationwide public food distribution system. This programme supports construction and reconstruction of rural infrastructure, generating more than 100 million man-days of employment annually.
- **Monthly Allowance for Poor Lactating Mothers (MAPLM)** aims to encourage mothers in breast-feeding. Under this scheme, women are entitled to Tk. 350 per month starting from the third month after conception for a duration of two years in order to improve nutrition levels.
- **Allowances for Widowed, Deserted and Destitute** is a scheme targeted at specific vulnerable groups such as widows and the deserted. Beneficiaries are entitled to Tk. 300 per month. Beneficiaries should not own more than 10 decimals of land. The beneficiary should also not be a beneficiary of any other SSNP and should not have a child of age >15. To serve the purpose of the allowance, the beneficiary would be ineligible if she remarries.
- **Old Age Allowance** is an unconditional allowance transfer scheme which women above the age of 62 and men above the age of 65 are entitled to, provided the woman is not a VGD beneficiary. Allowances are 300 Tk per month. The beneficiary should not own more than 50 decimals of land or be a beneficiary of any other SSNP. Half of all OAA beneficiaries should be women.
- **Allowances for Financially Insolvent Disabled (AFID)** provides allowances to disabled people with impairments in hearing, visual, speech, intellectual and physical. The allowance is worth Tk. 300 per month per beneficiary. Beneficiaries should have an annual income of less than Tk 24,000. Priority is given to homeless, elderly, and women with multiple disabilities.
- **The Primary Education Stipend Project** is designed to provide cash assistance to poor primary school pupils and their families in rural Bangladesh with an aim to increase enrolment rate, attendance rate and retention rate of primary school pupils. Eligibility criteria includes 85 percent monthly attendance and minimum of 50 percent marks on the annual exams.
- **The Female Secondary School Allowance Programme** ensures provision of monthly stipends to girl students from Std. 6-10 (i.e. 11 to 15 years old) belonging to poor households. The stipends cover the direct costs of schooling, one of the major factors deterring enrolment of girls at secondary level.

The following table provides details of the coverage of each scheme in terms of beneficiaries and budgetary allocation from the latest national budget. District wise budgetary support for SSNPs is not available in the public domain.

Table 4 SSNPs schemes' coverage and outlay

Scheme	Coverage	Unit ¹⁸	Budget allocation (Tk. Crore)
Vulnerable Group Development	9.13	Lakh persons	981
Vulnerable Group Feeding	64.7	Lakh persons	1453.42
Old Age Allowances	30.0	Lakh persons	1440
Allowances for Widowed, Deserted and Destitute	11.13	Lakh persons	534.34
Allowances for Financially Insolvent Disabled	6	Lakh persons	360
Maternity Allowances for Poor Lactating Mothers	2.64	Lakh persons	158.40
Food for Work	18.75	Lakh man months	1386.80
Primary Education Stipend Project	78.0	Lakh persons	940.0
Female Secondary School Allowance Programme*	10	Lakh persons	NA

Source: Revised Budget 2015-16

* Pradhan & Afrin (2015)

2.6.3 The Legislative Framework governing the 9 focus SSNPs

While SSNPs are a set of schemes and programmes, critics have pointed out that **there is a need for a right-based framework which provides constitutional and legal protection for entitlements**.¹⁹ That said, there are key supporting pieces of legislation which should drive the governance and delivery of these programmes:

The right to food security in particular, which links to **VGF**, **VGD** and **FFW**, is in fact one of the areas where laws have been enacted to protect people's rights. The Food Policy of 1988 encourages farmers to purchase products at fair/subsidised prices. The National Food Policy of 2006, passed by the Cabinet, aims at ensuring food security for all, through stable supply, increased purchasing power and adequate nutrition for all, especially women and children. The National Food Policy Plan of Action (2008-2015)²⁰ outlines the implementation structure involving 11 ministries under the leadership of the Food Planning and Monitoring Unit of Ministry of Food and Disaster Management (MoFDM). One of the agendas outlined is better stock management, storage facilities, transportation and monitoring of targeted food distribution schemes under SSNPs such as **VGD**, **VGF** and **FFW**. Another legislation, the Safe Food Act, which provides for right to safe food and protection of health and human life, however, is not a right to food itself. Currently, monitoring of all this regulations at local level, is the purview of the Union and Upazila levels, mainly the Chairmen.

SSNPs also include **gender focused development** initiatives like **VGD** and **AWDD**. The legislative structures for development of women include the **National Women Development Policy**²¹(NWDP), 2011 under the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs, which aims at elimination of poverty of women, their economic empowerment and employment, food security of women, special programmes for disabled women and those belonging to minority ethnic groups. SSNPs like **Maternity Allowances for Poor Lactating Mothers** and **AWDD** fit into the broader policy objectives outlined in the NWDP. The MAPLM links to the NWDP objective

¹⁸ A lakh is equal to one hundred thousand and is written as 1,00,000 – widely used in South Asia.

¹⁹QuaziShahabuddin, 'The Right to Food: Bangladesh Perspectives', The Bangladesh Development Studies, Vol. XXXIII, March-June 2010, No. 1&2, p. 128.

²⁰National Food Policy Plan of Action (2008-2015), FPMU, Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, Bangladesh <https://www.gafspfund.org/sites/gafspfund.org/files/Documents/NationalFoodPolicyPlanofActionFINAL.pdf>

²¹National Women Development Policy, 2011, <http://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/bgd149160.pdf>

of ensuring rights to nutrition and to have physical and mental health of highest standard all through the life cycle of women including in childhood, adolescence and during pregnancy.

The National Children Policy, 2011 aims at securing best interests of children with special emphasis on their education, health, protection, special rights of disabled children. The National Education Policy, 2010 seeks to ensure 100 per cent enrolment and retention of students at the primary and secondary levels. SSNPs such as **Primary Education Stipend Project** and **Female Secondary School Assistance Programme** are some of the instruments to achieve these policy goals which are governed by this legislation.

Recently, the Parliament also passed the **Persons with Disabilities' Rights and the Protection Act 2013** – complying with the Constitutional guarantee of social equity – under which a complaint of discrimination, if accepted, will lead to compensation for the victim. The law provides for alleviation of risks and prevention from increased disabilities by way of free medical services, disabled-friendly public infrastructure and educational curriculum. The **AFID** which is a cash transfer programme seeks to protect the disabled through monthly allowances, half of it reserved for women. The AFID provides allowances to disabled people with impairments in hearing, visual, speech, intellectual and physical as outlined in the Bangladesh Protibondhy Kallyan Act 2001 (**Bangladesh Disability Welfare Act 2001**).

For the **elderly**, which is a major vulnerable group for, the **draft National Policy on Elderly People** has been approved by the Cabinet. The law ministry will set the definition of old persons and specify provisions for ensuring facilities for senior citizens. Thereafter, the social welfare ministry will make the national policy public. It is proposed that “elderly people will have ID cards, health cards, reserved seats in transports according to the policy. Old homes will be established and the government will also take initiatives to attract the private sector in this regard.”²² To support the elderly, the Ministry of Social Welfare is providing **OAA** to the poor and vulnerable elderly since 1997, the only social protection scheme currently targeting elderly peoples.

Bangladesh has ratified major international human rights treaties and conventions which relate to **indigenous peoples** broadly including **ILO's Convention No. 107 on Indigenous and Tribal Populations** (1957). In terms of national legislation, under the **15th amendment to the Constitution of Bangladesh** the state **recognised tribes**, ‘*khudro jatisotta*’ (minor races) and ‘*nri-goshthi*’ (ethnic sects) **but failed to enshrine their Constitutional rights**. Instead it only says that “...the State shall take steps to protect and develop the unique local culture [sic] and tradition [sic] of tribes, minor races, ethnic sects and communities.” However, this was the first instance of Constructional recognition of indigenous peoples. But, as Dhamai (2014) notes “...critically, for them [indigenous peoples], any sense of achievement is negated by problematic formulations elsewhere in the constitution, e.g. in Article 6, Clause 2, which reads as follows: “The people of Bangladesh shall be known as Bengalee [sic] as a nation and the citizens of Bangladesh will be known as Bangladeshis”²³

The indigenous peoples of Chittagong Hill Tract (CHT) are specially protected under Constitutional provisions, but these are beyond the scope of the EVPRA intervention, which focuses on indigenous peoples in plains, including Santal, Uraon, Mahali, Malo, Mahato, Pahan, Borman, Sing, Kurin, Munda, Robidas, Kormokar, and Horijan. In broader terms, the Constitution does in fact cover all citizens through Part III of the constitution, which entails the right to equality before the law and the equal protection of laws. Also, in **Article 28 clause (1)** **protects discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth** or any of them.

²²<http://thedailynewnation.com/news/29769/rights-of-elderly-in-bangladesh.html>

²³Dhamai, B.M. (2014), “An Overview of Indigenous Peoples in Bangladesh” in ed (Chowdhury) *Survival under Threat: Human Rights Situation of Indigenous Peoples in Bangladesh*, Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP), 2014

2.6.4 The Governance Structure & Mechanisms for SSNP implementation

As illustrated in Exhibit 1 below, a wide range of stakeholders at various levels of governance are involved in the delivery of SSNPs and other development schemes.

Exhibit 1: Stakeholders in SSNP delivery

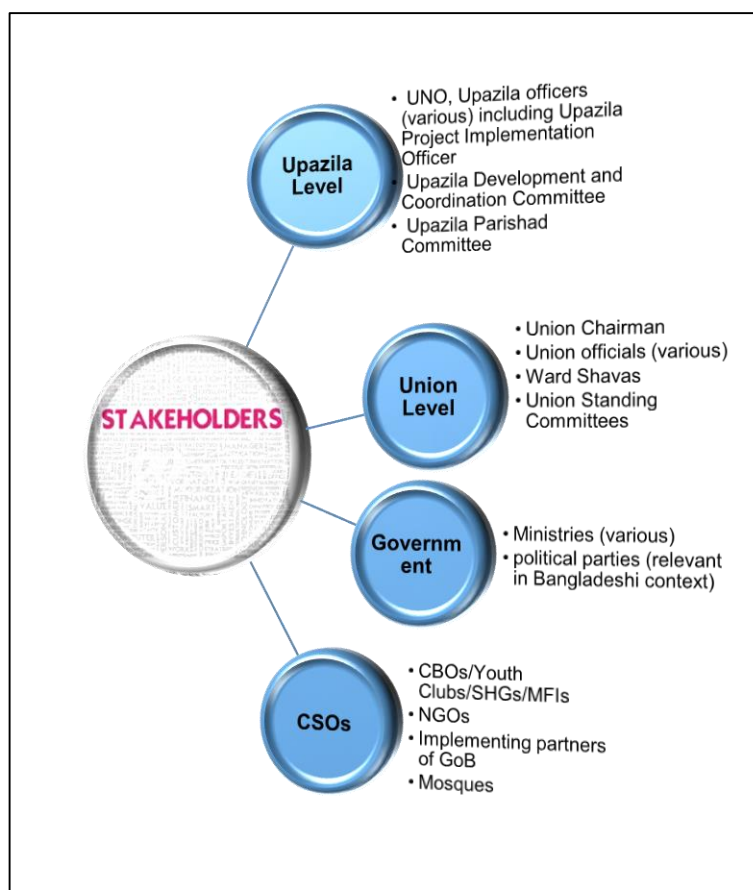
The National Social Security Strategy notes that a total of **145 programmes are administered by some 23 Ministries/Divisions** and that **seven Ministries** (Ministry of Disaster Management & Relief, Ministry of Food, Ministry Finance, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development & Cooperative, Ministry of Social Welfare and Ministry of Primary and Mass Education) **administer more than 75 percent of the total funding for social security**. The implementation of SSNPs involves a top-down structure with the **ministries involved in central planning and fund disbursement**, while **Upazilas and unions are in charge of implementation**.

Beneficiary selection and implementation

UpazilaParishads (UPZ) dominate the process of implementation, and are involved in tasks such as **finalisation of beneficiary lists, supervision of field implementation, monitoring of schemes, food management**, etc. Following communication from the nodal ministry regarding allocation for each scheme to upazilas, the Upazila administration - communicates with the Union Parishads through an official letter and solicits a list of beneficiaries from the Union Parishad.

Upon receipt of this letter, **the Union Parishad**, through its **Beneficiary Selection Committee**, prepares a list based on selection guidelines/manual received by the Upazilas (these eligibility guidelines are discussed above). The Union Parishads (UP) are **responsible for field implementation, including door-to-door services when required, transportation of rations, preparation of initial beneficiary lists and maintenance of updated lists, etc.** The Union Parishads are the **key stakeholders that EVPRA must work with and influence at the local level**.

The fine-points of the **beneficiary selection structure** might be somewhat different from one upazila to the other, as upazilas are known to customise processes as per need. Largely the processes include lottery system for candidates preliminarily shortlisted by Union Parishads; meticulous short listing of list generated through first round of selection through vetting of particulars (land holding, family details, income details, age, etc.) by the beneficiary selection committees / Ward Committees; and Chairmen-led selection (and approval) of probable beneficiaries in Unions following short listing by the selection committee.



The UPZ - Upazila administration receives lists of beneficiaries from all Unions which is further reviewed by Upazilas. A final list is made by the Upazila administration for each scheme. **The Upazila authorities and its representatives also visit pre-announced gatherings of potential beneficiaries at public places.** Here particulars which form the basis of gauging eligibility such as amount of assets owned, age, profession, household details etc. are collected for investigation to be carried out in the Union Parishad offices.

Distribution of allowances/benefits, management of all logistics involved in the task (arranging transportation, weighing grains, etc.) and maintenance of rosters/lists of benefits distributed/pending are carried out by field personnel from the Union Parishad under supervision of the Chairman, secretaries and members. Some cash transfers are made directly into beneficiary bank accounts.

The following table provides the detailed processes that implementation of each of the nine SSNPs entails. It is worth noting here that beneficiary selection committees are mostly composed of the chairmen, and members including domain-specific officers (e.g. social welfare officer) – at the respective levels, i.e. Union and Upazila, along with nominated members of MPs in some cases.

Table 5 Implementation structure and duties of officials

SSNP	Nodal ministry	Implementation
FFW	Department of Disaster Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food grains / cash allocated by Ministry to upazilas on the basis of population Executed by Upazila Parishad under the supervision of District Relief and Rehabilitation Officer (an Upazila official) through District Steering Committee Upazila further allocates grains/cash to Unions Beneficiary list is prepared by Unions and finalised by Upazilas Upazilas implement scheme as per circular, through Union Chairman
PSEP	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Management Committee will prepare initial list of beneficiaries/pupils under supervision of Union Parishads. List is reviewed and approved by the Upazila Primary Education Officer (UPEO) and countersigned by the UpazilaNirbahi Officer (UNO). PESP implementation, record-keeping and monitoring will be carried out at the upazila level by the Upazila Primary Education Officer (UPEO) and Assistant Upazila Primary Education Officers (AUPEOs) PESP monitoring officers, assigned to District Primary Education Offices (DPEOs), will maintain quality control and oversight of upazila PESP operations. District DPEOs prepare progress reports for central Project Implementation Management Unit (PIMU) in Dhaka
FSSAP	Ministry of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secondary Education Stipend Project is also a stipend programme, only gender-specific. The implementation follows the same procedure as PSEP
OAA	Ministry of Social Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Candidates have to apply to Upazila Social Services officer in a prescribed form, helped by the SSO and the field personnel. A ward committee (at Union level) and upazila Committee consisting of two representatives of the local MP and in concerned cases one representative of Upazila Chairman, selects the old-age allowance recipients in accordance with the implementation manual of the old-age allowance. Committee submits the list to the upazila committee for final approval. Approved beneficiaries receive allowances through UP and the Social Welfare Officer monitors the implementation.

AWDD	Ministry of Social Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upazila Committee and Ward Committees implement scheme, through UP support on the ground – same process as OAA
VGD	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Union Committee selects fifty women headed households for a two year cycle every year, a list of which is sent to Upazila/Thana Committee UPZ headed by Upazila Executive Officer through the Upazila/Thana Women Affair Officer reviews and finalized list and issues the VGD cards for accessing entitlements. Distribution is in the domain of Union Parishads while Upazila Women and Children Welfare Affair Officer is responsible for monitoring, including food management.
VGF	Ministry of Social Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VGF is a VGD like scheme, except it is an emergency relief programme and available to both genders. The implementation process is same as VGD, in line with eligibility. Social welfare officer monitors scheme.
AFID	Ministry of Social Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Union Parishad prepares initial list of disabled households in consultation with Social Welfare Officer. The committee, comprised of Chairmen, SWO and other members, selects beneficiaries in respective Unions. Upazila Parishad, led by UNO, reviews and finalizes list of beneficiaries. Allowances distribution is done by UP through banking channels and monitoring is done by the Social Welfare Officer.
MAPLM	Ministry of Social Welfare / MoWCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per programme guideline, the Union Committee prepares a list of potential beneficiaries based on age, marital status, number of children, household income and possession of assets. Upazila Family Planning Officer or Upazila Health Officer issues certificates to confirm pregnancy. After being selected by the union committee, upazila committee reviews and finalizes selection. The upazila committee monitors implementation of the programme. The National Steering Committee, if required, can select specific NGOs to assist the implementation process in certain areas.

2.6.5 Challenges and Issues in SSNP Delivery

As outlined in the summary above, the performance of SSNPs in Bangladesh is mixed. **Although the budgets for SSNPs have been growing, their reach is still limited.** Only 35% of the poor received any form of social protection benefit and 18% of those who did were non-poor in 2010, the NSSS, 2015 states. **Targeting also paves the way for exclusion/inclusion errors.** Experts also point toward **lacklustre and corruption-ridden implementation at the ground level**, some of which is discussed in further detail in this section below. Some of the components of schemes have overlapping mandates thus making it important that beneficiaries are screened for not using both schemes. For instance, while preparing list of Old Age Allowances beneficiaries, existing Vulnerable Group Development beneficiaries need to be filtered out. This means, those who are recipients of VGD allowances are not considered for OAA. Thus, most people would generally not be able to avail more than one SSNP.

However, **at the heart of faulty delivery and mal-governance of SSNPs lie corruption.** Under-capacitated or non-committal local government institutions, rent-seeking middlemen, **politicisation of SSNPs**, and ensuing governance failures hinder the desired benefits from reaching the real target segment²⁴.

²⁴Rashid (2014), 'Safety nets do work', Dhaka Tribune. <http://www.dhakatribune.com/op-ed/2014/may/29/safety-nets-do-work>

Extant challenges include **lack of coordination between departments and officers**, poor programme management, **mis-targeting of beneficiaries** (exclusion and inclusion errors), **leakages and corruption**, **lack of up-to-date financial management systems** and **inadequate monitoring and supervision**. Also, entitlements of disadvantaged groups often remain on paper due to lack of access and corruption-laden implementation.

A Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) report²⁵ submitted to the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs found that:

- i. **The formation of selection committees are often politically biased resulting in mis-targeting of beneficiaries.** Selection committees have to face tremendous political pressure in preparing the list of potential beneficiaries
- ii. There have been complaints of **bribery in the process of selection** of VGD beneficiaries. People sometimes also had to pay money for being included in the beneficiary list. To manage this money for bribing, frequently they had to take loan from various sources. However, not everyone has been successful in getting a VGD card even after paying money.
- iii. The extent of bribing varies by regions.

Findings of the ‘**Survey on Social Safety Nets Programmes (SSNP) in Bangladesh**’ conducted under Household Income & Expenditure Survey Project of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics provide insights into implementation problems with respect to SSNPs²⁶. It concluded that although the SSNP coverage has, by and large, increased both in terms of areas and number of households, the **coverage seems to be very low as compared to the total eligible target group households**. WV’s consultations are also in line with this finding. For example, according to the WV’s consultation prior to proposal development, **the budget allocation for social services from central government can only cover 30%-40% households in need in an Upazila, so even if these were well implemented there would be a shortfall**²⁷

The [survey](#) also found that instances of bribery for SSNPs was relatively greater for VGD and VGF and AWDD while reported lobbying through friends and relatives was highest for VGD and OAA. Over 50% of the reported bribery cases relate to Upazila officials and 39% to others. **In the monga-affected²⁸ Northern region of Bangladesh, people complained of receiving lesser benefits in the SSNP delivery process.** They complained that the UP-led beneficiary selection process is overtly flawed, **because the selectors often resort to nepotism, favouritism and allocation of cards on partisan grounds, depending on which party is in power in the given Upazila/Union.** Some of the specific challenges SSNP delivery on the ground is faced with are summarised below:

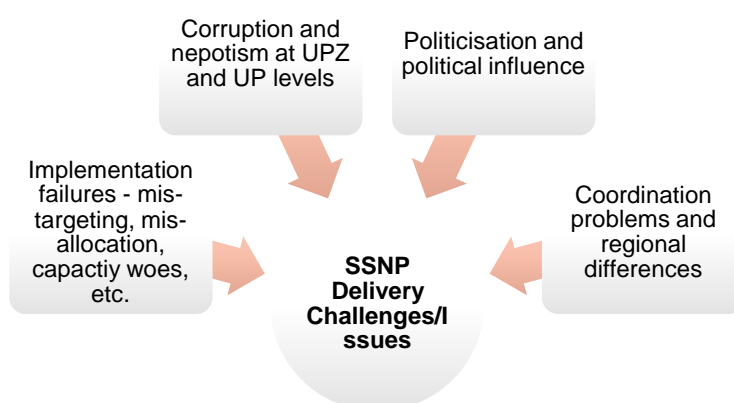
²⁵ ‘Impact Evaluation of Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) Programme in Bangladesh’, BIDS (2012). http://www.bids.org.bd/files/VGD_final_report-19052012.pdf

²⁶ Survey on Social Safety Nets Programmes (SSNP) in Bangladesh conducted under Household Income & Expenditure Survey Project of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics. <http://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/RessourceDownload.action?ressource.ressourceId=20081>

²⁷ World Vision’s EVPRA Concept Note, Page 9

²⁸ Monga refers to seasonal food insecurity. This occurs mainly in the lean season, i.e. between transplantation and harvesting. For more information: https://bangladesh.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Bilder/B_Globales_Lernen/B3.2_Oeffentlichkeitsarbeit/Mediathek/Studien/S_Zug_Article_Monga.pdf

Exhibit 2: Challenges in SSNP delivery



Recent data show that about 70% of the poor are still outside the safety net (HIES, 2010). **Bangladesh does not have a robust identification method for targeting of beneficiaries for SSNPs.** A mix of different methods for identifying potential beneficiaries is adopted. The identification process is mired with rampant corruption, discrimination and favouritism²⁹. The inclusion and exclusion problems, in effect, are not so much errors, as deliberate wrong-doings. **Local political elite (party cadre), influential individuals and even NGOs are alleged to be involved in tweaking and manipulating the beneficiary selection process**³⁰. **For most of the SSNP schemes, the beneficiary list is drawn out by the Upazila Parishad, with little or no community involvement, thus leaving the prospect of nepotism wide open.** Although there is no outright mention in GoB policy documents requiring or promoting involvement of communities, importantly the involvement of NGOs in identification/selection of beneficiaries is now a stated goal now under NSSS, 2015.

Rampant (but petty) corruption is at the crux of SSNP's multiple challenges. The local patrons who have hold on public resources and processes are also reported to sell beneficiary cards to those who are not even targeted beneficiaries³¹. For example in 2011 an UP Chairman was sued for selling VGF/VGD rice³²

Role of CSOs: The NSSS, the latest comprehensive policy and vision statement specifically on social security states that **Implementing Ministries/Divisions will work closely with NGOs in the delivery of programmes.** While it reiterates the pivotal role of local government in identifying potential beneficiaries, resolving disputes and helping conduct M&E exercises, **the role of NGOs as a partner has been espoused.**

However, **the document lacks specific details with only one paragraph in the 122 page document devoted to involvement of CSOs.** The GoB policy states that the government will “where necessary” initiate and deepen the partnership with NGOs in the area of delivering SSNPs. Specific areas where NGOs participation is mooted include

- a) Piloting of innovative ideas for possible scaling up;
- b) Helping out in identification of potential beneficiaries, especially in remote areas or those belonging to the marginalised or vulnerable social groups; and
- c) Assist in redressing grievances and disputes relating to implementation of programmes.

While there is no outright policy statement regarding involvement of civil society/non-state actors in SSNP delivery, a comprehensive UNDP study³³ on SSNPs does reveal that among the implementation actors are government agencies, local government bodies and NGOs. However, the bulk of the safety net programmes are

²⁹ Ahmed and Islam (2011), ‘People's perception on safety net programmes: a qualitative analysis of social protection in Bangladesh’

³⁰ Ibid

³¹ Ibid

³² ‘UP chairman sued for selling VGF, VGD rice’ The Daily Star, July 2015 <http://www.thedailystar.net/country/chairman-sued-selling-vgf-vgd-rice-117106>

³³ <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/bangladesh/docs/Publications/Social%20Safety%20Net%20Volume-2%20qxd.pdf>

implemented through government channels. **The supportive role of the NGOs is tested for in this study through qualitative consultations with CSOs and local governments.** It is also noted that some SSNPs, like VGD-UP and Char Livelihoods Programme, for example are more prone to delivery in partnership with NGOs. This may be because these are externally funded programmes. The actual extent of inclusion of civil society and their capacity in partnering the government in causing developmental outcomes is explored in the baseline study.

Grievance re-dress:

While the NSSS seeks to involve CSOs in resolving disputes and addressing grievance, **the grievance redress mechanisms to be followed are not spelt out specifically for SSNPs in any policy document available publicly.** The Cabinet Division of the Bangladesh Secretariat in its report on grievance redress in ministries encourage the “establishment of an effective internal system of preventing corruption and other irregularities as well as broadening the base of model-service delivery to the targeted people; ensuring optimum use of resources”. In addition, it states that the present available measures include “mediation and conciliation to ensure early resolution of grievances”³⁴.

The National Strategy for Social Security, 2015 document of the GoB, states that **“The Ministry of Social Welfare in close consultation with Statistics and Information Division will develop a nationwide complaints and grievance redress mechanism. The exercise will run in parallel with the task on selection processes and its recommendations will be implemented starting in 2016.”**The BBS-led SSNP survey under the aegis of HIES(cited earlier) reveals that in the context of nepotism, corruption, leakage and irregular/delayed disbursement in SSNP delivery which lead to obvious grievances, “anomalies and complaints remains unresolved in most of the cases in the absence of proper monitoring and follow-up by any appropriate authority”³⁵

The actual grievance redress mechanisms followed have been explored in this study through qualitative consultations with Union and Upazila governments.

It is in the context outlined in this chapter that the Establishing Vulnerable Peoples Access to Social Safety Net Programmes (EVPRA) intervention will operate for approximately the next three and half to four years. The next section outlines in brief the EVPRA logical framework, followed by the findings of the baseline survey in order to establish baseline values for, and recommendations regarding the programme approach and indicators set out in the log-frame.

³⁴Existing methods of grievance redressal as found in the qualitative survey have been highlighted in the Baseline Findings chapter. They point to mediation and dialogue between aggrieved and alleged parties in some cases, and fines/suspensions of officials in other.

³⁵Survey on Social Safety Nets Programmes (SSNP) in Bangladesh conducted under Household Income & Expenditure Survey Project of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics. <http://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/RessourceDownload.action?ressource.ressourceId=20081>

3. THE EVPRA LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The objective of the intervention, as the name suggests, is to establish the rights and access of vulnerable peoples to SSNPs, by way of strengthening CSOs and making them sustainable while empowering communities and promoting the transparency and accountability of existing government.

The EVPRA logical framework (see Annex) includes a set of targets for which objectively verifiable indicators have been set out in the log-frame and Indicator Tracking Table (ITT). The baseline study has aimed to capture the state of SSNP delivery from various angles with these indicators in mind. The post intervention evaluations, including monitoring, assessments and impact evaluation studies will seek to capture changes in these specific indicators over time.

Given the objectives of the intervention, the main baseline indicators in the log-frame are in the domain of ‘*awareness* of’, ‘*access* to’ and ‘*delivery*’ of SSNPs. The intervention logic focuses on empowering local CSOs, which means the other important indicators are to do with the ‘*capacities*’ and ‘*efficiency*’ of CSOs operating in the project upazilas to partner the government in delivery of SSNPs. Baseline data on these indicators have been captured from the household survey conducted on a total sample of 953 households, and supplementary information has been derived from qualitative interviews with civil society and the government.

The intervention logical also focuses on empowering Local Authorities (LAs) for better delivery of SSNPs, and the same will be achieved through policy, system, structure, practice or programmatic changes to improve access to SSNPs.

Likewise, the intervention logic outlines that communities will be empowered through CSOs so that by the end of the intervention they are not only aware of their entitlements under SSNPs and human rights but are also able to enjoy and voice their rights as citizens of the country.

The following baseline reporting and analysis will tend to focus mainly on these indicators and will facilitate a critical review of the appropriateness of target figures in the logframe and the development of specific benchmarks for key project indicators in the ITT. The data has been geographically disaggregated at the upazila level to provide better micro-insights. The findings have also been presented mainly through a disaggregation between beneficiary and non-beneficiary households³⁶. In order for potential gendered outcomes, if any, to emerge, relevant data has also been disaggregated gender-wise, i.e. male v. female. The final sampled units are provided in the Methodology section.

³⁶The definitions of ‘Beneficiary’ and ‘non-beneficiary’ households in this study are as follows:

Beneficiary household: A household that self-reports that they are currently *availing* one or more SSNP/s

Non-beneficiary household: A household that self-reports that they are not currently *availing* one or more SSNP/s

4. STUDY METHODOLOGY

The baseline study was carried out in a systematic manner and the study was designed keeping in mind project objectives. The following paragraphs summarise the activities that were carried out under this study.

PHASE I:

Initial Discussions with World Vision

During kick-off, initial discussions were carried out with select World Vision staff and core team members to develop a common understanding of the methodology, timelines, reporting and briefing processes etc. The EVPRA concept note, proposal and other project related documents were shared and extensive secondary research were also carried out. World Vision has provided support and facilitation as and when required for the successful completion of the study.

Desk Review

Exhaustive and detailed secondary research was undertaken in order to obtain information and insights. Some of the policy and project documents and online resources that were referred to are listed below:

- EVPRA Concept Note
- EVPRA Narrative Proposal
- EVPRA final Log Frame
- District Reports (Census, BBS)
- Bangladesh Population Census of 2011 / HIES, 2010
- NGO Affairs Bureau, GoB (2016)
- Bangladesh Seventh Five Year Plan FY 2016 to FY 2020 (Final Draft – 13 Oct. 2015)
- The State of Social Safety Nets 2015, World Bank
- National Social Security Strategy of Bangladesh, 2015
- Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey, 2014

Initial Screening of Stakeholders

Secondary research and literature review including a review of the SSNP implementation structure were undertaken to select stakeholders. They are as follows:

Table 6 Summary of stakeholders for study

Summary of Primary Stakeholders	Summary of Departmental stakeholders	Community stakeholders (Union, Upazila or state level)
Beneficiaries / Citizens / Households (Indigenous and other vulnerable groups, including; unemployed, widows, women, orphans, SSNP Beneficiary & Non Beneficiaries, the disabled, transitory poor, old aged people, the ultra-poor, pregnant women etc.)	Upazila/sub-district functionaries (UpazilaNirbahi Officer, Upazila Project Implementation Officer, Upazila Women's Affairs Officer, Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer, etc.) District administration (District Commissioner & other officials Union Council administration (Chairman and other members of Union) Donor agencies	CBOs, NGOs, CSO, Community leaders, Women's group, Mouzas ³⁷

³⁷ The concept of Mouza is now weakened, and village is the smallest unit of administration. But Mouzas also refer to a revenue unit. A mouza may include one or more villages, but mostly align with one village. E.g. in Dinajpur there are 1926 mouzas and 2131 villages.

PHASE II: Research Methodology, Protocol and Tool Development

Approach and Methodology

To probe the weak dynamic between the supply and demand side actors in SSNP delivery, a mixed method of study was adopted which involved both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Their use and mix was dependent on the type of stakeholder and the nature of information sought. Basic highlights of our approach considered for the study are as follows:

- Understanding of the requirements and context for the study and deliverables;
- Coordination with important stakeholders;
- Use of technology;
- Use of mixed methods for the primary research;
- Monitoring of work and quality control at all levels and all times.

Use of Technology

Our experience in other large scale surveys suggests that tracking of households is important. Further data collection in surveys offers challenge as there are possible errors during collection and post that in the data entry process. Systematic planning with number of checks and back checks at supervisors and field manager level was adopted to minimise the error. A robust CPro software was developed for data entry which minimised error. SPSS was used for data analysis.

Mix of Qualitative and Quantitative Methods

Qualitative and quantitative methods, both were used for baseline study. This study not only reported the status quo report due to the project or any of its interventions; but also looked at the direction of change and related reasons. In normal parlance robust evaluations tend to focus on data and the change in indicators take dominance. While quantitative evaluation gives the average effect on treatment and control and calculates the change, it may not give the spread of the effect or distribution of the change. The status of SSNP varied across households depending upon their socio-economic status. Therefore, it was important to capture socio cultural norms, enterprising environment and decision making pattern which had impact on the project outcome. Qualitative methods – FGDs / consultations / in-depth interviews was used to explain the trend or support the difference in numbers across various factors.

The study stored and documented the existing conditions along with recording but also looked at the direction of change and related reasons thereof. While quantitative evaluation provided average data on extent of social, economic, political and cultural empowerment, awareness levels, and extent of satisfaction with government service delivery, the qualitative attributes, the dynamics of cause and effect and also the distribution of change if any gauged through qualitative enquiry. Variations among households, etc., behavioural aspects, attitudinal factors, etc. which could not captured within the predefined quantitative structures were understood and analysed through qualitative research methods.

Justification for methodology

For the survey a sample which can be easy to manage was necessary while ensuring best possible representation of the total population. For the study, the population was divided in to three sub sets, District, Sub districts/Upazila and Unions. According to statistical theory, a sample is most likely to be representative if it is selected randomly, without bias in the choice of sample units by researcher. In this case household which is the smallest sampling unit was selected randomly for avoiding the bias. For that rigorous statistical technique requires for framing the survey to define random sample, based on a known, non- zero, probability of each unit which is being considered for the survey.

Therefore, a sample selected on a non-random basis, where the units of the sample are chosen according to pre-established criteria, is one of the techniques which is frequently used to cope with these constraints. In this case,

one had to seek to obtain a sample as representative as possible of the full range of heterogeneity observed within the EVPRA project intervention area. Stratified sampling is the best suitable technique to maximize precision whilst minimizing effort in the acquisition of information. The stratification allowed existing knowledge about the heterogeneity of the project intervention population to be taken into account, in particular the geographical distribution and other attribute factors.

Therefore population of the Sub districts was considered to select the sub district and unions while HHs were selected randomly fixing adequate percentages from each of the indigenous and other vulnerable groups which made the sample best representative and precision of error could be minimised due to unbiased of researcher.

Some limitations to follow this approach thoroughly were encountered, which are identified later.

Selection of Districts & Upazilas (Sub Districts)

The two focus districts of the EVPRA project in Northern Bangladesh were the focus for this study, namely Joypurhat and Dinajpur. Within these districts, five sub-districts or "Upazilas", two in Joypurhat and three in Dinajpur, were the focus of this EVPRA baseline.

Selection of Unions:

Two Unions (smallest unit of governance in Bangladesh) from each of these sub-districts were selected for the study. The Unions with the highest and lowest population in each sub-district were selected.

Table 7 List of Selected District, Upazila & Union

District	Sub-district/Upazila	Union	No. of Households
Joypurhat	JoypurhatSadar	Bhadra	9639
		ChakBarkat	4636
	Panchbibi	Aolai	8004
		Bagjana	5795
Dinajpur	Fulbari	Khayerbari	2745
		Shibnagar	7793
	DinajpurSadar	Auliapur	11225
		Kamlapur	4961
	Birampur	Jotbani	6287
		PaliPrayagpur	2331

These ten Unions were selected from within the five Upazilas and they are largely composed of rural areas. Other Union level secondary data on potential indicators of vulnerability (literacy rate, remoteness, per capita incomes, etc.) were not freely available in the public domain. Thus, the finalisation of Union sample was based on population data alone.

Selection of Households

From each of the unions households were selected randomly. A total of 953 Households were interviewed for this study. Main respondent of household was head of the household, whereas information related to other vulnerable member of family such as unemployed, and women, widow, disabled, specific information was asked from particular member in consultation with head of the household. A stratified approach, with pre-determined quotas could not be applied due to limitations highlighted later.

Statistical Rationale of Selection of Sample:

Statistical significance while calculating the samples which was considered with great importance.

Margin of Error: Margin of error is the level of precision which we required. This is the range in which the true proportion is estimated and expressed in percentage points (e.g., $\pm 1.5-2\%$). A lower margin of error may give larger sample size but gives much accuracy.

Confidence Interval: The confidence level specifies the amount of uncertainty associated with our estimate. This is the chance that the margin of error contain the true proportion.

Sample Proportion: It was determined by using the results from a previous similar survey present in secondary domain, for this study $N/n = 1.5\%$ was considered. For selection of representative sample for respondent, Normal distribution was adopted i.e. population distributed normally i.e. 50%. At 1.5-2% margin of error, 95% confidence level calculation of the total sample for this study was carried out, which is best practice for similar studies.

Table 8 Segregated list of Samples for HH

Upazila	Sample union	Unions	Sample Households	Beneficiary	Non - Beneficiary
JoypurhatSadar	2	Bhadsa	145	58	87
		ChakBarkat	70	28	42
Panchbibi	2	Aolai	120	48	72
		Bagjana	87	35	52
Fulbari	2	Khayerbari	41	16	25
		Shibnagar	117	47	70
Birampur	2	Jotbani	168	67	101
		PaliPrayagpur	74	30	44
DinajpurSadar	2	Auliapur	94	38	56
		Kamlapur	35	14	21
Total	10		951	380	571

The beneficiary and non-beneficiary disaggregation proposed were not followed due to lack of updated data on list of beneficiaries/non-beneficiaries during the time of the study, but the final results (which disaggregate beneficiary and non-beneficiary through self-reporting) indicate that the disaggregation is quite close to the pre-survey sampling proposed.

Departmental Stakeholders and Community Stakeholders

Judgmental sampling³⁸ was adopted for selecting the samples for qualitative research and from each of the categories only those respondents were considered who could provide valuable information and insights given their project stakes. Accordingly, from each of category an adequate number of respondents at different levels of administration (Federal Ministries, District, and Union governments), civil society and community stakeholders were considered for stakeholder consultations and for them FGD and In depth Interview were carried out. Total 1025 respondents were interviewed and consulted which included Household, departmental community and beneficiary which were.

³⁸Judgmental sampling is a type of purposive sampling and non-probability sampling where sampling defined as per judgment of researcher and as per requirement and objective of the study are considered to extract desired information. In this study for selection of the departmental stakeholders, community stakeholders and other implementing partners, this method was used. As most of the questions and information sought were qualitative in nature, that's why it was important to use this methods so that most important and critical information could be collected from the respondent.

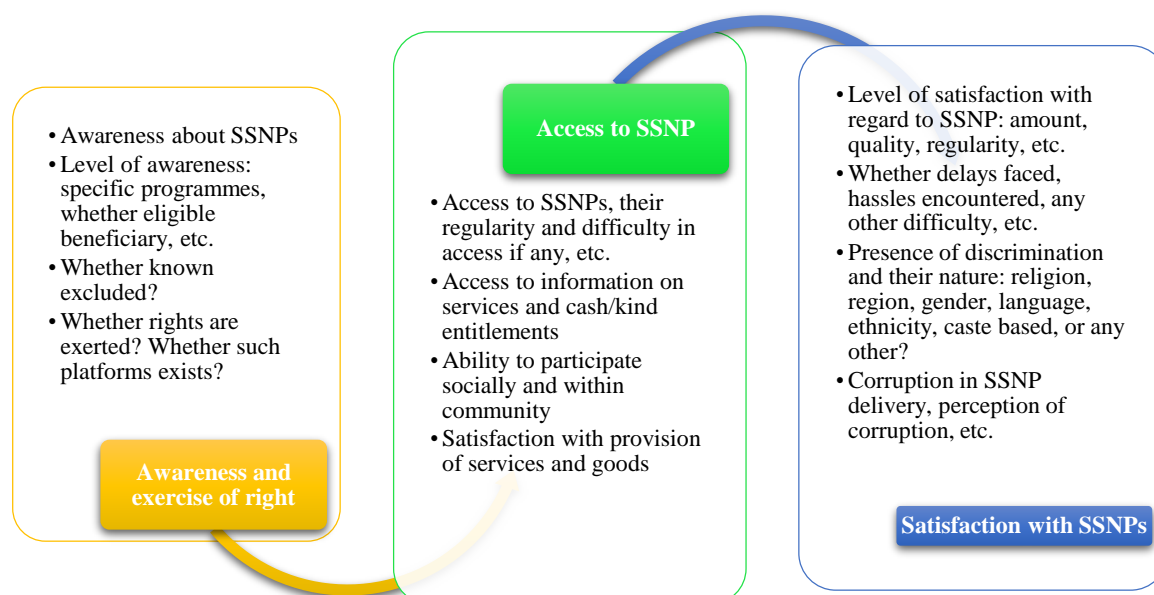
Table 9 Sample List

	Qualitative Sample			Quantitative sample	
	Stakeholder	Level	Total Units	Upazila	No. of households
Government	Members of Parliament	National	2	Birampur	248
	Upazila Chairmen & Officials	Upazila	35		
	Union Chairmen & Officials	Union	10	DinajpurSadar	122
	Officials in District administration	District	8		
Civil Society	USAID	Multilateral / Global	2	Fulbariya	162
	Plan Bangladesh			JoypurhatSadar	211
	Care Bangladesh				
	PM-EVPRA / PUMDO / Pollisree (Implementing agencies)	Regional	4	Panchbibi	210
	CSOs/CBOs	Union / Community	4		
	NGOs	Union	4		
	NGOs / Indigenous groups	National	2		
	Total		72		953

Baseline Indicators:

Every logframe indicator was reviewed and baselined. Following below is a diagrammatic representation of the Indicators which was considered for the EVPRA baseline study.

Households:

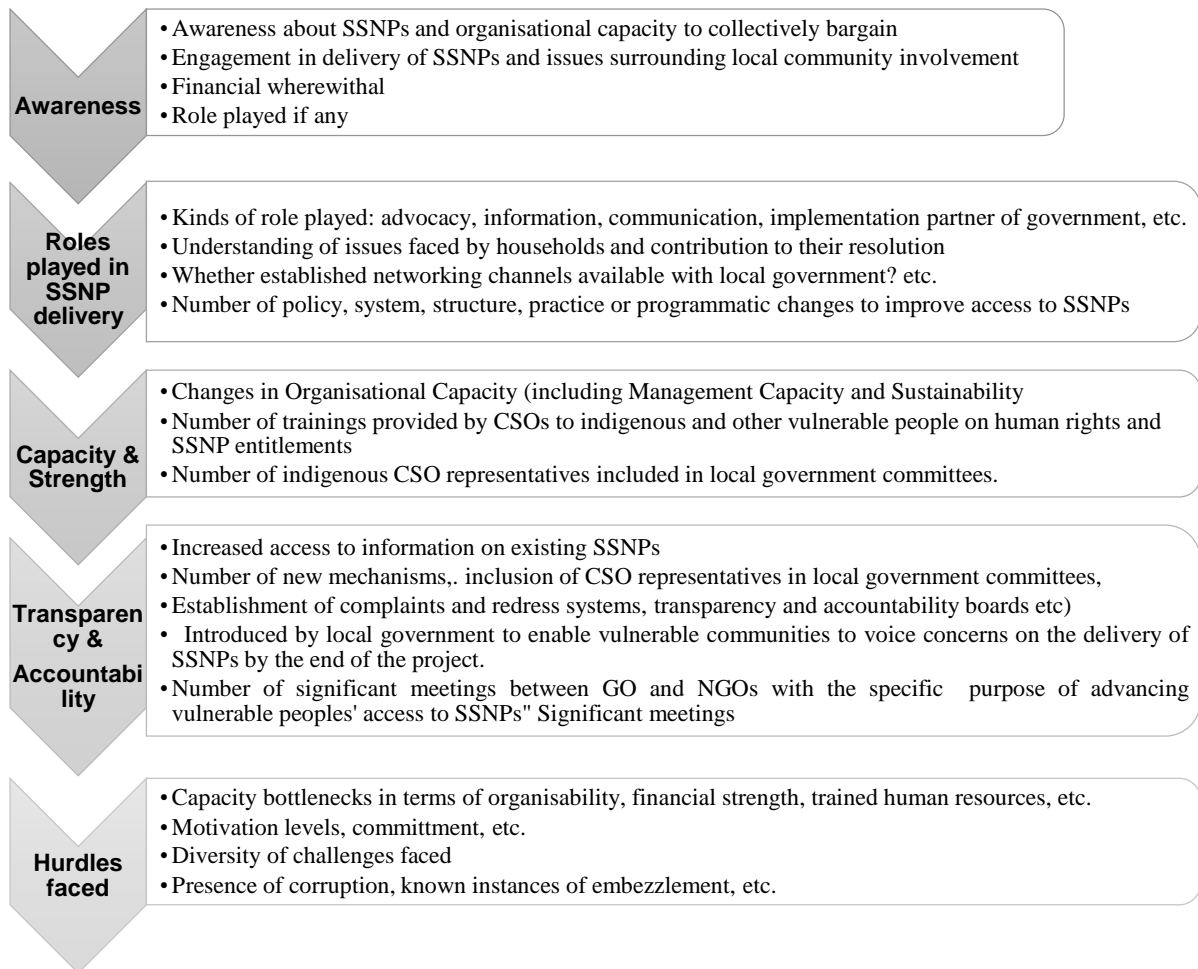


Other Indicators:

- Vulnerable peoples' satisfaction regarding the delivery of SSNPs (disaggregated)
- Vulnerable peoples' access to information on existing SSNPs (disaggregated)
- Transparency and accountability of existing government SSNPs
- Local government mechanisms enabling vulnerable communities to voice concerns on the delivery of SSNPs

- Number of vulnerable people with access to SSNPs from the government.
- Proportion of eligible people in the target communities with satisfactory access to SSNP information
- Number of eligible applications to SSNPs
- Vulnerable demanding rights and entitlements set out in SSNP policies
- Networking and collaboration between relevant government and non-government organisations (GOs and NGOs)
- Significant meetings between GO and NGOs with the specific purpose of advancing vulnerable peoples' access to SSNPs, specifically including indigenous groups and women.

Civil Society Organisations (Community stakeholders):



Other Indicators for CSO/CBO

- indigenous CSOs' organisational and management capacity
- indigenous CSOs leadership mechanisms for effective CSO governance
- Percentage of CSOs with either women, or other vulnerable people in a leadership position
- Indigenous CSOs' understanding of human rights and entitlements.
- networking and collaboration between relevant government and non-government organisations (GOs and NGOs)
- Significant meetings between Govt. arms and NGOs with the specific purpose of advancing vulnerable peoples' access to SSNPs, specifically including indigenous groups and women.
- Transparency and accountability of existing government SSNPs
- Local government mechanisms enabling vulnerable communities to voice concerns on the delivery of SSNPs

- Vulnerable peoples' satisfaction regarding the delivery of SSNPs(disaggregated)
- Vulnerable peoples' access to information on existing SSNPs (disaggregated)
- Proportion of eligible people in the target communities with satisfactory access to SSNP information
- Number of eligible applications to SSNPs
- Vulnerable demanding rights and entitlements set out in SSNP policies

Departmental Stakeholders:

- Implementation Status of SSNP
- Capacity Building and Future Scope
- Standard and SSNP current status
- Involvement of NGO and their effectiveness
- Reach to the society
- Financial and technical challenges
- Hurdles and Challenges in implementation
- Achievement and changes due to SSNP
- Transparency and Accountability

Other Factors:

- Transparency and accountability of existing government SSNPs
- local government mechanisms enabling vulnerable communities to voice concerns on the delivery of SSNPs
- The number of vulnerable people with access to SSNPs from the government.
- networking and collaboration between relevant government and non-government organisations (GOs and NGOs)
- Significant meetings between GO and NGOs with the specific purpose of advancing vulnerable peoples' access to SSNPs, specifically including indigenous groups and women.
- proportion of eligible people in the target communities with satisfactory access to SSNP information
- Number of eligible applications to SSNPs

Research tools

A set of research tools were designed for each different type of stakeholders. These are provided in Annexures. Tools used for the study are tabulated below.

Table 10 Tools used for Study for various type of stakeholders

S.N.	Stakeholder	Research Tools	Type of Tools
Quantitative Interview			
1.	Household Survey	Face to Face Interview	Semi- Structured Questionnaire
Qualitative Interview			
2.	Community stakeholders	Focus Group Discussions (FGD)	Discussion Guide and Check list along with Semi Structured Questionnaire
3.	Departmental & Other stakeholders	In Depth Interview	Key Informant Interview, Semi Structured Questionnaire

Primary Survey and Data Collection

For Primary survey, paper-based questionnaires were developed for both types of respondents i.e. quantitative and qualitative samples. The primary survey was carried out after training which included Child Protection Policies and field training. Child protection policy training was carried out by World Vision Bangladesh and Field training for researchers was carried out by the research team. Research tools were translated in to local language (i.e. Bengali, most widely used) for better understanding of researchers and respondents. Two days training session were also conducted before commencement of field work for field researchers. All members associated to the primary survey received CP, Behavioural Policy training by World Vision Bangladesh head office and Regional office and only trained members conducted Pre testing & Data collection during main survey.

Ethical and Child Protection Protocol

Two important ethical issues which were adhered to while conducting a survey were confidentiality and informed consent. The approach which was adopted while designing and implementing the study involved taking an informed consent from respondents on participating in the study by giving the information on the following: that a study would be conducted, the procedures and sections they were asked during the process, the risks and benefits reasonably to be expected, purpose of the study, anticipated uses of the information, names/telephone numbers/contact details of the study or research agency, that they had a choice to even refuse to participate in the study. Informed consent is a process of three levels of interactions: provision of information by the researcher; the potential participant understanding the information; and then making a response or decision to it. Besides, appropriate measures were taken to ensure regular quality checks to enable fool-proof data collection. The survey team undersigned the abiding the child protection protocol and undergo training specifically on Child Protection which was conducted by World Vision.

Quality Control and Sample Checks

Data checks were done on 10% of the survey's cases to ensure the data quality and accuracy at three layers i.e. At field supervisor, field coordinator and central core research team. Field Coordinator and Field supervisor had conducted the checks on field while Central team conducted through post tracking. For checking the margin of error in data sets and others variables which was considered for the study, Chi square test was performed which is the best method to check the data consistency and reliability and inter factor inconsistency. After the test, it was observed that for all data set actual margin of error is approx. 3.2%, which is less than 4% error. For statistical significance point of view, it is clearly known that if the actual margin of error is less than 5%, it is not significant.

Data Entry and Validation

All questionnaires were checked by supervisors in the field prior to leaving each Union to ensure that they had been completed fully and correctly. High level quality checks were conducted by World Vision as well on a daily basis, including checking of canvassed questionnaires. Priority was given to cross-checking and validation of data on the spot by the evaluation teams. The supervisors made random checks of schedules on the spot and cross-checked data by repeating the interview. The data collected from respondents through the survey was transferred to pre-coded schedules. This facilitated cross-checking and validation of data. The team regularly participated in interactive discussions to share their observations every evening. This exercise ensured effective cross-checking and validation of data. The client was a co-participant in ironing out issues on the field. A doubly entry of questionnaire data was done in CSPro to check and minimise errors. Data entry errors were identified and corrected systematically until no transcription/entry errors remained. After data entry, the data was cleaned to ensure logical validity. Post Tracking back-checks and physical matching was done to ensure accuracy in the data, and chi-square test at 95% confidence interval was performed to verify the accuracy of the data.

Type of Analysis used

An appropriate data analysis framework was designed to analyse the quantitative and qualitative data gathered through the field survey. The qualitative data collected through Semi structured questionnaires/FGD Guides with check lists was analysed by a team of Qualitative data analysts. After the master data sheets had been analysed, tabulation formats were created to prepare the database. The database covered a large number of tables. The descriptive tables were finalised by applying appropriate statistical techniques. The database was interpreted in terms of the objectives and evaluation framework including log frame. The report was prepared based on the analysis and interpretation of the qualitative and quantitative data. The focus was on collecting the base line data from project intervention areas and identifying gaps and weak areas in the intervention and appropriate corrective measures have been suggested. Appropriate methods were used to assess the, including univariate analysis was used for the baseline assessment to correlate the various attributes to the outcome. Statistical packages such as SPSS were used. The first round of tabulations provided simple frequency tables. More complex analysis was undertaken to determine the further analysis. The statistical analysis continued as new requirements for analysis emerged.

Presentation of Top-line Findings

The top-line findings from the field visits and data collection activities were shared with WVUK and WV Bangladesh and its partners PUMDO and Pollisree in the form of a Skype presentation.

Limitations of the Study

The study was exploratory and undertaken with limited resources. The study used a representative sample with statistical significance but this was relatively small. While the difference between beneficiary and non-beneficiary on all the evaluation indicators were found to be statistically significant (in most cases) at a confidence level of 99%, the accuracy of the actual estimate of the difference could be improved by the use of larger samples. As indicated above, the beneficiary and non-beneficiary disaggregation proposed originally in the proposal were not followed due to lack of updated data on list of beneficiaries/non-beneficiaries during the time of the study, but the final results (which disaggregate beneficiary and non-beneficiary through self-reporting) indicate that the disaggregation is quite close to the pre-survey sampling proposed.

The study assessed the current condition of EVPRA project intervention in both the districts Dinajpur and Joypurhat of various SSNP services and direct economic and non-economic impact on internal efficiency and service delivery from the perspective of beneficiary and departmental stakeholders and associated partners who are assisting in implementation of this project. It is important to describe some of the major limitations of the study.

- a.** Identification of Union: The sampling strategy was designed by taking largely rural habitations and reflects a rural bias. So, the findings cannot be generalised, also given that only two Unions were selected from each Upazila.
- b.** Selection of HH and Beneficiary. The selection of Household was on a random basis. Due to unavailability of secondary data of SSNP beneficiaries at the upazila and union level, households were selected randomly while visiting the Unions, while ensuring proportionate representation.
- c.** Segregation of HH type: Very few disabled HHs were found in the study as respondent. Thus, the conditions of disabled population was quite difficult to explore.
- d.** Respondent recall, perceptions and bias: As with all question-based surveys, the data are influenced by respondent knowledge of the availed service, the accuracy of their recall, and various biases that influence responses. Interviewer skills and approach are also important, particularly the extent of probing in questions that demand multiple responses. Questions for which responses are least likely to be accurate include those on the experience of users in the past one year.

- e. Lack of gender balanced team: The field investigation team did not have adequate female representation. Initially, the team was all-male; thereafter four female investigators were deployed for some time. Due to security concerns arising out of a volatile political environment (including electoral violence and crime) during the time of study³⁹, the field team did not have an adequately gender balanced team. It is however not suspected that responses would have suffered, because the HH questionnaire did not have gender-sensitive questions. The pre-testing, conducted by the team, also did not indicate that gender of interviewer would impact responses. The field team comprised of experienced enumerators who have years of experience conducting such studies in similar socio-cultural and demographic backgrounds.
- f. Lack of data in upazilas/unions: The consultations with Union and Upazilas indicated that there was a lack of data on specific schemes, beneficiary data, budgetary allocations, etc. at the local government level. Data was either not readily available, or not available in a consolidated manner. There might also have been resistance in terms of sharing data.

³⁹<http://bdnews24.com/bangladesh/2016/05/07/violence-during-4th-phase-union-council-election-claims-six-more-lives>
<http://bdnews24.com/bangladesh/2016/05/28/11-including-2-candidates-killed-in-violence-in-fifth-phase-union-council-elections>
<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/10-killed-in-bangladesh-poll-violence/article8389371.ece>

5. BASELINE FINDINGS

5.1 Profile of Sampled Households

Before analysing the specific findings of the baseline survey, the following section highlights in brief the demographic and socio-economic profile of the sampled households. Later, the demography will also be used to help shed light on the interpretation and analyses of findings.

Table 11 Demography of sampled households (HHs)

	Gender		Religion			Non-tribal / Tribal (indigenous minority)	
Upazila	Female	Male	Christian	Hindu	Muslim	Non-Indigenous/tribal	Tribal/Indigenous Minority
Birampur	44.4%	55.6%	15.3%	19.0%	65.7%	75.8%	24.2%
DinajpurSadar	54.9%	45.1%	8.2%	19.7%	72.1%	89.3%	10.7%
Fulbari	60.5%	39.5%	13.6%	32.7%	53.7%	76.5%	23.5%
JoypurhatSadar	54.0%	46.0%	2.8%	54.0%	43.1%	61.6%	38.4%
Panchbibi	47.1%	52.9%	18.6%	16.7%	64.8%	72.4%	27.6%
Average	52.2%	47.8%	11.7%	28.4%	59.9%	75.1%	24.9%

As Table 11 above shows, the respondents are representative of all genders, religions and also includes indigenous minority "tribal" and non-indigenous minority populations. On average, female respondents constituted 52.2% of the total sample, with the highest number of female respondents in Fulbari (60.5%). Almost three-fifths, 59.9%, of the sample were Muslim households, followed by 28.4% Hindu and 11.7% Christian households. DinajpurSadar has the highest Muslim household coverage (72.1%) and JoypurhatSadar the least (43.1%). About a quarter of all respondents in the sample are indigenous minority "tribal" people with JoypurhatSadar having the highest share and DinajpurSadar having the lowest share of indigenous minority "tribal" population.

The **educational levels** of the respondents indicate that as many as 59.5% of the respondents are illiterate with the level of illiteracy substantially lower only in Birampur. In sum, 85% of the respondents were either illiterate or educated only to the primary level. Educational attainment among the tribal/indigenous minority population is significantly lower across upazilas, with 68.4% of the respondents reporting having never gone to school as against 54.8% of the non-tribal respondents.

Overall, the high **prevalence of illiteracy** among the target populace means that the intervention will have to surmount the challenges of low cognition, i.e. poor visual perception, logical reasoning and memory strategies. Also, low levels of education and illiteracy means a lack of access to relevant written information, techniques and technical and life skills to address challenges of daily life. This means awareness programmes on SSNPs have to begin with basic concepts (e.g. rights, citizenship, social security, legal/financial understanding).

Table 12 Educational attainments in sampled HHs

Indigenous / Non-Tribal	Upazila	Educational Qualification			
		No education	Primary Level	Secondary Level	Tertiary Level
Non-tribal	Birampur	44.7%	31.4%	23.4%	.5%
Tribal/Indigenous minority		53.3%	23.3%	20.0%	3.3%
Non-tribal	Dinajpur Sadar	63.3%	22.9%	13.8%	0.0%
Tribal/Indigenous minority		76.9%	23.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Non-tribal	Fulbariya	61.3%	27.4%	10.5%	.8%

Tribal/Indigenous minority		68.4%	18.4%	13.2%	0.0%
Non-tribal	Joypurhat	51.5%	29.2%	17.7%	1.5%
Tribal/Indigenous minority		77.8%	17.3%	4.9%	0.0%
Non-tribal	Panchbibi	58.6%	26.3%	15.1%	0.0%
Tribal/Indigenous minority		69.0%	13.8%	17.2%	0.0%
Non-tribal	Total	54.8%	27.9%	16.8%	.6%
Tribal/Indigenous minority		68.4%	18.4%	12.4%	.8%

The **socio-economic profile of the respondents** has been mapped across each upazila through the presentation of mean (averages) and variances (standard deviation) to present an overall picture, as well as reveal the spread of incomes, across the sampled households. On indicators such as income, debt, etc. the high standard deviation indicates the wide range of respondents across the sample.

Table 13 Socio-economic profile of HHs

	Panchbibi		Joypurhat		Fulbari		DinajpurSadar		Birampur	
Indicator	Avg.	Std. Deviation	Avg.	Std. Deviation	Avg.	Std. Deviation	Avg.	Std. Deviation	Avg.	Std. Deviation
Occupational Income of HH	6564	3748	7348	3992	8284	4371	8080	4412	7610	4519
Remittance Income of HH	4465	2456	4205	2600	2986	3178	3795	2768	4522	3479
Cash Allowance Income of HH	538	389	900	1367	671	837	338	328	489	406
Pension income	-	-	-	-	-	-	5060	4394	-	-
Amount of HH Loan/Debt	23879	29859	19701	14710	21133	28286	23797	26791	35060	45626
Amount of HH saving	5026	4298	5404	6065	14919	56363	12487	23537	15615	79148
Expenditure on Food	3764	2043	4457	2743	5024	2396	4627	1969	4371	2214
Expenditure of Education	1234	1569	1415	1212	1099	1021	884	1278	1412	1684
Expenditure of Medical/Health Expenses	1089	1303	1059	826	976	1006	705	647	964	1081
Household Land (in Decimals)	6	4	7	6	6	4	6	4	8	7
Agricultural Land (in Decimals)	70	73	60	68	63	72	45	56	90	109

Across upazilas, the spread of income is large, with no particular upazila-wise distinctiveness. **Average income** of the sampled households is highest in Fulbari followed by DinajpurSadar, with the lowest average income in Panchbibi. Remittances⁴⁰ are a major source of income in most upazilas and its prominence is highest in Panchbibi. Cash allowances under SSNPs received comprise a meagre share of total income of households across upazilas.

On income, there is little or no divergence between beneficiary and non-beneficiary households, indicating generally low income levels. Interestingly, the **agricultural land holding** for non-beneficiaries households is more than double that of beneficiary households (87.7 decimals as against 39.0 decimals), indicating perhaps that households with large land assets, despite their apparent ability to influence/induce access to SSNPs (which we find later is prevalent phenomenon), might have chosen not to access SSNPs, or alternatively that these HHs are ineligible to receive the same due to their asset ownership, however to clarify this more investigation would be required. Importantly, on an average non-tribal HHs have agricultural land assets (80.3 decimals) 1.8 times that of tribal HHs (44.9).

Table 14 Proportion of HHs above/below averages

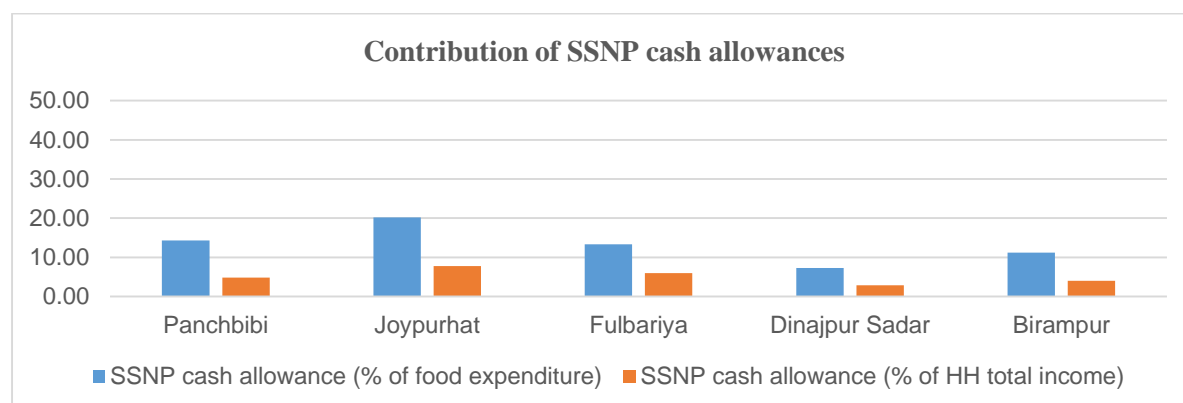
Income and Loan of HH	Averages	Percentage of HHs equal and above average
Average HH Income	7887.68 BDT per month	42.40%
Average HH Loan/Debt	28465 BDT per year	6.50%
Average HH saving	10889 BDT per year	11%

Given the importance of SSNPs to this project, it is useful to also look at the adequacy of SSNP cash allowances, and their contribution to household incomes is one potential measure of this. At the upazila level, average SSNP cash allowances form as low as between 2-8% of total household income (i.e. occupational + remittance income). They form less than 20% of households' monthly expenditure on food alone. This explains why between a third to 2/5th of HHs in almost all upazilas say they are unsatisfied with the adequacy of benefits. FGDs conducted with civil society stakeholders reveal that the situation is further aggravated by the fact that where there aren't cash allowances, but in-kind allowances for example for VGD and VGF, in several instances beneficiaries will get 8kgs instead of the stipulated 10kg, or 25kgs instead of the stipulated 30kgs of rice. Deprivation of the right quantum of subsidies might therefore also be one of the reasons why the household survey found substantial incidence of dissatisfaction over the quantity of allowances, in-kind or cash. While the situation is equally bad⁴¹ across upazilas, the inadequacy of SSNP cash allowances is most prominent in DinajpurSadar and Birampur.

⁴⁰ This refers to international remittances, i.e. flows from outside the country.

⁴¹ Interviews with local government confirms that across upazilas the *amount* of SSNP allowances (whether in-kind or cash) is lower than the demand. One of the reasons is low government funding for the schemes.

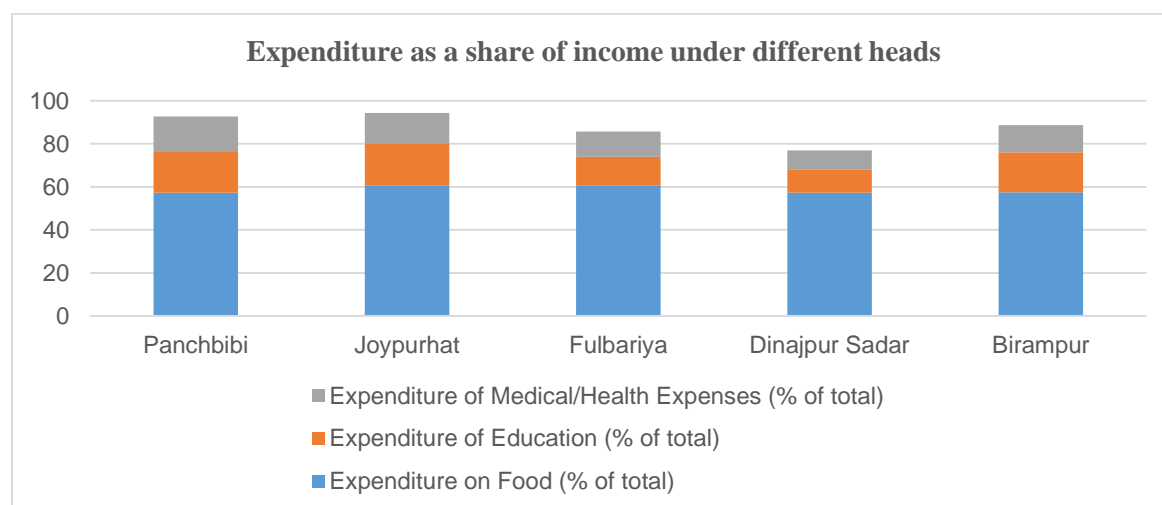
Figure 3 Contribution of SSNP allowances



Contribution of SSNP allowances

One of the important indicators is to look at expenditure under different heads as a share of total occupational income. As the figure above shows, food expenditure comprises a lion's share of total income of households across upazilas (57-60%), while as the figure below illustrates, expenditure on education and health are the next two major expenditure heads. In Dinajpur Sadar, education and health expenditures are on the lower side compared to Panchbibi and Joypurhat Sadar. This may be because while Dinajpur Sadar has 750 beds, 89 doctors and 134 nurses (in government health complexes), there were only 50, 5 and 9 in Panchbibi⁴². This indicates high private health expenditure in areas where government health services are lacking.

Figure 4 HH expenditure disaggregated



Although **land** is a natural asset that holds financial value, land is an important financial asset for rural households, in addition to being the axis of identity and belonging for people. It is sometimes their only valuable asset which is mortgaged for loans as a coping mechanism in times of need. Moreover, with farming as the mainstay of rural economies, **agricultural land holding** is an important indicator to measure. As such, landholding pattern provide insights into the income wealth status of households.

On an average, DinajpurSadar has the lowest agricultural landholding with an average agricultural landholding of 45 decimals. Birampur on the contrary has an average landholding double that of Dinajpur Sadar. Across upazilas, household land holdings don't reflect any substantial divergence, with an average of between 6 and 8

⁴² This means more than 10 times the number of medical staff (doctor/nurses) and infrastructure (beds) in Dinajpur Sadar, although the total population is a little more than double that of Panchbibi. Thus, per-capita availability of government-sponsored health facilities is much lower in Dinajpur Sadar than Panchbibi.

decimals per household. Variances in landholding within upazilas is on the lower side, compared to other indicators discussed here. However, there is wide divergence in **land-holding pattern among tribal/indigenous minority and non-tribal HHs**, and beneficiary and non-beneficiary HHs. Agriculture land-holding size is 1.8 times higher among non-tribals than tribals/indigenous minorities, while non-beneficiaries own more than two times the land held by beneficiary households. This potentially indicates that on an aggregate level, large landholding HHs are pulling out from SSNPs voluntarily⁴³. This may be either because the HHs are not in need of SSNPs or/and are ineligible to receive the same due to their asset ownership. However to establish this more investigation is required. If correct, it might be prudent to target the EVPRA intervention at landless or marginal land holding households.

Table 15 Landholding pattern - disaggregated

Beneficiary	Household land	6.2833	Indigenous/Tribal	Household land	6.2962
	Agricultural land	39.093		Agricultural land	44.931
Non-beneficiary	Household land	7.223	Non-tribal	Household land	7.050
	Agricultural land	87.782		Agricultural land	80.335

Having established income poverty, it is useful to look at the demographic details of households sampled. Taking the average for each upazila, vulnerable populations (i.e. children, lactating mothers and elderly) are mapped in the table below. There are about 3-5 pregnant women per upazila. Among all respondents, about 2/3rds of the households have two or more children meaning that facilitating access to the PSEP and FSSAP schemes, as EVPRA will seek to do, is highly relevant. The share of under-five children is highest in Birampur and DinajpurSadar and lowest in JoypurhatSadar. Out of the total sample more than 15% of the households had lactating mothers, with the highest share in DinajpurSadar. These households are important to note considering the MAPLM scheme, whereas the Old Age Allowance scheme is also relevant for well over a third of all households, and more than 40% of the households in JoypurhatSadar and Panchbibi.

Table 16 Demographic details of households – upazila wise

Upazila	Children (% of total HH)				Children under 5 (% of total HH)	Lactating mothers (% of total HH)	Elderly (% of total HH)
	1 child	2 children	3 children	>3 children			
Birampur	31.85%	32.66%	6.85%	28.64%	30.65%	16.12%	25.80%
DinajpurSadar	37.70%	23.77%	6.56%	31.97%	34.43%	23.77%	33.60%
Fulbari	32.09%	28.4%	9.26%	30.21%	29.63%	19.75%	33.34%
JoypurhatSadar	37.44%	22.27%	3.31%	36.98%	17.53%	10.90%	40.28%
Panchbibi	36.66%	21.90%	3.34%	38.10%	24.29%	12.38%	43.81%
Average	34.95%	26.13%	5.60%	33.32%	26.65%	15.73%	35.25%

** HH with children, lactating mothers and elderly as a share of total households sampled in upazila*

It is found that more than **two thirds (66.51%) of all households depend on one earning member**, but the figure varies upazila wise. While 56.2% households in Fulbari have one earning member, 77.6% households in Panchbibi have one bread-winner. In Fulbari, the trend of more than one working member is most prominent with 34.6% and 9.26% households having two and more than two earning members respectively – the highest on both counts. This is consistent with the finding that **the average income of the sampled households is highest in Fulbari**. On average, only more than a quarter of the total households have two earning members.

⁴³ Particularly because beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries are self-reported in this study.

Table 17 Members in HHs - Upazila wise

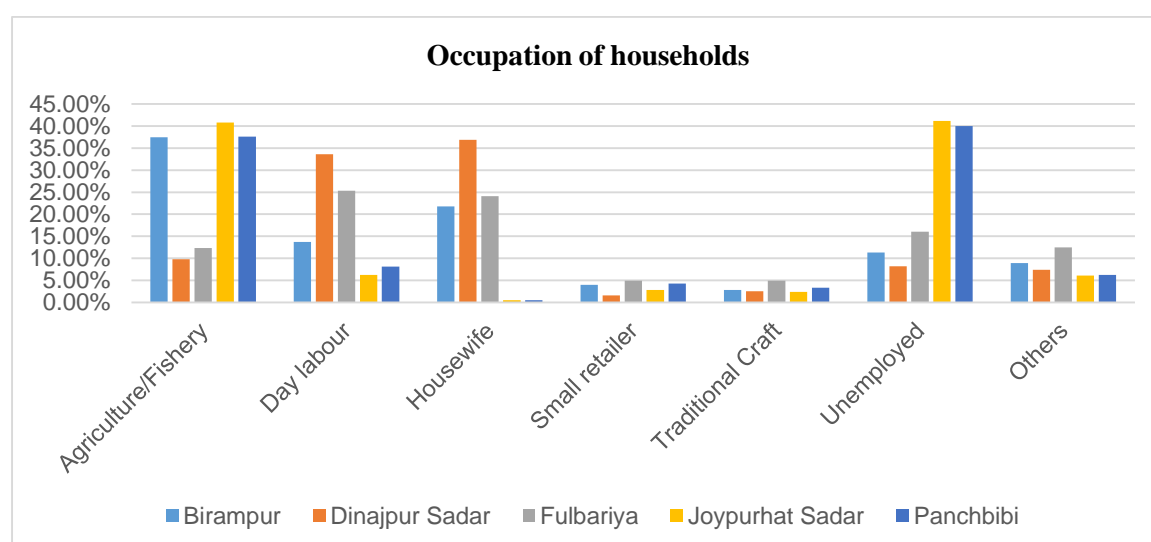
Upazila	Number of members in household						Number of earning members in household		
	1	2	3	4	5	>5	1	2	>2
Birampur	0.8%	8.5%	21.8%	36.3%	17.3%	15.32%	64.1%	28.6%	7.26%
DinajpurSadar	3.3%	9.8%	20.5%	27.0%	20.5%	18.85%	66.4%	28.7%	4.92%
Fulbari	2.5%	11.7%	11.1%	31.5%	29.6%	13.58%	56.2%	34.6%	9.26%
JoypurhatSadar	2.4%	14.2%	18.5%	34.1%	17.5%	13.27%	68.2%	25.6%	6.16%
Panchbibi	4.3%	16.7%	21.4%	25.2%	19.0%	13.33%	77.6%	19.5%	2.86%
Average	2.6%	12.2%	18.7%	30.8%	20.8%	14.87%	66.51	27.40	6.09

Most of the income generation across upazilas **courtesy agriculture/fisheries and wage labour** (agriculture and other sectors), with variations between these two occupations upazila-wise. A number of female respondents are housewives (in other words unemployed), but the classification has been kept intact due to its prevalence and cultural-religious relevance in the country. Often ‘housewives’ are partners in agriculture but their activities are often post-harvest and are limited to the premises of the household, and is not formally considered an ‘occupation’ as there is no formal wage.

Wage labour is the highest in DinajpurSadar and Fulbari, where the share of agricultural income (i.e. through cultivation) is dramatically lower than other upazilas. This is perhaps explained by the fact that agricultural landholding (i.e. land owned by sampled households) is the lowest among all upazilas, necessitating working as wage labour for income generation.

In contrast, **Joypurhat and Panchbibi** have the least wage labour and the **highest income from cultivation/agriculture**. These two upazilas also happen to have the **highest unemployment rates**, i.e. many households here are not working in other people’s fields or in any other sector as a labourer. These two upazilas also have the **highest share of indigenous minority/tribal population among all upazilas**, possibly reflecting some practice of identity-based discrimination. For evidence, further research on this is warranted.

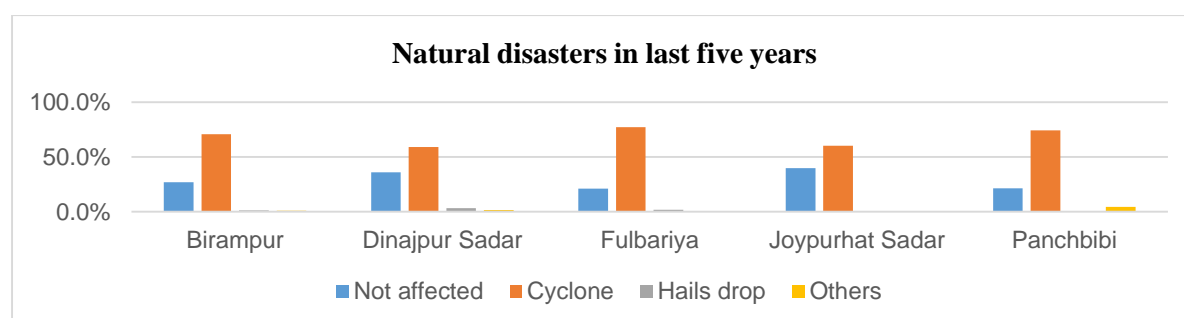
Figure 5 Occupation of sampled HHs



One of the important determinants of economic well-being in Bangladesh is the **incidence of natural disasters** and its effects, given that it is prone to natural disasters due to its geographical positioning and features. The survey found that most households are affected by cyclones. Droughts, salinity, flooding and earthquakes have marginal or no incidence in the sampled households. About 30% of the total households did not face a natural

disaster in the last five years, while more than two thirds of them faced cyclones. The share of households faced with cyclones is highest in Fulbari and Panchbibi.

Figure 6 Incidence of natural disasters



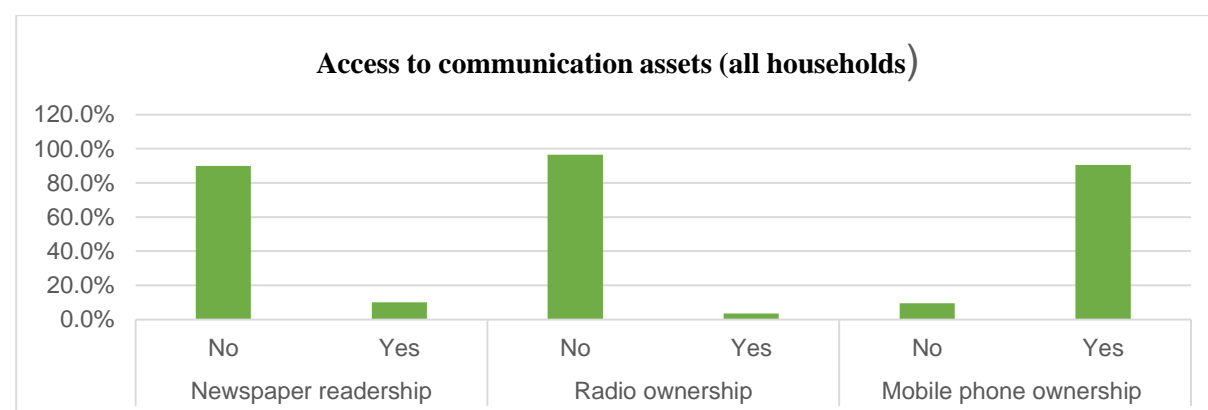
In most cases, the **impact of natural disasters** have been in the realm of **loss of property and damage of crops**. At about 17%, Birampur has the highest share of households that have experienced crop or livestock loss in the last 5 years, while Panchibi and Fulbari has the highest incidence of people reporting loss of property in the last 5 years due to natural disaster (more than 70% of the households). 4.10% of the households in Dinajpur Sadar reported the injury of an earning member of the household due to natural disaster. The coping strategies in the absence of SSNPs were not probed. However, this is indicative of even greater vulnerability, owing to the impacts of cyclones in households affected by it.

On average about **90% of the households** in all upazilas **owned a mobile phone**, while almost an equal number of them did not own a radio. **Newspaper readership is also low** with only 10% reading a newspaper out of the total households. **Birampur** has the highest readership (17.3%) which is consistent with the finding that the upazila **has the highest literacy rate** among the sampled HHs.

The high mobile phone ownership in all upazilas indicates that it can be used as a helpful tool for not just awareness generation, but extension services such as updates on SSNP calendars, changes in provisions, and any other information relevant to SSNPs that might impact access of households. Already the use of mobile phones have brought about visible changes in rural Bangladesh in the areas of women's empowerment, greater awareness/information, higher agricultural incomes (undercutting middlemen), etc⁴⁴. This has learning for the EVPRA intervention as well. Increased connectivity through mobile phones also has positive governance related impacts and improved participatory democracy in addition to being a vital tool for effective service delivery.⁴⁵

The following graph provides a macro picture, as upazila wise divergences are not significant.

Figure 7 Access to communication assets - upazila wise



⁴⁴<http://www.adb.org/results/bangladesh-mobile-revolution>

⁴⁵https://www.w3.org/2008/10/MW4D_WS/papers/hellstrom_gov.pdf

Summary of Profile of Sampled Households

- 52.2% of all sampled respondents are females, approximately 40% of all respondents belong to a religious minority and approximately 25% of all respondents are from indigenous minorities.
- More than 60% of all respondents are illiterate. 30.4% of all HHs are engaged in agriculture/fisheries and 15.3% in wage labour (day labour in agriculture and other sectors). 24.7% of all respondents are unemployed.
- HH income per month is in the range of 6500-8250 BDT (approximately €75-€95 Euros; at exchange rate as on 25/7/16: 1 €= 86.42 BDT), with the lowest incomes in Panchbibi and highest in Fulbari.
- On an average (across upazilas), agricultural land holding is about 87.7 decimals among non-tribals and 39.0 decimals among tribal/indigenous minority HHs.
- Food expenditure comprises a lion's share of total income of households across upazilas (57-60%). More than two thirds (66.51%) of all households depend on one earning member
- 29.7% of all sampled households did not face a natural disaster in the last five years, while 68.34% of them **faced cyclones**. The share of households faced with cyclones is highest in Fulbari and Panchbibi.
- 90.5% of the households in all upazilas owned a mobile phone, while almost an equal number of them did not own a radio. Newspaper readership is also low with only 10% reading a newspaper out of the total households.

5.2 Awareness of, access to and governance of SSNPs

5.2.1 Awareness

Respondents were asked if they were aware of SSNPs. A follow up question on each of the nine schemes that form a focus in the EVPRA project was also asked. Awareness is defined here as the simple knowledge that a scheme exists under which some kind of benefit is due to the citizens and that the same is operated by the local governments of Bangladesh. Importantly, this awareness does not necessarily indicate being well-informed on the details of the SSNPs. The detailed public awareness on specific aspects of SSNPs are explored in subsequent sections. Participation in delivery of SSNPs is also measured later.

As **Table 18** below indicates, the **general awareness level about some existence of SSNPs is quite high**, meaning that most respondents know about the general existence of SSNPs, possibly even the name of specific schemes, and that some kind of benefit is due to citizens by the Government under these schemes. It emerges that on average the awareness for Old Age Allowance (OAA) scheme is the most commonly known SSNP, followed by Allowances for Widowed, Deserted and Destitute (AWDD), Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) and Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF). General awareness of schemes such as Maternity Allowance for Poor Lactating Mothers (MAPLM), Secondary Education Stipend Project (SESP), Food for Work (FFW) and Primary Education Stipend Project (PESP) programme are on the lower side.

In terms of awareness levels in upazilas, **JoypurhatSadar and Birampur have relatively low awareness regarding SSNPs compared to other upazilas.**

Table 18 Awareness of SSNPs (% of total respondents) – rounded off

Upazila	SSNP Scheme									
	FFW/CFW	VGD	OAA	AWDD	VGF	MAPLM	PSEP	FSSAP	AFID	Average Awareness
Birampur	79	96	99	97	94	81	96	91	92	92
DinajpurSadar	89	99	100	98	97	80	97	92	97	94
Fulbari	89	97	100	99	95	82	99	96	99	95
JoypurhatSadar	83	87	98	96	88	77	85	72	87	86
Panchbibi	98	99	100	97	99	87	93	88	96	95
All upazilas	87	95	99	97	94	82	94	87	93	92

As abovementioned, although the awareness recorded above might reflect the most basic level of knowledge of SSNPs, this does not indicate being well-informed about SSNP delivery processes, redress mechanisms, eligibility criteria, etc. (knowledge about these is explored later).

It is also important to understand the **sources of information regarding SSNPs** for the respondents. Networked narratives and horizontal diffusion of knowledge is high with the impact of **word of mouth / neighbours** highest compared to other sources. Importantly **mass media** does not even figure as a source of information and has been clubbed under other responses – mostly accounting for **less than 1% of all responses**. As for **CSOs**, their presence and impact on information generation seems highest in JoypurhatSadar with about 21% of non-beneficiary households and more than 36% of beneficiary households indicating that NGOs/CSOs are their source of information on SSNPs. This is further illustrated in Table 19 below.

Table 19 Source of Information on SSNPs (% of respondents)

	Upazila	Union Parishad	NGOs/CSOs/CBOs	Word of mouth/Neighbours	Others
Non-beneficiary	Birampur	2.4%	19.05%	77.8%	0.79%
	DinajpurSadar	2.7%	2.67%	94.7%	0.03%
	Fulbari	.9%	7.21%	91.0%	0.90%
	JoypurhatSadar	0.6%	21.79%	76.9%	0.68%
	Panchbibi	0.0%	14.39%	83.3%	2.27%
	Average	1.3%	13.27%	84.5%	0.9%
Beneficiary	Birampur	8.2%	14.75%	76.2%	0.82%
	DinajpurSadar	0.0%	4.26%	95.7%	0.00%
	Fulbari	2.0%	3.92%	92.2%	1.96%
	JoypurhatSadar	0.0%	36.36%	63.6%	0.00%
	Panchbibi	0.0%	25.64%	74.4%	0.00%
	Average	2.0%	17.56%	80.4%	0.6%
Total	Birampur	5.2%	16.94%	77.0%	0.81%
	DinajpurSadar	1.6%	3.28%	95.1%	0.04%
	Fulbari	1.2%	6.17%	91.4%	1.23%
	JoypurhatSadar	0.5%	25.59%	73.5%	0.45%
	Panchbibi	0.0%	18.57%	80.0%	1.43%
	Average	1.0%	8.4%	84.3%	0.8%

In this study a statistical Chi Square test was conducted to check if there is any statistical significance between Gender and the Source of Information on SSNPs or not, i.e. is there any difference between how men and

women gain information on SSNPs. The tests found that there is no direct link between gender and source of Information on SSNP and so the importance of **word-of-mouth is a gender neutral phenomenon** with the share of women respondents depending on word-of-mouth almost mirroring the overall share. For further information on these tests please see the Annex.

Similarly, the same test was conducted to check if there is any statistical significance between tribal/non-tribal HH and Source of Information on SSNP or not. It was found that there is statistical significance and people from indigenous minority groups have less access to information on SSNPs, than non-indigenous people. The tests could not establish a strong correlation between particular sources of information, and as such the project should take into consideration this lack of access generally across the indigenous minority population and so should focus to create awareness among tribal population regarding easy access to information regarding SSNPs. For further information the test is outlined in the box directly below.

Statistical significance between tribal/non-tribal HH and Source of Information on SSNP

H₀ : There is strong and significant association between tribal/non-tribal HH and source of Information on SSNP.

H₁ : There is no significant association between tribal/non-tribal HH and source of Information on SSNP.

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	28.982 ^a	9	.001
Likelihood Ratio	29.132	9	.001

After conducting the Chi Square test it was found that $\chi(9) = 28.982$, $p = 0.001$, which implies that p value i.e., $0.001 \leq 0.05$, henceforth, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternate hypothesis and it can be concluded that there is higher statistical significance found between tribal/non-tribal HH and source of Information on SSNP. Which further signifies that non-tribal having more access to source of information.

Symmetric Measures ^c			
		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.174	.001
	Cramer's V	.174	.001

Observed phi value is equal to .174 and Cramer V is also 0.174. Therefore it can be concluded that though there is statistical significance, but the association between tribal/non-tribal HH and source of Information on SSNP is weak. Henceforth, seeing the strong association between these two factors and PIA should facilitate and create awareness among tribal population regarding easy access to information regarding SSNPs.

Although the basic awareness regarding the existence of SSNPs is high, as mentioned above, this does not tell us about knowledge of SSNP delivery processes, redress mechanisms, eligibility criteria, etc, and the survey found that the percentage of people actually availing the services are very low. This is true across upazilas and the **divergence on the basis of geography is not particularly notable**, although SSNP usage is the highest in Birampur and lowest in JoypurhatSadar. This is surprising since the number of people accessing information from CSOs is the highest in the JoypurhatSadar. But the upazila, which has by a large margin the highest share of respondents belonging to the minority community (Hindus: 54%), also happens to have least awareness regarding SSNPs.

5.2.2 Access

Table 20 Availing SSNPs (% of respondents) – rounded off

Upazila	Availing SSNP Scheme (% of respondents)									
	FFW/CFW	VGD	OAA	AWDD	VGF	MAPLM	PSEP	FSSAP	AFID	Average
Birampur	4	14	8	3	18	1	17	4	1	7.78
DinajpurSadar	4	2	8	9	17	1	7	2	2	5.78
Fulbari	5	4	3	6	6	1	10	4	1	4.44
JoypurhatSadar	2	3	9	2	6	0	2	2	3	3.22
Panchbibi	2	6	11	6	11	1	0	3	4	4.89
All upazilas	3	7	8	5	12	1	8	3	2	5.44

One of the **puzzling** pieces of information received is that while **37% of interviewees** responded affirmatively to the question as to whether they **access any of the SSNPs** (meaning that the beneficiary HH share is 37%), however **the grid question on specific SSNP schemes reveals much lower usage/access**.

There could be two explanations for the grid question, prima facie indicating much lower usage/access. One that the difference is accounted for by other schemes that respondents might be using, which are beyond the scope of the EVPRA project. It is worth noting that there are more than hundred SSNPs of which nine have been the focus of this study. Secondly, it could be that respondents were unable to recall schemes by names even though they might already be receiving benefits from them. This is because we found that in the rural areas, due to low awareness and literacy levels, the people surveyed were at times unable to recall schemes by name. Keeping this limitation of information in mind, it is worth understanding that in either case **the access to SSNPs is severely limited**, thus not only making the study relevant but also the EVPRA intervention pertinent.

Explaining ‘beneficiary’, ‘non-beneficiary’,

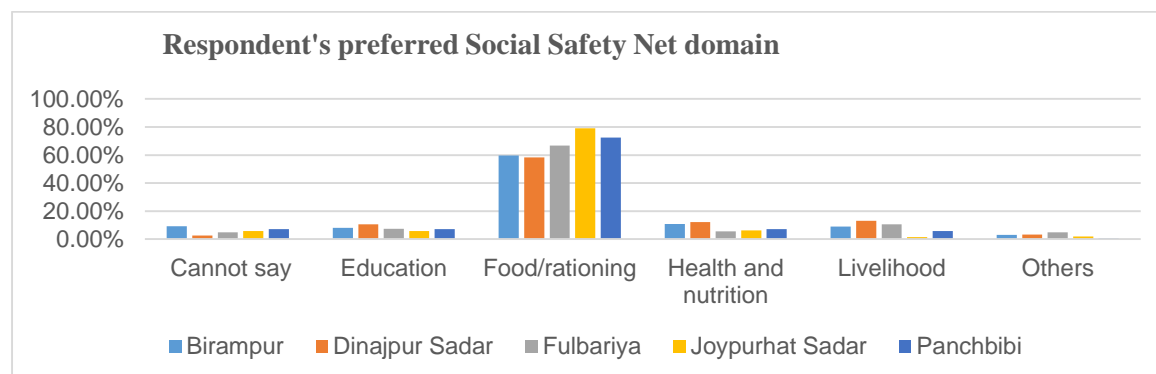
- **Beneficiary and non-beneficiary households** have been defined through self-reporting of respondents i.e. if respondent says s/he is availing of an SSNP, s/he is treated as a beneficiary, and if s/he is not availing SSNPs, s/he is a non-beneficiary.
- Notable here is that beneficiary is different from *eligible* beneficiary. Likewise, non-beneficiary respondents in the sample does not mean ineligible candidates for SSNPs. Thus, at no point in the study respondents can be classified as *actually* eligible and non-eligible.
- All respondents have however been asked to indicate whether they *know* about the eligibility criteria (results in Table 20). But their knowledge of eligibility per scheme has not been tested.
- Mis-targeting of beneficiaries is explored through other questions on access of and factors affecting SSNPs.

The usage of and access to SSNPs for females is not substantially higher or lower, and in fact almost mimics total usage. Thus, prima facie, **gender does not seem to be a factor as far as availing SSNPs is concerned**. This is in line with the context analysis that does not reveal gender to be a major determinant of access to SSNPs. Disaggregated findings on several baseline indicators presented in the subsequent pages seek to analyse the importance of gender as a factor.

The predominant challenge in SSNP delivery that emerged during the qualitative interviews was **lack of adequate coverage of beneficiaries under the SSNP schemes**. Most official interviewees in the Unions also highlighted that **the quantum of allowances that households are eligible for is on the lower side**. This means that not only are several poor people are left out of the formal social safety net but even the existing beneficiaries could do with more provisions in terms of quantity.

Before analysing this low access to SSNPs in further detail, it is worth looking at what the respondents think about their rights in the domain of public services are. Firstly, across upazilas and cutting across beneficiary and non-beneficiary households, **respondents overwhelmingly said (90-97% of them) that they have a right to a social safety net with provision of basic services.**

Figure 8 Respondents' sense of right to social safety - choices



Interestingly the survey found that indigenous minority respondents strongly felt a right to social safety net programmes compared to non-tribal respondents. Through a Chi Square test was conducted to check if there is any statistical significance Tribal/Non Tribal HH and Right to a social safety net with provision of basic services or not. Further information on the statistical findings is outlined in the box directly below.

Statistical Significance and testing linkages between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and Perceived Right to a social safety net with provision of basic services

In this study statistical Chi Square test was conducted to check if there is any statistical significance Tribal/Non Tribal HH and Right to a social safety net with provision of basic services or not.

H_0 : There is strong and significant association between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and Right to a social safety net with provision of basic services

H_1 : There is no significant association between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and Right to a social safety net with provision of basic services

Chi-Square Tests						
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	
Pearson Chi-Square	7.335 ^a	1	.007			
Continuity Correction ^b	6.542	1	.011			
Likelihood Ratio	8.586	1	.003			
Fisher's Exact Test				.006	.003	

After conducting the Chi Square test it was found that $\chi(1) = 7.335$, $p = 0.007$, which implies that p value i.e., $0.007 < 0.05$, henceforth, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternate hypothesis and it can be concluded that there is very much statistical significance found between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and their Right to a social safety net with provision of basic services. Therefore it can be said that tribal feel strong that they have and right to a social safety net with provision of basic services.

Symmetric Measures ^c			
		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.088	.007

Observed phi value is more than 0.50, therefore it can be concluded that though there is statistical significance, so that the level of association between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and their Right to a social safety net with provision of basic services is higher. That clearly indicates that those who are tribal, they perceived that that they have much more Right to a social safety net with provision of basic services than Non-tribal.

Interestingly, the uptake of VGF in the sampled locations/households is the highest which is a feeding programme targeted at the poorest households and one of the oldest running SSNPs. Nevertheless, revealingly,

more than two-thirds of all respondents **said** that the social safety **provisions should be in the domain of food rations**. Livelihood, education and health/nutrition services were accorded second order of importance, in no particular order, i.e. about 7-8% each preferred these three services. There was no statistical divergence in the responses between beneficiary and non-beneficiary households. The preference for food rations is not surprising given that expenses on food comprises more than half of the total HH expenditure across upazilas. Thus, higher support from the government on food provisions would help HHs save for discretionary spending.

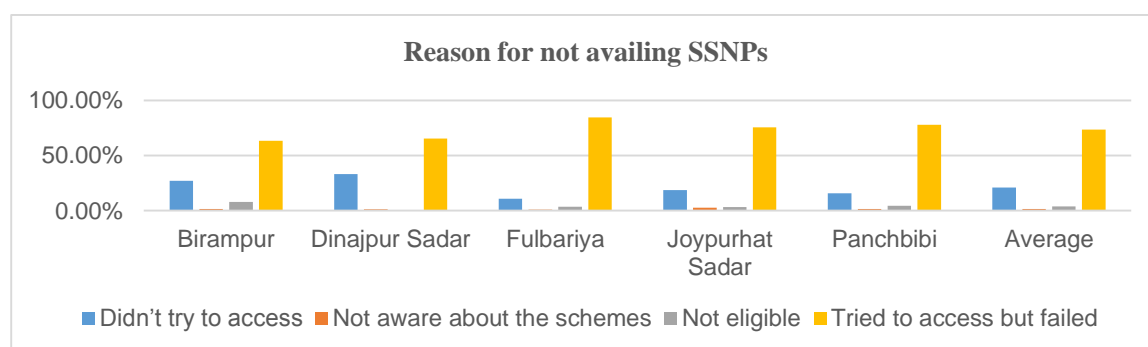
Other options which respondents didn't choose include insurance, pensions, agriculture support, etc. While food rations were the overwhelming choice across upazilas, most respondents preferred the same in JoypurhatSadar. The **preference for livelihood support meanwhile was highest in DinajpurSadar**. That the maximum number of sampled households are availing VGF is not a surprise, given the preference for food rations.

Reasons for not accessing SSNPs, despite perceived right to SSNPs

Now it is important to understand why, particularly in the context of EVPRA which focuses on the governance aspect of SSNP delivery, despite such an overwhelming need for social safety nets, and despite a basic knowledge of the existence of a government sponsored SSNP system, do the respondents not in fact avail of the various schemes? It is well known that the SSNP coverage is considerably below the actual demand. It is worth looking at why access is so severely limited, before understanding the supply side bottlenecks from the departmental side.

This question applies to non-beneficiary households. **A good number of the respondents** (roughly a quarter of them) **say they did not even try to access the schemes, whereas a vast majority of the respondents (73.4%) report** that they have had **failed attempts at trying to access SSNPs**. There is quite a bit of divergence upazila-wise. For instance, the delivery of SSNP seems **most problematic in Fulbari** where about 85% of the respondents said that they have been unable to access SSNPs. Birampur has a relatively low number of households who have been unable to access SSNPs, but the share of households who do not is still very high at 63.5% of the respondents. This might have to do with the fact that Birampur, with the lowest illiteracy and highest newspaper readership, has better awareness regarding procedures and other requirements for being able to access SSNPs.

Figure 9 Reason for not availing SSNPs

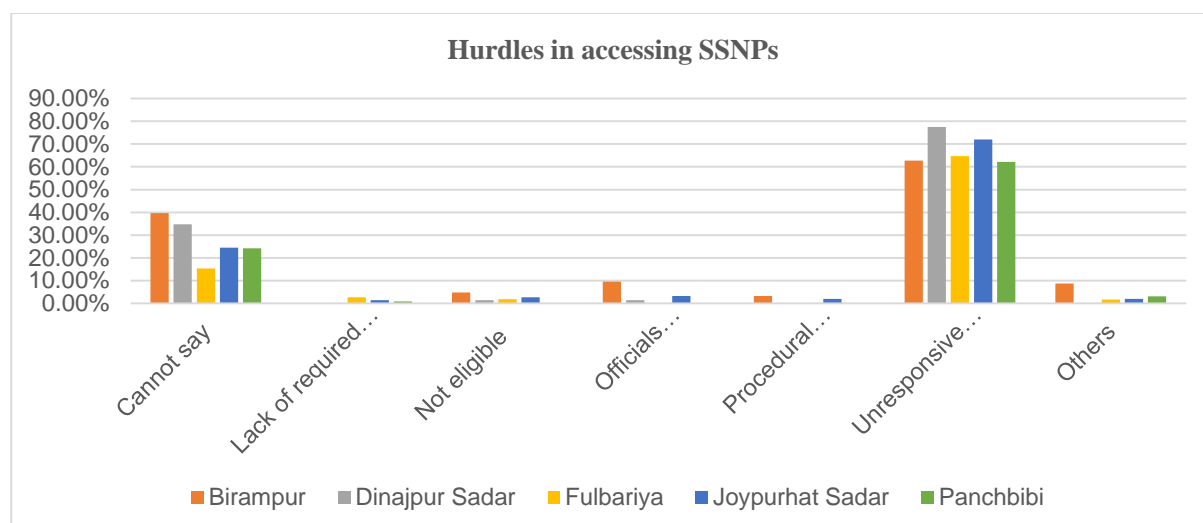


Having established that the access to SSNPs is not just elusive to a vast majority of vulnerable peoples, but that many of them, don't even make an attempt to try to access the SSNPs, such respondents were asked why they wouldn't try to access SSNP, despite the pressing need. It was an open-ended question eliciting a range of answers. While most of them could not spell out the reasons, some of them (4.7%) said that they felt there was no point in trying. Some also said that potential bribery, long delays (2.2%) and the prospect of 'roaming about' would put them off. Roaming about and running from pillar to post to be able to enrol for SSNPs also entails loss of man-day and wages, which is a costly affair for many respondents who are engaged in day labour.

Households were also specifically asked as to what kind of hurdles they face when trying to access SSNPs and the results are revealing, pointing towards a serious supply side bottleneck.

While in many cases respondents could not provide a specific answer, from among those who did an unresponsive Union/Upazila Parishad and uncooperative officials seem to be the biggest hurdles for a large majority of respondents. The lack of specific answers may be because the respondents were either unable to articulate or were unwilling to answer the question, fearing implication of raising a specific hurdle. Nevertheless from those who did respond, procedural complexity and lack of required documents were the other two hurdles reported by the respondents. There was no uniqueness of response in any upazila worth noting, but Fulbari seemed worst affected. This is expected since the most failed attempts at accessing SSNPs was also in the upazila.

Figure 10 Hurdles in accessing SSNPs



The fact that some respondents reported that they weren't eligible for SSNPs prods the question as to how many respondents are aware of the actual eligibility criteria for SSNPs. While knowledge of specific criteria per scheme was not investigated, the general components which contribute in defining eligibility (such as income, land, gender, etc.) were enquired about.

Awareness regarding eligibility criteria for SSNPs

Table 21 Awareness of eligibility criteria for SSNPs

	Upazila	Awareness of eligibility criteria for SSNPs
Non-beneficiaries	Birampur	55.6%
	DinajpurSadar	56.0%
	Fulbari	66.7%
	JoypurhatSadar	97.4%
	Panchbibi	97.0%
	All upazilas	74.5%
Beneficiaries	Birampur	47.5%
	DinajpurSadar	70.2%
	Fulbari	51.0%
	JoypurhatSadar	100.0%
	Panchbibi	100.0%
	All upazilas	73.7%
Total	Birampur	51.6%
	DinajpurSadar	61.5%
	Fulbari	61.7%
	JoypurhatSadar	98.1%
	Panchbibi	98.1%
	All upazilas	74.2%

About three quarters (74.2%) of the respondents stated they were aware of the eligibility criteria, with the survey indicating that beneficiaries of SSNPs report greater awareness of eligibility criteria than non-beneficiaries. For further information on the statistical findings please see the box directly below:

Statistical Significance between beneficiary and Awareness of the eligibility criteria for each or any of these SSNPs

In this study statistical Chi Square test was conducted to check if there is any statistical significance between beneficiary and Awareness of the eligibility criteria for each or any of these SSNPs or not.

H₀ : There is strong and significant association between beneficiary and Awareness of the eligibility criteria for each or any of these SSNPs

H₁ : There is no significant association between beneficiary and Awareness of the eligibility criteria for each or any of these SSNPs

Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.573 ^a	1	.018		
Continuity Correction ^b	5.213	1	.022		
Likelihood Ratio	5.500	1	.019		
Fisher's Exact Test				.020	.012

After conducting the Chi Square test it was found that $\chi(1) = 5.573$. $p = 0.018$, which implies that p value i.e., $0.018 < 0.05$, henceforth, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternate hypothesis and it can be concluded that there is higher statistical significance found between beneficiary and Awareness of the eligibility criteria for each or any of these SSNPs. That clearly indicates that those who are beneficiary of SSNP, they are more aware about the eligibility criteria than non-beneficiary.

Symmetric Measures ^c			
		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	-.076	.018

Observed phi value is less than 0.10, therefore it can be concluded that though there is statistical significance, but the association between beneficiary and Awareness of the eligibility criteria for each or any of these SSNPs is weak. That clearly indicates that those who are beneficiary of SSNP, they are more aware about the eligibility criteria than non-beneficiary.

There was substantial divergence upazila wise: While among beneficiaries only about half the respondents in Fulbari and Birampur claimed to know about the eligibility criteria, 100% of the respondents claimed to know the criteria in Panchibi and JoypurhatSadar even amongst non-beneficiaries.

This is interesting given that almost double the size of the population report having bad experiences while accessing the information about eligibility criteria in Fulbari and Birampur compared to Panchibi and Joypurhat sadar. Notably, Fulbari, which had relatively high CSO activity, is also in fact plagued more seriously by issues such as lack of information regarding SSNPs, difficulty in access to SSNPs, etc. This might point toward either a lack of capacity within CSOs or absence of civil society focus on SSNPs *per se*.

When analysing by **gender**, again, the **awareness of eligibility criteria** by male and by female is again not dissimilar from the overall figures. They are however a little on the lower side in Birampur, compared to the overall figures for that upazila. For instance, 55.5% of the females were unaware of the eligibility criteria compared to 42.8% of all males and 48.4% of all respondents. When analysing by tribal/non-tribal group, and again comparing the awareness of eligibility criteria there was not found to be any evidence of a correlation between awareness rates and whether the household was indigenous or non-indigenous (please see the Annex for further details of this test).

It was also interesting to analyse whether there was any correlation between respondents educational attainment and their awareness of the eligibility criteria, but there was no evidence found that awareness rate of eligibility criteria is affected due to educational attainment. For further information on this test, please see the Annex.

Awareness on any grievance redress mechanisms

In addition to eligibility criteria, **awareness on available grievance redress mechanisms** was also tested. On this question, most respondents, irrespective of whether they are beneficiaries or non-beneficiaries were unaware of public complaint redress mechanisms that should be in place for SSNPs. Further information on the testing behind this analysis can be found in the Annex.

Awareness was highest in Panchibi and lowest on an average in DinajpurSadar. Non-beneficiary households in Birampur were the worst off, with only 4% reporting awareness. As expected, on average beneficiary households were more aware than non-beneficiary households. This is not surprising since the policies and processes for grievance redress are not clearly spelt out in documents available publicly. It also indicates that no awareness drives about these issues have been conducted by Unions/Upazilas, regarding what processes are predominantly followed to address grievances.

Table 22 Awareness of public complaint/grievance redress mechanism

	Upazila	Awareness of public complaint/grievance redress mechanism
Non-beneficiaries	Birampur	4.0%
	DinajpurSadar	5.3%
	Fulbari	9.9%
	Joypurhat	14.7%
	Panchbibi	17.4%
	All upazilas	11.0%
Beneficiaries	Birampur	13.1%
	DinajpurSadar	4.3%
	Fulbari	13.7%
	Joypurhat	10.9%
	Panchbibi	25.6%
	All upazilas	14.4%
Total	Birampur	8.5%
	DinajpurSadar	4.9%
	Fulbari	11.1%
	Joypurhat	13.7%
	Panchbibi	20.5%
	All upazilas	12.3%

In case of awareness of public complaint/grievance redress mechanisms, women in some upazilas were more aware than males. For instance, in Birampur, DinajpurSadar and Panchibi **the share of female respondents who are aware of the grievance redress mechanisms is fairly higher than their male counterparts**, i.e. 10.9% as against 6.5%; 6.0% as against 3.5% and 26.3% as against 15.3% of male respondents respectively. This may be because at 42% and 54.1% in Birampur and Dinajpur Sadar, female literacy rates are higher than the average in the district (40%).

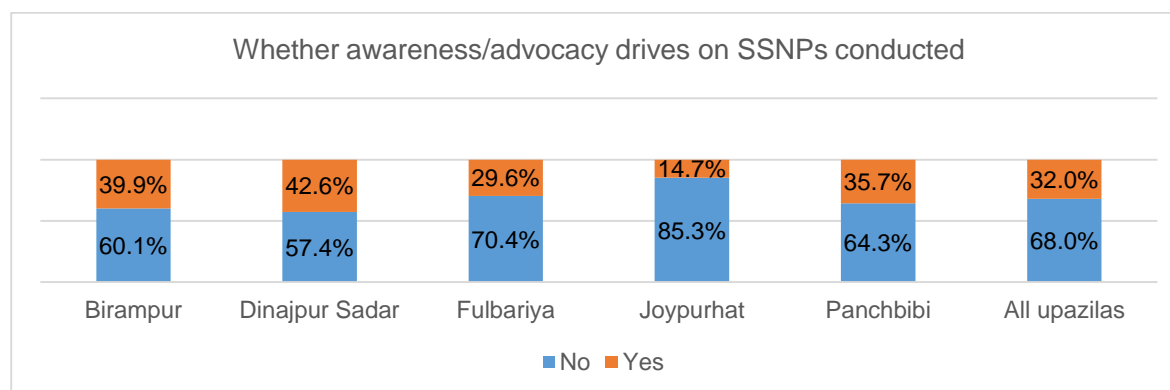
It was also interesting to analyse whether there was any correlation between respondents educational attainment and their awareness of the public complaints mechanisms for SSNPs, but there was no evidence found that awareness is affected by educational attainment. For further information on this test, please see the Annex.

Most officials at the Union and Upazila level say that they mainly receive grievances on malpractices, which are addressed mostly through informal dispute resolution mechanisms such as dialogue, or in some cases by way of punitive action (such as suspension and fines). The government stand on grievance redress is stated in the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS, 2015). The document, while acknowledging the lack of an appropriate redress mechanism as an extant governance challenge, plans to put in place a formal system soon. Accordingly, “The Ministry of Social Welfare in close consultation with Statistics and Information Division will develop a nationwide complaints and grievance redress mechanism. The exercise will run in parallel with the task on

selection processes and its recommendations will be implemented starting in 2016.” Notably the MSW is the nodal ministry for major SSNPs including VGF, AFID, OAA, MAPLM and AWDD. Such mechanism is still not in place and will potentially be implemented in 2016, as per GoB’s NSSS.

In overall terms, the very low detailed awareness levels on SSNPs and its components begs the question whether any advocacy or awareness drive has been conducted in the community to promote usage of the schemes under it, and if they have the effectiveness of these. As the following figure suggests, about two-thirds of all respondents said that no such activity was conducted. JoypurhatSadar in particular seemed badly affected with lack of development communication activities.

Figure 11 Whether awareness programmes conducted in community



Most respondents from among those who responded affirmatively were unable to spell out the impacts of such advocacy efforts on their access to SSNPs or even their awareness levels.

Further analysis has revealed that those who are non-tribal, are more aware that there have been awareness drives in their communities. For better EVPRA intervention, it is needed that more awareness drive should be conducted at local level and indigenous population should be encouraged to participate. An outline of the testing conducted is outlined in the box immediately below.

Statistical Significance between Tribal/Non-Tribal HH and Advocacy/awareness drive been conducted for any of the SSNP schemes in community

In this study statistical Chi Square test was conducted to check if there is any Statistical Significance between Tribal/Non-Tribal HH and Advocacy/awareness drive been conducted for any of the SSNP schemes in community or not.

H₀: There is strong and significant association between Tribal/Non-Tribal HH and Advocacy/awareness drive been conducted for any of the SSNP schemes in community

H₁: There is no significant association between Tribal/Non-Tribal HH and Advocacy/awareness drive been conducted for any of the SSNP schemes in community

Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	18.179 ^a	1	.000		
Continuity Correction ^b	17.512	1	.000		
Likelihood Ratio	19.120	1	.000		
Fisher's Exact Test				.000	.000

After conducting the Chi Square test it was found that $\chi(1) = 18.279$ $p = 0.000$, which implies that p value i.e., $0.000 < 0.05$, henceforth, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternate hypothesis and it can be concluded that there is higher statistical significance found between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and Advocacy/awareness drive has been conducted for any of the SSNP schemes in community.

Symmetric Measures ^c			
		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	-.138	.000

Observed phi value is more than 0.10, therefore it can be concluded that though there is statistical significance, but the association between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and awareness drive has been conducted for any of the SSNP schemes in community is medium. That clearly indicates that those who are non-tribal, they are more aware that there was awareness drive has been conducted. For better EVPRA intervention, it is needed that more awareness drive should be conducted at local level and indigenous population should be encouraged to participate.

In the absence of formal information/awareness generation drives, and low awareness levels on SSNPs and its features, it is important to know whether people approach the local government officials directly for information that they are in need of. Findings reveal that this varies across upazilas and also between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.

While three quarters of the non-beneficiary respondents in Fulbari seem to approach local government representatives, only 56% of those in DinajpurSadar do so (it's almost as bad for beneficiary households here). For beneficiaries, the rate is slightly higher, with 82.1% and 78.2% of all respondents answering affirmatively in Panchbibi and Joypurhat Sadar respectively.

Table 23. Would you approach local government representatives directly for either help or information?

	Upazila	Approached local government representatives directly for help or information
Non-beneficiaries	Birampur	67.5%
	DinajpurSadar	56.0%
	Fulbari	74.8%
	Joypurhat	68.6%
	Panchbibi	68.9%
	All upazilas	68.0%
Beneficiaries	Birampur	68.9%
	DinajpurSadar	59.6%
	Fulbari	74.5%
	Joypurhat	78.2%
	Panchbibi	82.1%
	All upazilas	72.8%
Total	Birampur	68.1%
	DinajpurSadar	57.4%
	Fulbari	74.7%
	Joypurhat	71.1%
	Panchbibi	73.8%
	All upazilas	69.8%

As for **gender based differences**, on this count **gender seemed a determining factor only for two upazilas**. While 60.9% of the female respondents reach out to local government representatives in Birampur, about 74% of the male respondents do so. Likewise, as against 79.3% males approaching the Union representatives, only 67.7% of the females did the same in Panchbibi. This is a puzzling finding since these two upazilas had a much higher share of females aware of the grievance redress mechanisms compared to males. This indicates that the **awareness of women is not put to use or translated into actions, potentially due to gendered norms in society limiting direct interactions outside the household**. A follow-up question revealed that while most of the female respondents could not spell out a reason for not approaching the local government representatives, a few of them thought doing so would not help.

Analysis regarding whether being from an indigenous minority group was likely to affect one's likelihood of approaching local government for help information did not reveal any connection or correlation. Further information on the tests behind this analysis can be found in the Annex.

There is quite a bit of divergence in responses as to what was the outcome of soliciting information directly from local government representatives – depending on whether one is a beneficiary or not, and even upazila-wise. While as many as 41.7% of non-beneficiaries in Joypurhat reported that their request was turned down (as against about 20.0% in DinajpurSadar and Fulbari), beneficiary households in general were far better off with 47.3% of respondents in all upazilas having received the required information/help (as against only 21.8% of the

non-beneficiary respondents). This finding reveals that Union Parishad officials⁴⁶ are more open to meeting and helping out beneficiary households, which may be both a positive thing (i.e. UP/UPZs according priority to SSNP beneficiaries) and a negative thing (a general unhelpfulness towards the community and low communication between government and citizens).

Table 24 Outcome of approaching local government officials

	Upazila	Cannot say	Received required information/help	Received unhelpful answers only	Request was turned down	Was not given a hearing	Others
Non beneficiaries	Birampur	32.5%	39.7%	4.8%	16.7%	4.0%	2.38%
	DinajpurSadar	44.0%	20.0%	16.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.00%
	Fulbari	25.2%	35.1%	12.6%	19.8%	6.3%	0.90%
	Joypurhat	31.4%	10.3%	12.2%	41.7%	3.8%	0.64%
	Panchbibi	31.1%	8.3%	20.5%	34.8%	5.3%	0.00%
	All upazilas	32.0%	21.8%	13.0%	28.2%	4.2%	0.83%
Beneficiaries	Birampur	31.1%	51.6%	5.7%	9.8%	0.0%	1.64%
	DinajpurSadar	40.4%	36.2%	14.9%	8.5%	0.0%	0.00%
	Fulbari	25.5%	45.1%	9.8%	13.7%	5.9%	0.00%
	Joypurhat	21.8%	40.0%	3.6%	23.6%	9.1%	1.82%
	Panchbibi	17.9%	53.8%	6.4%	16.7%	3.8%	1.28%
	All upazilas	27.2%	47.3%	7.4%	13.9%	3.1%	1.13%
Total	Birampur	31.9%	45.6%	5.2%	13.3%	2.0%	2.02%
	DinajpurSadar	42.6%	26.2%	15.6%	15.6%	0.0%	0.00%
	Fulbari	25.3%	38.3%	11.7%	17.9%	6.2%	0.62%
	Joypurhat	28.9%	18.0%	10.0%	37.0%	5.2%	0.95%
	Panchbibi	26.2%	25.2%	15.2%	28.1%	4.8%	0.48%
	All upazilas	30.2%	31.3%	10.9%	22.9%	3.8%	0.94%

Most of the **Union and Upazila level respondents** in the qualitative interviews say that the **demand for beneficiary cards is much higher than the supply**, meaning that the SSNPs elude a lot of poor people and the size of the social safety net is itself far from comprehensive. Accordingly, it is also worth considering that the lack of access, or even the high share of people turned down at Unions, might have to do with the **demand-supply gap**, which is in fact a function of the funding for SSNPs that is allocated in the government's annual budget. Low funding would mean less resources per upazila which limits the number of beneficiary cards distributable. KIIs reveal that the demand for SSNP beneficiary cards far outstrip the number of cards that they are in a position to distribute. One Union Member said by way of a ballpark measure, "...where I need 30 cards to deliver I only have 2-3 cards available." In other words, on a regular day, Unions are equipped to meet only 10% of the demand for SSNPs.

But the most important self-reported challenges in the delivery of SSNP seem to be on grievance and complaints redress mechanisms, transparency levels and monitoring.

⁴⁶ Members of the community are most likely to think of Union Parishad officials when they are asked about local government representatives, given that they are the first point of contact.

5.2.3 Governance of SSNP delivery and satisfaction of beneficiaries

Having dealt with the awareness and access issues, it is worth looking at the **satisfaction levels** of households. This section applies only to beneficiary households since it deals with the governance of SSNP delivery and maps satisfaction level among current users.

First, respondents were asked a simple binary question as to whether they were satisfied with SSNP delivery. **Surprisingly, most respondents answered affirmatively.** The least satisfaction was found in Birampur – the only upazila where the number of respondents that responded with a yes (66.4%) were less than the average of 79.1%. **Those who reported dissatisfaction were asked to provide a reason for the same, to which most of them could not provide a specific response.** This lack of response may possibly be due to perceived fear of implication of divulging reason for dissatisfaction. However those who did, provided answers that reflect on the governance of SSNPs.

Table 25 Satisfaction in SSNP delivery

Upazila	Satisfied with SSNP delivery
Birampur	66.4%
DinajpurSadar	83.0%
Fulbari	82.4%
JoypurhatSadar	81.8%
Panchbibi	82.1%
All upazilas	79.1%

Importantly, analysis has been conducted to explore whether there is any difference between levels of satisfaction with SSNP delivery and whether one is from an indigenous minority group or not. Tests found that non-tribals are more satisfied than non-tribals, and tribals are more dissatisfied than non-tribals. Further information on these tests is outlined in the box below.

Statistical Significance between tribal/non-tribal HH and Satisfaction with the delivery of SSNPs

In this study statistical Chi Square test was conducted to check if there is any statistical significance between tribal/non-tribal HH and Satisfaction with the delivery of SSNPs or not.

H₀ : There is strong and significant association between tribal/non-tribal HH and Satisfaction with the delivery of SSNPs.

H₁ : There is no significant association between tribal/non-tribal HH and Satisfaction with the delivery of SSNPs.

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.931 ^a	2	.019
Likelihood Ratio	8.214	2	.016

After conducting the Chi Square test it was found that $\chi^2(2) = 7.931$. $p = 0.019$, which implies that p value i.e., $0.019 \leq 0.05$, henceforth, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternate hypothesis and it can be concluded that there is higher statistical significance found between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and Satisfaction with the delivery of SSNPs. Therefore it can be said that non-tribal are more satisfied and tribals are more dissatisfied than non-tribal in case of satisfaction with the delivery of SSNP.

Symmetric Measures ^c			
		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.091	.019
	Cramer's V	.091	.019

There is direct relationship between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and Satisfaction with the delivery of SSNPs Observed phi value is less than 0.10, therefore it can be concluded that though there is statistical significance, but the association between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and satisfaction with delivery of SSNP is very weak.

Testing has also revealed that those who are beneficiaries are more satisfied in terms of service delivery of SSNP than non-beneficiary. Again, further details of these tests can be explored in the box below.

Statistical Significance between beneficiary and Satisfaction with the delivery of SSNPs

In this study statistical Chi Square test was conducted to check if there is any statistical significance between beneficiary and Satisfaction with the delivery of SSNPs or not.

H₀ : There is strong and significant association between beneficiary and Satisfaction with the delivery of SSNPs.

H₁ : There is no significant association between gender and Satisfaction with the delivery of SSNPs.

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	953.000 ^a	2	.000
Likelihood Ratio	1256.384	2	.000

After conducting the Chi Square test it was found that $\chi^2(2) = 953.0$, $p = 0.019$, which implies that p value i.e., $0.00 \leq 0.05$, henceforth, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternate hypothesis and it can be concluded that there is higher statistical significance found between beneficiary and Satisfaction with the delivery of SSNPs. Therefore it can be said that beneficiary are more satisfied and non-beneficiary are more dissatisfied than due to not accessing the service in case of satisfaction with the delivery of SSNP.

Symmetric Measures ^c			
		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	1.000	.000
	Cramer's V	1.000	.000

Observed phi value is equal to 1. Therefore it can be concluded that though there is statistical significance, and the association between beneficiary and their satisfaction level from SSNP service delivery is perfect. That clearly indicates that those who are beneficiary, they are more satisfied in terms of service delivery of SSNP than non-beneficiary.

There is no relationship between gender and reported satisfaction with SSNP delivery, however details of these tests can be found in the Annex.

Mainly **delays** in getting allowances and inadequate (less than what is due) provisions – both cash and in-kind – were reported to be the causes of dissatisfaction. The latter opens up the prospect of **pilferage of subsidies**, which is a major concern impacting programme efficiency in most developing countries⁴⁷. Panchbibi was relatively more affected by this, with 16.6% of the beneficiaries pinning dissatisfaction on curtailed subsidies (cash and in-kind provisions such as food-grains). Delays were most reported in DinajpurSadar. 9% of the respondents in Birampur said that poverty remains despite SSNPs, which might in fact be the outcome of some of these governance failures.

Table 26 Reason/s for dissatisfaction on SSNP delivery

Upazila	No response	Quantity of in-kind subsidies less than what is due	Cash allowances less than the actual allowance value	Delays in delivery	Poverty remains	Grains are of poor quality	We are poor so we don't get it	Others
Birampur	66.4%	10.7%	0.8%	4.1%	9.0%	1.6%	2.5%	4.92%
DinajpurSadar	83.0%	6.4%	0.0%	8.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.13%
Fulbari	82.4%	9.8%	3.9%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.96%
JoypurhatSadar	81.8%	9.1%	3.6%	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.64%
Panchbibi	82.1%	12.8%	3.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.28%
All upazilas	79.1%	9.8%	2.4%	3.3%	1.8%	0.3%	0.5%	2.78%

⁴⁷<http://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/28425/economics-wp221.pdf>
<https://www.oecd.org/tad/agricultural-policies/46340359.pdf>
<http://economics.mit.edu/files/7589>
<https://www.bostonfed.org/commdev/smart-subsidy/10-triest.pdf>

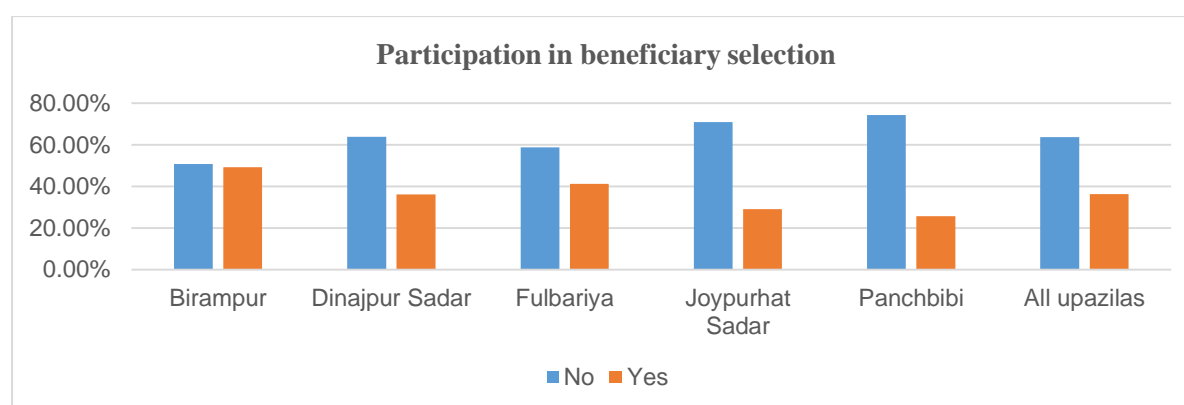
Targeting & Beneficiary Selection

One of the crucial determinants of the success of a poverty alleviation programme is its appropriate **targeting** with minimum inclusion and exclusion errors. In this context, the survey revealed that a community-led **participatory beneficiary selection processes is not commonly practiced**, as the majority of respondents in all upazilas reported having never participated in beneficiary selection. Participation in beneficiary selection is an important measure of transparency of SSNP delivery since Union/Upazila officials reveal that it is during the selection of beneficiaries and distribution of beneficiary cards that a lot of the corruption takes place. Substantial parts of the actual delivery of SSNPs (in case of cash) is done through banks, which minimises corruption levels at that stage in the process. Although there is no outright mention in GoB policy documents requiring or promoting involvement of communities, **the involvement of NGOs in identification/selection of beneficiaries is a stated goal now under NSSS, 2015**. Qualitative interviews with CSOs reveal that although Unions sometimes involve NGOs in preparation of beneficiary lists, they are not acted upon. This therefore indicates that there is a good opportunity for EVPRA to advocate for increased involvement of civil society in the beneficiary selection process, in line with and in support of the NSSS, 2015, in order to improve transparency and targeting.

The exclusion of community members in the beneficiary selection processes is worst in JoypurhatSadar and Panchbibi. In Birampur, almost half the respondents reported having participated in the beneficiary selection process, the highest in any upazila, which might have been the outcome of the fact that Birampur reported the highest number of SSNP awareness/advocacy programmes. The picture has been drawn from beneficiary households, as almost none of the non-beneficiary households reported participation in beneficiary selection. The study reveals that **gender is not a determining factor for participation in beneficiary selection**, but that the very process of **beneficiary selection is not inclusive in its entirety**.

KIIs with Union Chairmen and its officials confirmed that it is them who are primarily engaged in finalising the list of beneficiaries (followed by approval from Upazilas) and monitoring disbursement of allowances and implementation of the schemes at the ground level. The UpazilaParishads (UPZ) have a supervisory role besides upazila level monitoring.

Figure 12 whether participated in beneficiary selection



Importantly, analysis has found that those self-reported beneficiaries were more likely to have participated in the beneficiary selection process. Additionally, those who are non-tribal, are also participating more in the beneficiary selection processes. This would align with the fact that more non-tribals access SSNPs, than tribals.

The details of these tests are presented in the boxes immediately on the page below.

Statistical Significance between beneficiary and participation in the beneficiary selection processes

Introduction: In this study statistical Chi Square test was conducted to check if there is any statistical significance between beneficiary and participation in the beneficiary selection processes or not.

H_0 : There is strong and significant association between beneficiary and participation in the beneficiary selection processes

H_1 : There is no significant association between beneficiary and participation in the beneficiary selection processes

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	940.310 ^a	2	.000
Likelihood Ratio	1224.600	2	.000

Explanation: After conducting the Chi Square test it was found that $\chi^2(2) = 940.310$, $p = 0.000$, which implies that p value i.e., $0.000 < 0.05$, henceforth, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternate hypothesis and it can be concluded that there is very much statistical significance found between beneficiary and participation in the beneficiary selection processes.

Findings: That clearly indicates that those who are beneficiary of SSNP, they are more participating in the beneficiary selection processes than non- beneficiary.

Symmetric Measures ^c			
		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.993	.000

Conclusion: Observed phi value is less than 0.10, therefore it can be concluded that though there is statistical significance, but the association between beneficiary and participation in the beneficiary selection processes is weak. That clearly indicates that those who are beneficiary of SSNP, they are more participating in the beneficiary selection processes.

Statistical Significance between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and participation in the beneficiary selection processes

Introduction: In this study statistical Chi Square test was conducted to check if there is any statistical significance between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and participation in the beneficiary selection processes or not.

H_0 : There is strong and significant association between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and participation in the beneficiary selection processes

H_1 : There is no significant association between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and participation in the beneficiary selection processes

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.926 ^a	2	.003
Likelihood Ratio	13.262	2	.001

Explanation: After conducting the Chi Square test it was found that $\chi^2(2) = 11.926$, $p = 0.003$, which implies that p value i.e., $0.003 < 0.05$, henceforth, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternate hypothesis and it can be concluded that there is higher statistical significance found between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and participation in the beneficiary selection processes. That clearly indicates that those who are non-tribal, they are more participating in the beneficiary selection processes than tribal.

Symmetric Measures ^c			
		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.112	.003

Conclusion: Observed phi value is more than 0.10, therefore it can be concluded that though there is statistical significance, but the association between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and participation in the beneficiary selection processes is weak. That clearly indicates that those who are non-tribal, they are more participating in the beneficiary selection processes.

Assessing Corruption in SSNP delivery

While the lack of participation from the community members reveal a certain opacity in which the programme is targeted and run, the survey also sought to directly unpack issues of **transparency and accountability in the delivery of SSNPs**. On an average the responses were more or less cut into two halves, one each indicating that inducements and favours lead to access to SSNP and that it does not.

Among both beneficiary and non-beneficiary households the share of respondents who responded affirmatively was significantly higher in Fulbari, whereas the number of respondents who responded affirmatively was lesser in beneficiary households in JoypurhatSadar – the least among all upazilas. It emerges that the **perception of mal-governance is the highest in Fulbari**, which incidentally **also reported the highest number of failed**

attempts at accessing SSNPs – the latter potentially triggering a perception that the SSNP delivery is corrupt, further spread through word of mouth.

Table 27 Whether inducements / favours have led to access to SSNP in the community

Non-beneficiaries	Upazila	Yes
	Birampur	49.2%
	DinajpurSadar	52.0%
	Fulbari	63.1%
	JoypurhatSadar	50.0%
	Panchbibi	44.7%
	All upazilas	51.8%
Beneficiaries	Birampur	51.6%
	DinajpurSadar	42.6%
	Fulbari	62.7%
	JoypurhatSadar	40.0%
	Panchbibi	50.0%
	All upazilas	49.4%
Total	Birampur	50.4%
	DinajpurSadar	48.4%
	Fulbari	63.0%
	JoypurhatSadar	47.4%
	Panchbibi	46.7%
	All upazilas	51.2%

Having established **pretty widespread corruption**, it is worth knowing where the epicentre of the lack of accountability lies. To that end, respondents were asked as to who were at the receiving end of these inducements.

While understandably many respondents backed out from answering the question, among those who did an overwhelming majority of them pointed towards **government officials at the Union and Upazila levels**. This includes members of Unions who are primarily responsible to put together a list of beneficiaries – a process which lacks sufficient participation from the community. NGOs and CBOs were more or less given a clean cheat by the respondents. **Party workers** were also at the receiving end of inducements, more so in Birampur, Fulbari and Panchbibi.

Respondents in an FGD held with representatives of CSOs/NGOs were in two minds regarding which was the bigger problem: bribery or political influence, and eventually agreed that the two are interlinked. The party workers are often bribed and so are Union Chairmen themselves. **Political influence** often leads to deletion of names of those who are known to be from the opposition parties. The discussion also revealed that bribery is not supposed to be admitted, so it is almost like an open secret. In a few cases, cards are deprived to even those who paid bribes.

Table 28 Who was at the receiving end of inducements?

	Upazila	No response / Don't want to say	Field team	Govt. official (UP/UPZ levels)	Member implementing partner/NGO/CBO	Party cadre
Non-beneficiaries	Birampur	51.6%	1.6%	50.6%	1.6%	1.6%
	DinajpurSadar	49.3%	1.3%	48.0%	0.0%	1.3%
	Fulbari	36.9%	2.7%	46.8%	1.8%	9.9%
	JoypurhatSadar	50.0%	.6%	42.9%	1.9%	4.5%
	Panchbibi	55.3%	0.0%	33.3%	.8%	10.6%
	All upazilas	49.0%	1.2%	45.3%	1.3%	5.8%
Beneficiaries	Birampur	50.0%	0.0%	36.9%	0.0%	13.1%
	DinajpurSadar	57.4%	2.1%	38.3%	0.0%	0.0%
	Fulbari	37.3%	2.0%	45.1%	0.0%	15.7%
	JoypurhatSadar	60.0%	1.8%	34.5%	1.8%	1.8%
	Panchbibi	50.0%	1.3%	41.0%	0.0%	7.7%
	All upazilas	50.7%	1.1%	38.8%	.3%	8.8%
Total	Birampur	50.8%	.8%	50.3%	.8%	7.3%
	DinajpurSadar	52.4%	1.6%	44.3%	0.0%	.8%
	Fulbari	37.0%	2.5%	46.3%	1.2%	11.7%
	JoypurhatSadar	52.6%	.9%	40.8%	1.9%	3.8%
	Panchbibi	53.3%	.5%	36.2%	.5%	9.5%
	All upazilas	49.6%	1.2%	41.0%	.9%	6.9%

To assess finally the governance of SSNP delivery system on the ground, respondents were also asked to define what they think are the major determinants of ease of access to SSNPs, in other words what are the factors that impact one's access to SSNPs. The results here corroborates previous findings of corruption, while directly revealing the presence of **bribery and nepotism**. The share of non-beneficiary households in Fulbari and JoypurhatSadar pinning bribery as the main determinant of easy access to SSNPs is the highest at 58.6% and 51.9% respectively, much less so in Birampur (23%).

Among beneficiary households, Panchibi has the highest share of respondents alleging corruption as the deciding factor for SSNP access. The upazila has also the highest share of respondents indicating that the good rapport with the Union members/chairmen can affect access to SSNPs, both among beneficiary and non-beneficiary households. Birampur and JoypurhatSadar meanwhile had the highest share of people who said that a good relationship with political figures (not necessarily in the Union/Upazila administration) mattered. This is in line with the finding that Birampur has among the highest share of respondents alleging that political workers would be receiving inducements in exchange for access to SSNPs. It is important to note that a majority share of respondents in several upazilas said they did not have an idea about the factors impacting SSNP access.

It was explored whether the fact the people were beneficiaries or non-beneficiaries of SSNPs had any impact on their perception regarding whether corruption can be a deciding factor for people's access to SSNPs, and no relationship was found. Further information on this analysis can be found in the Annex.

Analysis from the survey findings reveals that whether the household was from an indigenous minority group or not, did not have any affect the respondents perception regarding whether corruption can be a deciding factor for people's access to SSNPs. As such there was no direct relationship found between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and whether a community was perceived to gain access to a SSNP as a result of any inducement/favours. Further information on this testing can be explored in the Annex.

Qualitative interviews and FGDs held with CSO members also shed light on the importance of personal relationships with the Members of the Union and their Chairmen. Often, these **relationships prove beneficial in helping people gain better access to allowances under SSNPs, both in terms of quality and quantity.** Qualitative consultation with a Member of Parliament revealed that no matter how active the Upazila is in conducting monitoring, it is the Unions who are at the centre of delivering SSNP services and thus the success of SSNPs crucially hinge on Unions. “There will be no barrier if Chairmen/members do their job honestly” the MP said, while pointing out that the allowances should also be increased.

Table 29 Factors affecting access to SSNPs

	Upazila	Can avail if there is a good relationship with members/chairman	Can avail if there is a good relationship with political people	Bribery	Don't have any idea	Others
Non Beneficiary	Birampur	3.2%	11.9%	23.0%	61.1%	0.79%
	DinajpurSadar	0.0%	4.0%	33.3%	57.3%	5.33%
	Fulbari	0.0%	3.6%	58.6%	36.9%	0.00%
	JoypurhatSadar	6.4%	14.1%	51.9%	26.9%	0.64%
	Panchbibi	18.2%	1.5%	40.9%	34.1%	5.30%
	All upazilas	5.6%	7.0%	41.5%	43.3%	2.4%
Beneficiary	Birampur	1.6%	18.9%	26.2%	50.0%	3.28%
	DinajpurSadar	0.0%	8.5%	36.2%	51.1%	4.26%
	Fulbari	0.0%	3.9%	45.1%	49.0%	0.00%
	JoypurhatSadar	10.9%	12.7%	38.2%	36.4%	0.00%
	Panchbibi	15.4%	5.1%	46.2%	33.3%	0.00%
	All upazilas	5.6%	9.8%	38.4%	44.0%	1.50%
Total	Birampur	2.4%	15.3%	24.6%	55.6%	2.02%
	DinajpurSadar	0.0%	5.7%	34.4%	54.9%	4.92%
	Fulbari	0.0%	3.7%	54.3%	40.7%	0.00%
	JoypurhatSadar	7.6%	13.7%	48.3%	29.4%	0.47%
	Panchbibi	17.1%	2.9%	42.9%	33.8%	3.33%
	All upazilas	5.4%	8.3%	40.9%	42.9%	2.1%

Interviews with members of an NGO which carries out monitoring of SSNP delivery and conducts awareness generation regarding SSNPs and its mechanisms corroborated this fact while arguing that the incidence of corruption is high with cards often distributed to those who bribe the member of chairmen. Again, monitoring is few and far between with minimal due diligence. In some cases, a person is arbitrarily removed from one list if he/she is eligible to benefit from more than one SSNP scheme. Some Upazila officer said that political influences during beneficiary selection is more common in the Unions than Upazilas.

Respondents in another FGD conducted with members of various CSOs reveal that irregularity and bribery is too common in case of SSNP delivery. In addition, “nepotism of the representatives and fictitious list of beneficiaries exist”. People who canvassed for them in the election manage to secure benefits, again a point which the household survey validates. The corruption instance is again mentioned with a specific number: “3000-5000 taka must be given to make an allowance card.”

Fairness of SSNP delivery

Finally, it is important to understand whether there is a direct perception among respondents that discrimination is being practice. To that end, respondents were asked to say whether they have been discriminated against in the provision of SSNPs. The share of non-beneficiary respondents who thought they have been discriminated against was slightly higher than the beneficiary respondents. Discriminations have been less reported in

JoypurhatSadar among both beneficiary and non-beneficiary households. While the upazila also has the highest share of respondents who said that their request for information at the Union/UpazilaParishad was turned down, the belief seems to be that it is a case of systemic apathy and disconnect rather than a case of *discrimination* towards them. Non-beneficiary households in DinajpurSadar had the maximum number of households who felt discriminated against.

Table 30 Whether discriminated against in providing SSNPs

	Upazila	Yes
Non-beneficiaries	Birampur	44.4%
	DinajpurSadar	58.7%
	Fulbari	36.0%
	JoypurhatSadar	24.4%
	Panchbibi	32.6%
	All upazilas	36.8%
Beneficiaries	Birampur	43.4%
	DinajpurSadar	38.3%
	Fulbari	29.4%
	JoypurhatSadar	25.5%
	Panchbibi	32.1%
	All upazilas	35.4%
Total	Birampur	44.0%
	DinajpurSadar	50.8%
	Fulbari	34.0%
	JoypurhatSadar	24.6%
	Panchbibi	32.4%
	All upazilas	36.3%

During qualitative interviews with government representatives at the Union and Upazila levels, identity-based discrimination against indigenous peoples was ruled out. However, the lack of education in particular groups of people (e.g. indigenous) was pointed out as a hurdle in the provision of services. Accordingly, there is a strong case for conducting mass awareness generation campaigns, officials said.

Overall, the share of tribal HHs reported having being discriminated against is substantially higher than non-tribal HHs. While about 45% of the tribal/indigenous population reported discriminated against (i.e. denied entitlements under SSNP), only about a third of all non-tribal HHs reported the same. At the level of district, while 42.4% HHs in Dinajpur reported discrimination only about a quarter of the HHs said the same in Joypurhat.

Table 31 Discrimination tribal/non-tribal

Indigenous/Non Tribal	Discriminated against (i.e. denied entitlement under SSNP)
Non-Tribal	33.3%
Tribal/Indigenous	44.8%
Total	36.3%

Except Birampur, women respondents in all upazilas witnessed higher discrimination in the provision of SSNPs, with roughly 56%, 36%, 27% and 34% of the female respondents in DinajpurSadar, Fulbari, JoypurhatSadar and Panchbibi reporting incidences of being discriminated against, as opposed to only about 43%, 30%, 21% and 30% of the male respondents. While **statistically, the higher discrimination is attributable to the gender**, the respondents themselves did not point out gender as the reason. While most respondents could not spell out or did not want to respond, some of them pointed out usual governance issues such as nepotism and bribery, about

6% of respondents in Joypurhat and Panchibibi they were discriminated against since they belonged to indigenous populations. Like with overall results, most female respondents alleged discrimination at the hands of Union/Upazila functionaries.

In a study of *adivasi* (tribal) households in Joypurhat, Braun (2010)⁴⁸ finds that female tribals often face double discrimination – on the gender front as well as ethnic identity. One of the notable points was that *adivasi*/indigenous women have difficulty in obtaining justice at the local government institutions, and that allegedly “police and administration often do not provide necessary support to deliver justice; they are even reluctant to accept cases filed by the *adivasis* and carry out proper investigation into the matters.” Plus, existing legal support from different development organisations is also inadequate.

Statistical analysis of the survey findings also supports this literature, with results indicating that tribal respondents did perceive that they were more likely to be denied access to SSNPs. Details of the tests conducted can be explored in the box below.

Statistical Significance Tribal/Non Tribal HH and Perception on Discrimination for SSNP Entitlement (i.e. denied entitlement under SSNP)

In this study statistical Chi Square test was conducted to check if there is any statistical significance Tribal/Non Tribal HH and Perception on Discrimination for SSNP Entitlement (i.e. denied entitlement under SSNP) or not.

H₀ : There is strong and significant association between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and Perception on Discrimination for SSNP Entitlement (i.e. denied entitlement under SSNP)

H₁ : There is no significant association between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and Perception on Discrimination for SSNP Entitlement (i.e. denied entitlement under SSNP)

Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.573 ^a	1	.001		
Continuity Correction ^b	10.081	1	.001		
Likelihood Ratio	10.396	1	.001		
Fisher's Exact Test				.001	.001

After conducting the Chi Square test it was found that $\chi(1) = 10.573 \cdot p = 0.001$, which implies that p value i.e., $0.001 < 0.05$, henceforth, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternate hypothesis and it can be concluded that there is higher statistical significance found between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and their perception on discriminated against (i.e. denied entitlement under SSNP). Therefore it can be said that tribal perceived that they are more discriminated and they are more denied for entitlement under SSNP than Non-tribal.

Symmetric Measures ^c			
		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.105	.001

Observed phi value is more than 0.10, therefore it can be concluded that though there is statistical significance, but the association between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and their perception on discriminated against (i.e. denied entitlement under SSNP) is medium. That clearly indicates that those who are tribal, they perceived that that they are more discriminated for SSNP.

Interesting however, the same exploration did not find any correlation between gender and people's perception of whether they were discriminated in accessing / denied access to SSNPs. Details of the tests conducted, can be found in the Annex.

To understand self-perception of vulnerability among the sampled households, respondents were asked to reveal if they feel disempowered within the community. The results indicate that there indigenous community members have a great perception of vulnerability, than non-tribal community members, which also echo the findings presented above.

⁴⁸https://bangladesch.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Bilder/B_Globales_Lernen/B3.2_Oeffentlichkeitsarbeit/Mediathek/Studien/Study-on-conflict-in-Adivasi-villages.pdf

Statistical Significance between Indigenous or Non-Indigenous and feeling of Vulnerability.

In this study statistical Chi Square test was conducted to check if there is any statistical significance between Indigenous or Non-Indigenous and feeling of Vulnerability or not.

H₀ : There is strong and significant association between Indigenous or Non-Indigenous and feeling of Vulnerability.

H₁ : There is no significant association between Indigenous or Non-Indigenous and feeling of Vulnerability.

Chi-Square Test					
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.110 ^a	1	.013		
Continuity Correction ^b	5.736	1	.017		
Likelihood Ratio	6.022	1	.014		
Fisher's Exact Test				.014	.009

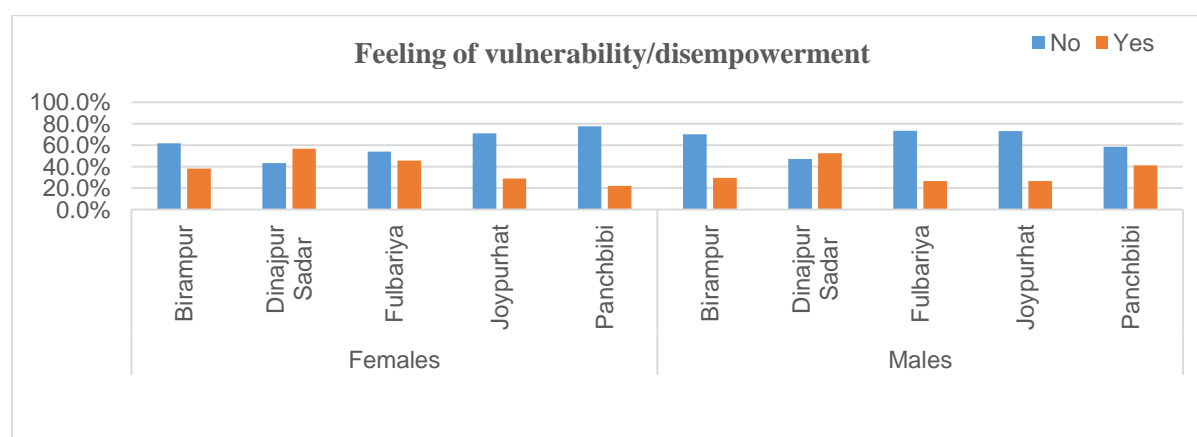
After conducting the Chi Square test it was found that $\chi(1) = 6.110$ $p = .013$, which implies that p value i.e., $0.013 < 0.05$, henceforth, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternate hypothesis. Henceforth, it can be concluded that there is statistical significance between Indigenous or Non-Indigenous and feeling of Vulnerability

Symmetric Measures ^c			
		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.080	.013
	Cramer's V	.080	.013

Observed phi value is less than 0.10, therefore it can be concluded that though there is statistical significance, but the association between indigenous or non-indigenous and their feeling of vulnerability are weakly associated.

Additionally, results also indicate that females on the whole feel substantially more vulnerable/disempowered than their male counterparts. Except Panchibibi where males feel much more vulnerable than females, the rest of the upazilas represent a gender skew against females. While the maximum number of women respondents who report a feeling of vulnerability is highest in DinajpurSadar (56.7%), Fulbari represents the maximum divergence between both genders (46%) females feel disempowered against only 26.6% males). DinajpurSadar in fact has an overall sense of disempowerment, including for males.

Figure 13 Incidence of self-assessed vulnerability – gender wise



While most respondents could not spell out the specific reason for this feeling, on an average about 17% of them reported poverty as the reason.

As a means of summarising at the same time providing a comprehensive understanding of the level of satisfaction and perception among the respondents regarding the governance of SSNP schemes in the five upazilas, the following table provides findings on several key parameters such as efficiency, fairness and transparency in running of SSNP schemes, the adequacy of benefits and their quality and the sensitivity, capacity and effectiveness of all stakeholders including government representatives, field workers and implementing authorities.

Table 32 Respondents' satisfaction level on various parameters of SSNPs across upazilas

	Very good	Good	Fair	Neutral	Bad	Very bad
Relevance of SSNPs						
Birampur	13.3%	44.4%	14.5%	.4%	18.1%	9.3%
DinajpurSadar	4.9%	50.8%	16.4%	0.0%	9.8%	18.0%
Fulbari	7.4%	34.0%	21.0%	0.0%	15.4%	22.2%
Joypurhat	2.4%	39.8%	35.1%	3.8%	14.2%	4.7%
Panchbibi	6.2%	41.0%	30.5%	1.4%	12.9%	8.1%
Ease of access to entitlements/benefits						
Birampur	12.9%	46.0%	15.7%	.4%	20.2%	4.8%
DinajpurSadar	3.3%	58.2%	12.3%	0.0%	14.8%	11.5%
Fulbari	3.1%	38.9%	22.2%	0.0%	19.1%	16.7%
Joypurhat	.9%	35.5%	31.3%	.5%	26.5%	5.2%
Panchbibi	4.3%	33.8%	28.1%	1.0%	26.7%	6.2%
Access to information on eligibility criteria, beneficiary lists, etc.						
Birampur	5.6%	31.0%	14.1%	.8%	36.3%	12.1%
DinajpurSadar	2.5%	27.0%	18.0%	0.0%	30.3%	22.1%
Fulbari	1.9%	25.9%	25.9%	.6%	25.3%	20.4%
Joypurhat	.9%	27.5%	34.1%	2.8%	28.9%	5.7%
Panchbibi	2.4%	33.8%	26.7%	4.8%	21.0%	11.4%
Sensitivity and approachability of government						
Birampur	6.0%	41.1%	22.2%	.4%	25.4%	4.8%
DinajpurSadar	.8%	35.2%	28.7%	0.0%	23.0%	12.3%
Fulbari	1.9%	35.2%	34.0%	1.9%	16.7%	10.5%
Joypurhat	.5%	28.4%	27.0%	4.7%	29.9%	9.5%
Panchbibi	4.3%	28.1%	34.8%	4.8%	24.8%	3.3%
Capacity of implementing agency/partner organisation						
Birampur	7.7%	40.3%	24.6%	8.5%	17.7%	1.2%

DinajpurSadar	0.0%	34.4%	45.9%	1.6%	10.7%	7.4%
Fulbari	3.7%	27.8%	37.0%	9.3%	17.9%	4.3%
Joypurhat	.9%	21.3%	45.0%	14.2%	18.5%	0.0%
Panchbibi	1.9%	11.9%	34.3%	33.3%	17.1%	1.4%
Capacity/efficiency of field staff of government						
Birampur	6.5%	33.5%	31.5%	7.3%	19.8%	1.6%
DinajpurSadar	.8%	34.4%	50.8%	2.5%	9.8%	1.6%
Fulbari	3.1%	22.2%	40.1%	5.6%	28.4%	.6%
Joypurhat	.9%	25.1%	44.1%	10.9%	18.0%	.9%
Panchbibi	5.7%	18.6%	29.0%	24.3%	21.9%	.5%
Capacity/efficiency of field staff of NGOs						
Birampur	6.9%	45.2%	25.4%	8.9%	12.5%	1.2%
DinajpurSadar	0.0%	49.2%	34.4%	2.5%	12.3%	1.6%
Fulbari	3.7%	37.7%	28.4%	8.6%	21.6%	0.0%
Joypurhat	6.2%	29.4%	32.2%	11.8%	19.0%	1.4%
Panchbibi	4.8%	25.7%	25.7%	31.9%	11.4%	.5%
Initiative-taking/proactivity of frontline workers						
Birampur	4.0%	34.3%	38.3%	3.2%	15.7%	4.4%
DinajpurSadar	0.0%	32.8%	46.7%	2.5%	16.4%	1.6%
Fulbari	1.2%	21.0%	48.8%	2.5%	25.9%	.6%
Joypurhat	1.4%	34.1%	37.4%	9.0%	17.1%	.9%
Panchbibi	5.2%	25.7%	39.5%	12.4%	15.7%	1.4%
Transparency of SSNP delivery						
Birampur	4.8%	21.4%	15.3%	1.2%	37.5%	19.8%
DinajpurSadar	0.0%	32.0%	26.2%	.8%	23.8%	17.2%
Fulbari	2.5%	24.1%	26.5%	.6%	35.2%	11.1%
Joypurhat	.9%	28.0%	31.8%	1.4%	32.7%	5.2%
Panchbibi	3.3%	31.0%	22.4%	5.2%	30.0%	8.1%
Fairness of SSNP delivery						
Birampur	4.4%	32.7%	29.0%	0.0%	27.0%	6.9%
DinajpurSadar	0.0%	37.7%	46.7%	.8%	11.5%	3.3%
Fulbari	0.0%	52.5%	25.9%	.6%	14.8%	6.2%
Joypurhat	2.4%	28.9%	37.9%	1.4%	21.8%	7.6%

Panchbibi	3.3%	49.0%	14.3%	2.4%	24.3%	6.7%
Adequacy of cash or in-kind benefits						
Birampur	3.2%	31.5%	24.2%	.4%	32.3%	8.5%
DinajpurSadar	0.0%	17.2%	60.7%	.8%	18.0%	3.3%
Fulbari	1.9%	33.3%	33.3%	.6%	27.2%	3.7%
Joypurhat	2.4%	43.6%	31.8%	2.8%	19.0%	.5%
Panchbibi	4.3%	32.9%	39.5%	6.2%	15.7%	1.4%
Quality of in-kind allowances (e.g. food-grains)						
Birampur	4.4%	59.7%	15.3%	.8%	14.1%	5.6%
DinajpurSadar	3.3%	34.4%	59.8%	.8%	1.6%	0.0%
Fulbari	3.1%	53.1%	34.6%	1.2%	5.6%	2.5%
Joypurhat	3.3%	50.2%	31.3%	2.8%	11.8%	.5%
Panchbibi	5.2%	41.4%	35.2%	4.8%	11.9%	1.4%

While the table is exhaustive and maps in detail the level of satisfaction across each upazila and across twelve important parameters, **important conclusions** drawn hereby are presented briefly below. On an aggregate level, the parameters on which respondents feel the worst are transparency of SSNP delivery and access to information on SSNPs (e.g. eligibility criteria, beneficiary lists, details of distribution, due processes, components of each scheme, etc.).

On these parameters 44.1% and 42.7% of the total respondents in the survey rated the performance as either ‘bad’ or ‘very bad’. Respondents felt quite strongly on other aspects which reflect on the governance of the scheme including sensitivity and approachability of government officials and ease of access to entitlements/benefits under SSNPs wherein about **a third of respondents rated their satisfaction at ‘bad’ or ‘very bad’**. On the capacity of field staff and pro-activeness of frontline workers, the respondents were more optimistic with a majority of them rating their satisfaction positively, but 20% of the respondents still deemed the government field workers inept. Qualitative interviews with CSOs also brought up capacity issues in Unions – from lack of training to government staff to shortage of manpower. The latter point was also strongly made by Upazila and Union domain-specific officers. KIIs also revealed that monitoring can be improved if manpower is increased.

On the adequacy of cash or in-kind benefits more than a quarter of all respondents pinned their satisfaction between ‘bad’ to ‘very bad’, whereas about 11% felt so strongly about the quality of in-kind subsidies (e.g. grains). This might have to do with the poor state of warehouses (for storing grains) in Unions, an issue which was brought to light in KIIs with Union Parishad members and Chairmen. **More than a quarter of all respondents felt that the SSNP delivery was unfair or very unfair**, while about 16% of the respondents felt that even the implementing agencies/NGOs weren’t capable of efficient delivery of SSNPs.

Recommendations by UPs and UPZs

Besides the almost universal call at both levels of government interviewed for an increase in the number of beneficiaries and also in the quantity of in-kind and cash allowances, both at the Union and Upazila level, the respondents (Chairmen and Vice Chairmen) have been able to provide other constructive suggestions for improvement in services and better SSNP delivery. These range from awareness building to better targeting of beneficiaries and are compiled below:

Table 33 Awareness Building Target for Beneficiaries

Union Parishad	UpazilaParishad
“For awareness generation, presentation through projector can be arranged to disseminate facts on SSNP delivery in the region, amount of allowances, time limit to collect them and related activities.”	“The literacy rate among indigenous and other vulnerable groups is very low. Therefore their idea regarding what to do and where to contact is very weak. In that case the literacy rate should be improved among them.”
“20% quota system should be introduced for indigenous groups. Vocational training should be arranged for them.”	“Spread of education among them should be increased. Actual improvement is possible by ensuring efficient use of their capabilities.”
“It will be better if the allowance is increased to taka 1000-1500.”	“Field staff should be more trained. All vulnerable groups should get equal treatment.”
“At first a survey should be conducted to get an estimate of wealth. Then after classification, people from lowest category should be selected as eligible.”	“If a survey is conducted at Union level, accurate beneficiary list can be made....Payment of all scheme related grant allowance should be completed via mobile banking.”

Civil society capacity

Now that it has been established that not only is the state (local government) unable to run the SSNP schemes efficiently while indulging in corrupt practices, it is in essence ‘missing in action’ in several ways. This void is often plugged by civil society through its role in both complementing government efforts as a partner in development, and also through checks on the accountability of government.

Respondents were first asked to report whether they were a part of a CSO/CBO/SHG at the time of the interview. The responses were highly dependent on upazila, and also on whether one is a beneficiary. Interestingly, **membership in CSOs is not significantly higher among beneficiary households**, and in fact much less in Panchbibi.

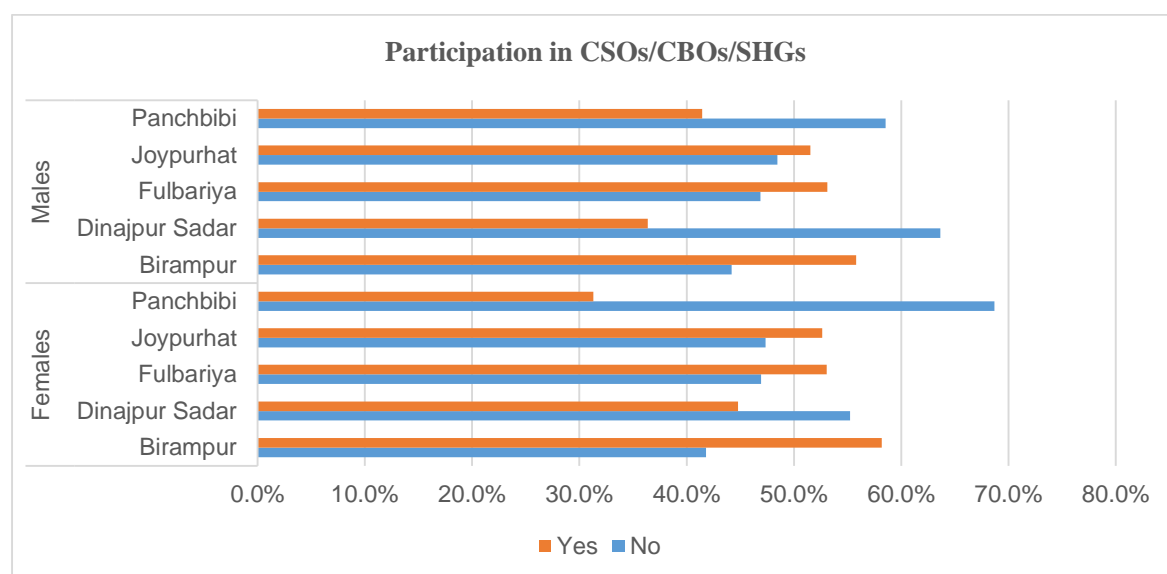
Birampur and JoypurhatSadar fared better with a high share of respondents who are members of CSOs. This is in line with the finding that the share of respondents who received information regarding SSNPs from CSOs/NGOs is among the highest in these two upazilas. Relatively high literacy rates in Birampur might explain high CSO participation there. Panchbibi, the poorest upazila in terms of occupational income, has the lowest CSO membership.

Table 34Whether respondent is a part of CSO/CBO/SHG

Non-Beneficiary	Upazila	Part of CSO/CBO/SHG
	Birampur	50.8%
	DinajpurSadar	40.0%
	Fulbari	52.3%
	JoypurhatSadar	48.7%
	Panchbibi	42.4%
	All upazilas	47.3%
Beneficiary	Birampur	63.1%
	DinajpurSadar	42.6%
	Fulbari	54.9%
	JoypurhatSadar	61.8%
	Panchbibi	26.9%
	All upazilas	51.0%
Total	Birampur	56.9%
	DinajpurSadar	41.0%
	Fulbari	53.1%
	JoypurhatSadar	52.1%
	Panchbibi	36.7%
	All upazilas	48.7%

Disaggregated by **gender**, the maximum gender-based skew is found in DinajpurSadar and Panchbibi, where the share of female respondents not participating in CSOs/CBOs are much higher than their male counterparts, 44.8% and 31.3% as against 36.4% and 41.4% of male respondents respectively. This is consistent with the finding that females in this two upazilas feel the most vulnerable compared to their male counterparts. The higher self-assessed vulnerability in females can potentially be attributed to very low female participation in community based and civil society organisations in these two upazilas.

Figure 14 Participation in CSO/CBO/SHG gender-wise



The results indicate that non-tribal people have higher participation rates in CSOs/CBOs/SHGs than tribal people. The analysis behind this can be explored in the box below.

Statistical Significance between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and Participation in CSO/CBO/SHG

In this study statistical Chi Square test was conducted to check if there is any statistical significance between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and Participation in CSO/CBO/SHG or not.

H_0 : There is strong and significant association between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and Participation in CSO/CBO/SHG

H_1 : There is no significant association between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and Participation in CSO/CBO/SHG

Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.067 ^a	1	.005		
Continuity Correction ^b	7.654	1	.006		
Likelihood Ratio	8.078	1	.004		
Fisher's Exact Test				.005	.003

After conducting the Chi Square test it was found that $\chi(1) = 8.067$, $p = 0.005$, which implies that p value i.e., $0.005 \leq 0.05$, henceforth, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternate hypothesis and it can be concluded that there is higher statistical significance found between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and Participation in CSO/CBO/SHG. Therefore it can be said that non-tribal are more participating in CSO/CBO/SHG than tribal.

Symmetric Measures ^c			
		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.092	.005

Observed phi value is less than 0.10, therefore it can be concluded that though there is statistical significance, but the association between Tribal/Non Tribal HH and their perception on discriminated against (i.e. denied entitlement under SSNP) is weak. That clearly indicates that those who are tribal, they perceived that that they are more discriminated for SSNP.

Interestingly the results show that there is no evidence to show that men are more likely to participate in CSHOs/CBOs/SHGs than women, or that beneficiaries are more likely to participate than non-beneficiaries. The statistical analysis to support these statements can be found in the Annex.

Impact of CSOs

Among those who reported participation in CSOs, it is important to understand what kind of changes associating with a CSO has brought about in their lives. Thus, the follow-up question would apply to those who are a part of CSOs and reveals that most respondents don't have an idea about it. This means their participation in CSOs might not have been driven by a specific goal in mind, or that they are passive members of the CSOs. Revealingly, several respondents (more than a third on average) reported that their involvement in CSOs have helped them with additional income. Interestingly, one does not note a significant change difference in the number of people who relied on CSOs for income support between beneficiary and non-beneficiary households. Not only are those outside the SSNP net relying on CSOs, but so are those who already benefit from government sponsored SSNPs. It is possible that several of these respondents are in fact part of SHGs or MFIs. The maximum share of respondents who said CSOs provide a platform for collectivisation and unification of their interests was in JoypurhatSadar. The upazila also had the highest share (41%) of non-beneficiary households whose requests for information at the Union/UpazilaParishad were turned down. The latter might have triggered a feeling for the need to collectivise through CSOs to acquire an increase in bargaining power.

Table 35 Outcome of CSO participation

	Upazila	No response	Awareness & capacity building	Collectivization	For education purposes	Income support	Others
Non-Beneficiary	Birampur	49.2%	2.4%	15.9%	2.4%	28.6%	1.59%
	DinajpurSadar	60.0%	1.3%	4.0%	0.0%	34.7%	0.00%
	Fulbari	47.7%	0.0%	8.1%	0.0%	40.5%	3.60%
	JoypurhatSadar	51.3%	0.0%	14.1%	0.0%	32.7%	1.92%
	Panchbibi	57.6%	0.0%	6.1%	0.0%	35.6%	0.76%
	All upazilas	52.7%	0.7%	10.3%	.5%	34.2%	1.67%
Beneficiary	Birampur	36.9%	4.9%	8.2%	7.4%	37.7%	4.92%
	DinajpurSadar	57.4%	2.1%	2.1%	0.0%	38.3%	0.00%
	Fulbari	45.1%	7.8%	11.8%	0.0%	35.3%	0.00%
	JoypurhatSadar	38.2%	1.8%	20.0%	0.0%	38.2%	1.82%
	Panchbibi	73.1%	0.0%	6.4%	0.0%	20.5%	0.00%
	All upazilas	49.0%	3.4%	9.3%	2.5%	33.7%	1.98%
Total	Birampur	43.1%	3.6%	12.1%	4.8%	33.1%	3.23%
	DinajpurSadar	59.0%	1.6%	3.3%	0.0%	36.1%	0.00%
	Fulbari	46.9%	2.5%	9.3%	0.0%	38.9%	2.47%
	JoypurhatSadar	47.9%	.5%	15.6%	0.0%	34.1%	1.90%
	Panchbibi	63.3%	0.0%	6.2%	0.0%	30.0%	0.48%
	All upazilas	51.3%	1.7%	10.0%	1.3%	34.0%	1.78%

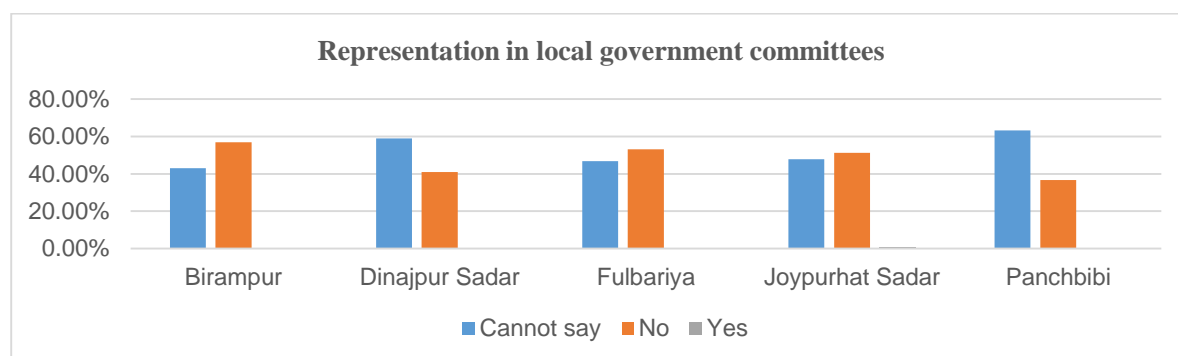
It is worth noting that while only 0.7% of all non-beneficiary respondents reported that they are more aware or feel capacitated from their participation in CSOs, about five times the number of households among beneficiaries said they are more aware and empowered. Even though the absolute numbers here are quite low, it indicates that some have benefited from CSO participation (possibly resulting in their being SSNP beneficiaries) while others have not.

Respondents who were a part of CSOs were also asked whether the concerned CSO/NGO is forthcoming with information and help solicited. While many respondents said they did not know (reinforcing their **passive membership**), among the remaining ones, most responded affirmatively. This establishes that the local CSOs are generally responsive to the needs of the community.

Respondents were also asked whether they, through their association in CSOs, managed to get representation in local government committees. In several upazilas none of the respondents responded affirmatively.

The participation of local peoples in decision-making committees is thus near to zilch. There was no significant difference in the response based on whether the respondent was a beneficiary of SSNP or not. Accordingly, follow-up questions regarding name of committees, their purpose and outcomes were rendered redundant.

Figure 15 Whether representative in any local committee?



To gauge the degree of activity and engagement by CSOs, respondents were asked whether they received any training from CSOs and on an average only about 17% of the respondents said that they did receive training. While 21.2% of the beneficiary households reported having received training, only 14.3% of the non-beneficiary households said the same. Birampur and JoypurhatSadar had the highest number of respondents who received training from CSOs. These two upazilas also had among the number of people accessing information regarding SSNPs from CSOs.

Table 36 Whether received any training from CSOs

	Upazila	Received any training from CSOs
Non-beneficiaries	Birampur	23.0%
	DinajpurSadar	4.0%
	Fulbari	10.8%
	JoypurhatSadar	16.0%
	Panchbibi	12.9%
	All upazilas	14.3%
Beneficiaries	Birampur	28.7%
	DinajpurSadar	14.9%
	Fulbari	15.7%
	JoypurhatSadar	29.1%
	Panchbibi	11.5%
	All upazilas	21.2%
Total	Birampur	25.8%
	DinajpurSadar	8.2%
	Fulbari	12.3%
	JoypurhatSadar	19.4%
	Panchbibi	12.4%
	All upazilas	16.9%

Not only did a majority respondents in all upazilas said they did not receive any training from CSOs, a vast majority of those who did could not specify what training it was. Few respondents mentioned that they had received agriculture and livelihood related training. **About 1-2% of the respondents received training on SSNPs, its features and components, with the exception of Fulbari where more than 3% received SSNP-**

related awareness trainings. A follow-up question on whether the trainings were helpful or beneficial was met with high non-response, indicating that trainings did not yield actionable positive outcomes among recipients.

CSO partnerships with government

A good measure of capacity of a CSO is to assess its ability to get itself represented in the government, and not only get heard but provide inputs to formulation of strategies to be adopted for implementation of projects. Its ability to partner the government at all levels and be taken seriously is among the major indicators of its success in engendering inclusive multi-stakeholder led-development. The household survey has already revealed the lack of involvement of the community in SSNP delivery.

Civil society (which is an aggregation of disparate individual voices in the community) engagement also seems on the lower side. One of the KIIs revealed that the Union Parishad sat on a carefully prepared list of beneficiaries (done by a CSO) for two years and eventually 'lost' it. The interview revealed that their members do have informal interactions with Union functionaries and an effort is made to connect with leaders as well. However, they have not been able to find a place in formal meetings where strategies and plans are discussed.

The representatives of CSOs in another FGD agreed that the involvement of civil society is at present very low or nil. They said that due to the nature of their grassroots involvement, their engagement in the process might actually drastically improve service delivery, but interactions by way of meetings and consultations with the government are very rare.

It is also reported that **there is no scope for civil society members to be part of a government committee**, without that process itself being a function of favouritism or exclusion. **There is no objective, well-laid out plan to include civil society members in the local decision-making** and in the rare cases that they are involved, it might not even be a bona fide case. People favoured by Chairmen are brought in the loop, and Union Parishad meetings are by and large elusive to CSO members.

Another FGD with different civil society participants (NGOs) revealed that sometimes Union Parishads do appreciate help from civil society in terms of helping out with the list of beneficiaries, but it's rare for them to eventually consider it. In one of the discussions with CSO members, a participant reported being part of the beneficiary selection process, but also said that his contributions to the list were removed after a while. **CSOs involvement in SSNP delivery remains largely limited to awareness generation and informal monitoring.** The household survey revealed that even on this front, the household survey finds that much less than a quarter of all households receive information on SSNPs from CSOs, while more than 2/3rd of all respondents reported not having witnessed any advocacy drive on SSNPs.

Meanwhile, **monitoring as a formal process of governance in service delivery remains the exclusive domain of the Union and Upazila Parishads alone.** Some civil society stakeholders indicate that it may be productive to hand out monitoring roles to third party CSO bodies.

An NGO participant in another FGD revealed that he was involved in providing maternal allowance and also had a go at monitoring the distribution. He revealed that it might have helped though that he had been a Member of the Union before. This also points to **informal personal networks influencing level of CSO involvement in government processes.** Another participant said that the government does not meet with NGO personnel, even though on paper some CSO representative might have been enlisted for meetings. These members do not have specified duties and most are not even aware which government committee they belong to.

In another FGD, where the usual things were agreed upon, i.e. mal-governance in SSNP delivery, patronage networks, lack of education and awareness, one of the CSO participants held the view that when they visit the Upazila as a member of civil society, the government representatives tend to value their importance on the basis of funds at their disposal, meaning that bigger NGOs with generous funding manage to have a seat at the high tables. Most participants agreed that **money speaks when it comes to involvement of CSOs in government processes.** A member of a CSO reported being part of the Union Parishad's development committee, and that

female members in his NGO are in touch with Union Parishad female members regarding allowances and project cycles.

The qualitative research broadly indicated that about a few meetings (3-6) are held with government, but their content and outcome is hardly productive, and these **meetings are often an exercise in formality**. There was complete agreement though that fuller involvement of CSOs/NGOs is bound to be a game changer in terms of improvement in all aspects of SSNP delivery to the targeted households. It is important to note here that in terms of transparency, the household respondents were of the view that NGO/CSO personnel are largely accountable and transparent. Their capacity is also more highly rated than that of government field workers. 88% of the households in another SSNP study conducted in 2009⁴⁹ revealed that involvement of the community would cause better targeting of beneficiaries.

While the abovementioned findings point toward very little involvement of CSOs in actual delivery of SSNPs, an UNDP study on SSNPs, cited earlier in this report, point to a supportive role of NGOs in the implementation of SSNPs. The divergence in findings may be owing to totally different locational sample (none of the five upazilas in this study figured in the 24 odd upazilas covered in the UNDP study). Also only three among the nine SSNPs covered in this study were part of the UNDP study.

It remains to be seen whether the NSSS, 2015 vision of having NGOs participate in the process of identification of the poor and vulnerable population is achieved over time. KII with a national level CSO revealed that some policy-making inputs are provided by bigger research-based organisations including specific recommendations on how to ensure better targeting of SSNPs and reducing corruption.

On inclusion within CSOs and management

Almost every CBO that participated in the research reported having **women, widows, elderly and indigenous members**. But they **don't have disabled members**. Nearly all participated CBOs claimed to have almost half of members as females. Females also participate in forming committees and are actively involved in its workings. The fact that gender as well as other discriminations are not made in the process of building a CBO is an encouraging sign of a progressive society. EVPRA could use this practice as a stepping stone for its intervention areas.

Only some of the NGOs/CSOs that were covered held periodic elections for members or management positions. Some CSOs implied lack of financial resources and infrastructure was visibly weak in some cases. But in terms of self-assessment, most participants seemed committed despite challenges, and did not accord importance to good management practices within their organisation in the face of massive challenges in the community. Individual commitment levels and a desire to bring good governance seemed to be driving the CSO activity across upazilas. KIIs and FGDs conducted revealed that participants were unable to respond on questions related to governance, management practices, etc. within the organisation, indicating lack of conceptual clarity on these issues. On specific probing management practices was found lacking.

Following the preceding discussion on CSO challenges, a scaling has been attempted for purpose of understanding level of challenges in CSOs and is based on responses received by participants in FGDs (and KIIs) conducted with NGOs and CBOs. The codes/scales here are applied to qualitative data for the purpose of condensing, consolidating and explaining the text heavy discussions that comprise the data.

⁴⁹http://www.nfpcsp.org/agridrupal/sites/default/files/CF_1_of_07_Final_report-Approved_2.pdf

Exhibit 3: Assessment of capacity challenges on a scale (1: Very good – 5: Very bad)

SN	Parameter	1	2	3	4	5
1	Networking with government (G2C)					
2	Involvement in SSNP delivery					
3	Internal knowledge					
4	Physical Infrastructure					
5	Human Resources strength					
6	Management practices					
7	Commitment / enthusiasm levels					
8	Inclusion					

Table 37 Description of parameters and scales deployed

Parameter No.	Explanations
1	The scaling of Networking with Government (G2C) has been arrived at by analysing responses to questions on number of meetings held with government, degree of involvement with government in the developmental processes, and other responses that have cropped up during discussion without triggers. E.g.: “We try but the chairman isn’t available”; “There is no mechanism for CSO involvement”
2	This parameter was relatively easier to code given that the discussion centred on SSNPs. Questions such as presence in government committees for SSNPs, involvement in creating beneficiary lists, monitoring, any other aspect, etc. were used to analyse this question. E.g. of responses: “there is no scope for CSO monitoring in SSNPs”; “We made lists but they didn’t do anything with it for two years”
3	Internal knowledge is gauged through responses on SSNPs itself, and on other scheme specific details, availability of data in organisations, etc. For example, blank responses were drawn on some scheme specific details while there was better understanding of SSNP delivery, processes, etc.
4	This parameter was gauged through observation of offices, furniture, files, availability of computer, etc., and also through responses that cropped up organically during discussions.
5	Responses at the CSO/NGO level did not betray lack of manpower.
6	There was lack of clarity on what management practice entails and on specific probing, information received was scant and did not point toward effective management practice. Elections were not periodic in some cases, and missing in others.
7	The enthusiasm and commitment levels were gauged through observation and was generally quite high. Responses were spirited and the discussions carried on for long revealing high commitment to the cause.
8	This parameter was gauged through specific responses to the question on membership of various vulnerable populations, and also through observation.

The baseline study has established that the SSNPs are inadequate in terms of not just coverage of people, but also the quantity of allowances that beneficiaries are entitled to. Moreover, the experience is worsened by a myriad governance failures including mis-targeting, political influences, rampant corruption in SSNP delivery. In addition, Union and Upazila administration are suffering from low budgetary allocation for SSNPs, and a consequent resource crunch, that impacts on delivery of SSNPs. Meanwhile, communities and CSOs are almost excluded from every aspect of SSNP delivery, from beneficiary selection to disbursal of benefits. Not surprisingly, although most respondents reported satisfaction on SSNPs in general, the satisfaction levels in the community is low on a range of critical parameters including transparency of SSNP delivery. The next section outlines the EVPRA logframe indicators and maps baseline values against the proposed targets, and also provides recommendations per indicator and other recommendations for EVPRA project based on the quantitative and qualitative findings.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction to Recommendations

The Baseline study findings discussed in the previous sections have provided a thorough situational assessment of the marginalised population identified as the target group of the EVPRA project. The findings have also provided insights into the levels of awareness among the communities about SSNPs, the gaps in awareness and the modes through which information has been disseminated. The governance structure behind the delivery of SSNPs and the level of satisfaction among the intended beneficiaries has also been probed. Processes of beneficiary selection as well as advocacy channels and methods have been analysed. Additionally, it has also provided crucial information about the capacity of the CSOs to augment better service delivery and the need for capacity augmentation has also been identified. These findings in isolation merely provide a situational assessment at the baseline. In order for the data to be relevant, firstly the inferences and conclusions have to be studied in conjunction with the project objectives. The findings have to be put in a logical chain of causality leading to the project impacts. The chinks in the processes and activities have to be identified and recommendations from the findings need to be used to suggest alternative processes. Secondly, the findings are reflective of the quantum of change that can be realistically expected and the specific tweaks in the programme design that can lead to such changes. Finally, the findings should provide very clear cut directions to the project team about the areas which need more attention so that the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the intervention is not compromised.

Logframe Review

Based on the presentation of the findings in the previous chapter, this section comprises of a review of the logframe, indicators for the Indicator Tracking Table (ITT) and some key recommendations for the programme implementation strategies, and for ongoing project monitoring and learning.

The Overall Objective (**O1.1.**) of the project is that there is an Increased percentage of the target population with increased satisfaction regarding the delivery of SSNPs by the end of the project. Regarding satisfaction levels, EVPRA hopes to have 80% of the target population, of whom at least 40% are women, report greater satisfaction levels on SSNP delivery. Current levels of satisfaction on various disaggregated parameters, such as perceived transparency and fairness of SSNP delivery, adequacy of cash allowances, and ease of access to entitlements, are on the lower side. There are 3 strategic objectives of the project that seek to contribute to achieving this overall objective, and an introductory overview of these is summarised below:

SO1: To strengthen organisational capacity and sustainability of targeted local indigenous CSOs.

There have been major shortcomings noted in the organisational and functional capacities of the CSOs through the course of the baseline assignment. These findings therefore support the EVPRA project design and indicate the need for the EVPRA intervention. The findings indicate there needs to be a well thought out strategy to capacitate CSOs and help them build on their skills to strengthen information dissemination and power advocacy campaigns. The findings reveal that it is not just human resource and infrastructural constraints which impede the work of CSOs. There is insufficient internal knowledge, scant funding support, inadequate skills to network and advocate changes and general lack of effective management practises.

Under this strategic objective, EVPRA proposes to measure progress through indicator **SO1.1** which will analyse the Increased percentage of indigenous CSOs exhibiting improved organisational and management capacity by the end of the project. This indicator and the target proposed for SO1.1 is analysed further in

Table 38 below. Additionally there are three key results that the project strives towards to meet this strategic objective.

Expected **Result 1.1**, is that Functional indigenous CSOs exist with effective leadership in practice. The two indicators that will be used to measure this result, are **R1.1.1**, the percentage of CSOs in the target areas implementing new organisational leadership mechanisms and **R1.1.2** the percentage of CSOs with women and people from marginalised backgrounds taking up leadership positions. The established targets for both these indicators were 80% and 40% respectively by the end of Year 2. It was found in the baseline survey that many CBOs have the presence of women and it is recommended that this be leveraged further by the project. The existing women participants could be used to mobilise women from within the community to form CBOs. The recommendation would be to identify natural women leaders from within the communities and then use their experience to build CBOs with adequate representation of women. Capacity building workshops for CSOs should not just focus on enhancing the knowledge of SSNPs but also on organisational management which will include HR management, bookkeeping, website development and MIS maintenance.

Under **Result 1.2** the project aims to ensure that Indigenous CSOs have increased their understanding of human rights and entitlements. The indicator that will be used to monitor progress toward this result is **R1.2.1** which will measure the Number of trainings provided by CSOs to indigenous and other vulnerable people on human rights and SSNP entitlements by the end of the project. The target of "153 trainings" comes to a little more than 3 per month. This is a steep ask, although seems adequate given that currently more than 85% of all respondents reveal they have never received any training from CSOs. CSOs provide information to SSNPs to only about 10% of all households currently.

Expected **Result 1.3** is that there is Effective networking and collaboration between relevant government and non-government organisations (GOs and NGOs) is established. The indicator to measure this is **R1.3.1** which will measure the Number of significant meetings annually, including 1 annual SSNP policy conference by the end of the project. This indicator is relevant, because although a few meetings are already held between GO and NGOs, their outcome and achievements are not understood. We note that there needs to be a target on the number of significant meetings targeted per year to analyse its adequacy and that EVPRA will develop the target after the completion of the baseline report.

SO2: To Promote transparency and accountability of existing government SSNPs

Under this strategic objective, EVPRA proposes to increase the Percentage of vulnerable people (specifically including indigenous groups and women) with increased access to information on existing SSNPs by the end of the project (**SO2.1**), as well as to monitor the Number of new mechanisms introduced by local government to enable vulnerable communities to voice concerns on the delivery of SSNPs by the end of the project (**SO2.2**).

The SO2.1 target of having 60% of the targeted vulnerable households gaining increased access to information on SSNPs by the end of the project is highly relevant and potentially achievable through partly through capacity enhancements of CSOs. For instance 87% of the households are not aware of grievance redress mechanisms for SSNPs and about a quarter have no idea about the eligibility criteria for SSNPs. Also, word-of-mouth is the source of information an overwhelming majority of people, which has its pitfalls. For instance, information cannot be verified and there is a potential for wrong information to spread as well. Also, local government representatives point out that low literacy levels are a major impediment because not many people are aware of policies and procedures, and more so about their rights as a citizen.

There are two key results that the project strives towards to meet this strategic objective. The targeted **Result 2.1** of ensuring “Inclusion of indigenous CSO representatives in local government committees” (**R2.1.1.1**) is very appropriate since none of the households reported having been part of any local government committee, and while several CSO representatives have said that although they tried to participate and get representation in local government committees and meetings their efforts have mostly not yielded any results. To achieve this will be a gradual process and can only begin with the capacity development of CSO members. We recommend that the CSO members need to build trust within the communities that they work with and also help in facilitating engagement with the government officials. There needs to be a bottom up legitimacy attached to CSO members which could ultimately help them in being a part of the government committees. But, the focus from the very beginning needs to be on making the process of beneficiary selection more representative and inclusive by providing the community with opportunities to make inroads into government bodies.

Expected **Result 2.2** aims to achieve that Target communities are satisfied with access to SSNP information, and indicator **R2.2.1** lays down that an increased percentage of beneficiaries from the target communities will be satisfied with access to SSNP information. Currently, the figure that are satisfied stands at below 40% and there is a lot of road to cover. On important parameters like information regarding SSNPs and transparency of delivery more than 2/5th of the respondents rated their satisfaction level as either ‘bad’ or ‘very bad’. We consider that there are three ways in which satisfaction on information can be enhanced. The first way would be to provide information that pertains with the specifics of schemes rather than the generic idea of entitlement to SSNPs broadly. This would also include more information on processes, including grievance redress and other follow up functionalities / accountability mechanisms. Effective communication provided by EVPRA through a well designed communication strategy will go a long way in reaching out to the intended beneficiaries and in helping them to use the information provided.

Secondly, satisfactory information will also be possible when the right information is available at the right time. This indicates that there should be dedicated community level personnel accessible to the communities to help them out with grievances and queries. This recommendation would go a long way in making the existing systems more efficient and less arbitrary, because currently informal dispute resolution mechanisms are prevalent, e.g. through dialogue and settlements. Thirdly, it is also recommended that villages should have boards with information on SSNPs displayed so that the beneficiaries can access the information whenever they require it.

SO3: Increase the total number of vulnerable people with access to SSNPs from the government.

The EVPRA logframe has, under Specific Objective 3, set a target of having 30% of the targeted households gain access to SSNPs by the end of the project (**SO3.1**). The same can be achieved through a mix of grassroots work and policy level dialogue. This is because the Unions, even if SSNP delivery is governed well, will still be working with the ability to distribute only a limited number of beneficiary cards (capable of meeting only part of the demand) unless changes occur at the level of Ministries/funding authorities.

Expected result R3.1 is that The vulnerable are demanding rights and entitlements set out in SSNP policies. The indicator for **R3.1.1** aims to evidence an Increased number of eligible applications to SSNPs. This is a challenging ask, but there is no doubt over its relevance and aptness. The process will be gradual and can only come about when adequate information is disseminated to the beneficiaries. The workshops on human rights and entitlements should not just be focused on making information available but also on making people aware about the necessity of seeking their legal entitlements and the correct process for this.

EVPRAs should monitor the level of awareness of the communities and the trainings, and content of interface meetings should be tweaked accordingly.

The household survey revealed that most households are not primarily dependent on SSNPs for sustenance and mostly rely on agricultural or wage labour for income. Even so their ability to access the SSNPs is severely limited with an average of 73.42% of the respondents having encountered failure in trying to access SSNPs. Expected results **R3.2** and **both indicators R3.2.1 and R3.2.2**, intend to identify and evidence these barriers and present them at the national level so that solutions and mitigation measures can be adopted in collaboration with key stakeholders at the policy level. Publications produced under this result will seek to advance access to SSNPs by the most vulnerable (R3.2.2). The sustained engagement with the local government, participation of CSO members in the government committees and well-designed advocacy plans can ultimately lead to this result and strategic objective being met. However, it is necessary to be realistic about the possibilities of such change. Policy level changes take time and have to be legitimised by a larger evidence base. Therefore, as outlined in the EVPRA project design, the project will need to consider larger networking beyond the project areas to work towards these goals.

The baseline values that the survey arrived at are mapped below against the proposed target for some of the indicators.

Table 38 EVPRA target v. baseline values (select indicators)

Logframe Indicator	Logframe Proposed target	Baseline values	Analysis & Recommendation
O.1.1 Percentage of the target population with increased satisfaction regarding the delivery of SSNPs by the end of the project.	<i>80% of the target population (disaggregated by indigenous and other vulnerable groups), of whom at least 40% are women by the end of the project.</i>	<p>38.37% dissatisfied with transparency of SSNP delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 44% female dissatisfied with transparency of SSNP delivery • 45.6% male dissatisfied with transparency of SSNP delivery • 28.3% non tribals dissatisfied with transparency of SSNP delivery • 35.6% tribals dissatisfied with transparency of SSNP delivery <p>30% dissatisfied with ease of access to entitlements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 32.4% female dissatisfied with ease of access to entitlements • 28% male dissatisfied with ease of access to entitlements • 42.1% non tribals dissatisfied with ease of access to entitlements • 52.4% tribals dissatisfied with ease of access to entitlements <p>26% dissatisfied with fairness of SSNP delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 27.4 % female dissatisfied with fairness of SSNP delivery 	<p>To measure "increased satisfaction" regarding the delivery of SSNPs we recommend that EVPRA should benchmark progress according to 4 defining factors; the transparency of SSNP delivery; ease of access to SSNPs; fairness of SSNP delivery; adequacy of cash allowances. We have provided baseline values for each of these. The top-line value for each of the 4 criteria has been calculated based on an average of % of respondents who responded with 'bad' and 'very bad' across upazilas.</p> <p>As outlined in the logframe, satisfaction regarding the delivery of SSNPs can also be measured by communities and LAs on an ongoing basis through community gatherings and score card results as part of the CVA process.</p> <p>To address dissatisfaction with SSNP transparency, ease of access and the fairness of SSNP delivery, we recommend that EVPRA should co-create with Union and Upazila Parishad a formal</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 27.4% male dissatisfied with fairness of SSNP delivery • 23.3 % non-tribal dissatisfied with fairness of SSNP delivery • 39.6% tribal dissatisfied with fairness of SSNP delivery <p>12.4 % dissatisfied with adequacy of SSNP cash allowances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13.2 % female dissatisfied with adequacy of SSNP cash allowances • 12.6 % male dissatisfied with adequacy of SSNP cash allowances • 11.8% non-tribal dissatisfied with adequacy of SSNP cash allowances • 14 % tribal dissatisfied with adequacy of SSNP cash allowances 	<p>grievance redress system and monitor its performance initially. Focus should also be on to mandatorily require community participation in beneficiary selection, and the same should be achieved by putting in place a clearly-laid out system with processes and protocols. For example, there should be a well-defined composition of beneficiary selection committees with adequate community/civil society representation (with parameters for their inclusion outlined). This can be achieved through partnering Upazila governments while conducting dialogues with the Central government ministries directly.</p> <p>Specifically to address the dissatisfaction regarding the adequacy of cash allowances there is a need for EVPRA to focus on improving quantity of SSNP allowances through this dialogue and advocacy.</p>
O.1.2 Number of policy, system, structure, practice or programmatic changes to improve access to SSNPs by the most vulnerable people, specifically including indigenous groups and women, by the end of the project.	<i>At least 3 changes by the end of the project (e.g.: increased budgetary allocation towards provision of SSNPs; administrative actions that reduce leakage; access to information provisions; introduction of explicit community targeting guidelines etc).</i>	Baseline Value: Zero.	<p>We suggest that this indicator be adapted to "Number of policy, system, structure, practice or programmatic changes to improve access to SSNPs by the most vulnerable people, specifically including indigenous groups and women, contributed to by EVPRA during the grant lifetime".</p> <p>This is because we do not agree that the "Number of policy/programmatic changes, etc" may be impact indicators directly attributable to EVPRA. EVPRA can only contribute to this through advocacy, and the contribution towards this would need to be defined qualitatively.</p>
SO1.1 Increased percentage of indigenous CSOs exhibiting improved organisational and management capacity by the end of the project.	<i>At least 60%CSOs exhibiting improved organisational and management capacity, of which at least 20% are women's organisations, by the end of the project.</i>	Baseline Value: 0% of the indigenous CSOs interviewed (a total of 2) exhibited organisational and management capacity. 8.3% (1 of 12 CSOs surveyed) reported some organisational and management capacity). 0% of the CSOs surveyed were women's organisations.	<p>We note that the baseline values for this indicator are not statistically robust as the sample size is not statistically significant.</p> <p>Moving forward, there are however certain tangible milestones which could be included into the ongoing</p>

		<p><i>Qualitative finding:</i> Most CSOs surveyed (91.7% or 11 out of 12 CSOs) revealed a lack of organisational / management practices and respondents could not answer questions on leadership.</p> <p>None of the CSOs surveyed were women's organisation as such.</p>	<p>monitoring framework including a functional MIS for survey data, streamlined book keeping practises, website development to aid advocacy measures and inclusive HR policies with a focus on inclusion. A capacity assessment tool needs to be prepared with adequate standardisation measures for the same and we recommend that the EVPRA team follows this up with the CSO assessment team.</p>
SO2.1 Percentage of vulnerable people (specifically including indigenous groups and women) with increased access to information on existing SSNPs by the end of the project.	<i>60% vulnerable people (disaggregated by indigenous and other vulnerable groups, including women) have increased access to information on SSNPs by the end of the project.</i>	<p>Baseline Values:</p> <p>92% of the respondents have some basic knowledge of SSNPs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 89% tribals have basic knowledge of SSNPs • 91% females have basic knowledge of SSNPs <p>Only 1.9% of all HHs received their information from official sources (Union Parishads).</p> <p>25% of the respondents are unaware of eligibility criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25.2% tribals are unaware of eligibility criteria • 27.5% females are unaware of eligibility criteria <p>87.7% of the respondents are unaware of grievance redress mechanisms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 91.2% tribals are unaware of grievance redress mechanisms • 86.5% females are unaware of grievance redress mechanisms 	<p>We note although overall 92% of respondents had some general knowledge about the existence of SSNPs, the survey findings also revealed that word-of-mouth was the primary source of information on SSNPs. As such it's important to note that the veracity of this information cannot be verified and there is potential for wrong information to be disseminated in this way. Accordingly, we recommend that access to information be monitored by EVPRA project teams initially.</p> <p>Furthermore we recommend that the indicator should be re-caste as a composite indicator with weight given to all functional components of SSNPs. This would help track critical knowledge areas such as eligibility criteria and grievance redress mechanisms, which are otherwise getting camouflaged in a broad definition of "access to information on SSNPs". Based on this, the outreach content and methods could be continuously revised.</p>
SO2.2 Number of new mechanisms (e.g. inclusion of CSO representatives in local government committees, establishment of complaints and redress systems, transparency and accountability	<i># of mechanisms per local authority by the end of the project.</i>	Baseline Value: Zero	<p>As outlined in the EVPRA project design, EVPRA should conduct innovative outreach activities with the local government in a spirit of cooperation and not confrontation. Invite members of the local bureaucracy for village level meetings, training camps and workshops and</p>

boards etc) introduced by local government to enable vulnerable communities to voice concerns on the delivery of SSNPs by the end of the project.			<p>propose crucial changes backed by evidence.</p> <p>Continue outreach efforts through follow up meetings with various levels of stakeholders.</p>
SO3.1 Increased percentage of vulnerable people, including indigenous groups and women, have access to SSNPs by the end of the project.	<i>30%vulnerable people (disaggregated by vulnerable groups, specifically including indigenous groups and women) have access to SSNPs by the end of the project.</i>	<p>Baseline Values:</p> <p>An average of 5% of respondents currently report access to the 9 specific SSNPs.</p> <p>37% of the respondents currently report themselves as a beneficiary of SSNP schemes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31.6% tribals currently report access to SSNPs • 38.7% females currently report access to SSNPs 	<p>For EVPRA it makes sense to use the figure that specifically relates to the 9 SSNPs, but this might not preclude the fallacy of respondents not being aware of schemes by formal name and thus potentially not reporting use/non-use correctly.</p> <p>Vulnerability is gauged by respondent's self-assessment (i.e. whether they report themselves as a beneficiary or not).</p>
R1.1.1 Percentage of indigenous CSOs in the target sites implementing new organisational leadership mechanisms (e.g. new board standards, periodic/annual elections, inclusion of women, operational structures and systems etc) for effective CSO governance.	<i>80% CSOs by the end of year 2 of the project.</i>	<p><i>Baseline Value: Zero</i></p> <p><i>Qualitative finding:</i></p> <p>Only 2 of the CSOs surveyed were indigenous CSOs. Most CSOs(91.7% or 11 out of the 12 CSOs surveyed) revealed a lack of organisational / management practices and respondents could not answer questions on leadership.</p> <p><i>Qualitative finding:</i></p> <p>Some CSOs (3 out of 12 CSOs surveyed) had women members in leadership positions. Neither of the 2 indigenous CSOs surveyed were led by females. Focus may be on indigenous women and other vulnerable groups, e.g. disabled in leadership positions.</p>	<p>We note that the baseline values for this indicator are not statistically robust as the sample size is not statistically significant. We recommend that the baseline values for this indicator be explored further during the CSO capacity assessment. In particular, a standardised capacity assessment tool for CSOs should be prepared and certain tangible milestones for example increased visibility in order to increase networks and alliances; improved legal literacy of staff members; streamlined accounting practises in the organisation to bring in fiscal transparency; HR manuals so as to mainstream inclusive policies within the CSO; strengthen communication and documentation skills of the staff members to aid advocacy and evidence building efforts should be included.</p> <p>We recommend that as planned in the EVPRA design, the project conduct organisational management trainings for CSOs. The trainings should include-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR Management with a focus on inclusion and transparency of functioning

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIS management • Bookkeeping and auditing • Development of websites • Evidence documentation and reporting
R1.1.2 Percentage of CSOs with either women, or other vulnerable people in a leadership position by the end of year 2 of the project.	<i>40 % CSOs with women, or other vulnerable people in a leadership position by the end of year 2 of the project.</i>	<p>Baseline Value: 41.6% of CSOs (5 out of 12 CSOs) interviewed already have women in leadership positions. 0% of (0 out of 2) indigenous CSOs have women in leadership positions.</p> <p>None of the non-indigenous CSOs interviewed have people from indigenous minorities in leadership positions. 100% of the indigenous CSOs interviewed (2 out of 2) were led by indigenous peoples.</p>	<p>We note that the baseline values for this indicator are not statistically robust as the sample size is not statistically significant. We recommend that the baseline values for this indicator be explored further during the CSO capacity assessment. We also advise that EVPRA should include diversity portfolio of CSOs as one of the important outputs which they have to report on a regular basis and update the information on their MIS.</p> <p>The diversity profile of the CSOs indicates the social composition of the staff members of the CSO. Since, the work of the CSOs aims at reaching out to marginalised populations, their own functioning should be seen through the lens of inclusion and equity. If the internal profile of the organisation is not representative of the diversity in gender, caste, religion and ethnicity, then the field interactions will not benefit from the lived experiences of various marginalised communities. The goal of inclusion should be seen as a continuum from the access and opportunities provided at the level of the communities to the inclusion of marginalised communities in the CSO in decision making roles.</p> <p>Despite the question over the reliability of the baseline value, due to the finding that the proposed target regarding the % of women in leadership positions has already effectively been met, we recommend that the target should not just look at the designations held by women</p>

			<p>and people from marginalised communities but focus on the kind of work allocation, decision making power and parity in pay.</p> <p>Based on consultations and secondary analysis, weights or scores need to be given to the various alternatives under the four heads proposed. For instance, it is easier to recruit people from marginalised positions for field roles but there might be reluctance to put them in positions of authority like the board of governing members, or the director of the CSO. Each designation needs to be graded based on the existing profile of position holders. The grading should be done by also taking into account the possibility of interaction and engagement with the government. Secondly, merely including women or people from marginalised backgrounds to satisfy the diversity criteria is not enough. Inclusion indicates parity of pay and equal division of responsibilities based on skill sets. There should be a score provided to the CSOs if these criteria are met. A composite score based on these 4 indicators should reflect the final status of the CSO. All this information can be captured through an open ended semi-structured questionnaire and can be then progressively graded.</p>
R1.2.1 Number of trainings provided by CSOs to indigenous and other vulnerable people on human rights and SSNP entitlements by the end of the project.	<i>153 trainings provided by the end of the project.</i>	<p>Baseline Value: Zero.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 85% respondents report Zero trainings from CSOs on human rights and SSNP entitlements 15.7% HHs receive information on SSNPs from CSOs. 	<p>The baseline value can be zero as the indicator seeks to measure the number of trainings provided over the project period. We advise that there will be a need to conduct a needs assessment first before proceeding with the trainings. The CSO mapping and organisational capacity assessment assignment will address this. We consider that following this assessment, 3+ trainings on SSNPs per month is advisable.</p> <p>For the purposes of ongoing monitoring and mid and end-</p>

			line surveys, respondents could also be asked the question, "Compared to the previous 12 months or 24 months, have you attended more trainings by CSOs on SSNP entitlements & human rights?" This would enable EVPRA to measure whether respondents report a comparative increase in the number of trainings provided generally.
R1.3.1 Number of significant meetings ⁵⁰ between GO and NGOs with the specific purpose of advancing vulnerable peoples' access to SNNPs, specifically including indigenous groups and women.	<i>Target value: # significant meetings annually, including 1 annual SSNP policy conference by the end of the project.</i>	<p>Baseline Value: Zero</p> <p><i>Qualitative finding</i></p> <p>Most CSOs (11 out of 12 CSOs surveyed) don't hold meetings with GOs. Those who do manage 3-6 per year. The outcomes of these meetings are also unknown which means that their significance as defined by EVPRA cannot be measured and is open to interpretation.</p>	<p>We note that the baseline value for this indicator is not statistically robust as the sample size is not statistically significant, and we do not have enough information regarding the "significance" of the few meetings reported as occurring to assess them. As such we recommend that the baseline values for this indicator be explored further during the CSO capacity assessment if possible. At mid and end-line it may be possible to include a retrospective indicator to assess this further, again using comparison with the previous period.</p> <p>We recommend that EVPRA should work towards building a larger alliance of NGOs and CSOs which can be organised as a federation. This will provide the necessary backing to the demands on SSNP access and accountability of delivery by showing numbers to back up demands.</p> <p>Specifically, there should at least be 6 meetings between GOs and NGOs per year, with an effort of coalescing interests and demands on SNNPs. The annual conference should be inclusive and have representation from smaller CSOs, instead of large well-funded institutions who may lack understanding of ground realities.</p>

⁵⁰"Significant meetings" refers to the relationship/interaction between communities and government at any level, where this interaction is for the purpose of agreeing specific reforms to SSNP delivery. This is measured based on evidence collected through social accountability tools, and other service delivery monitoring processes.

<p>R2.1.1 Number of indigenous CSO representatives included in local government committees.</p>	<p><i>50 CSO representatives by the end of year 3 of the project, of which at least X% are women.</i></p>	<p>Baseline Value:</p> <p>0% of the indigenous CSOs (0 out of 2) with whom qualitative consultations were conducted were part of local government committees.</p> <p>16.7% or 2 out of 12 of the CSO representatives with whom qualitative consultations were conducted were part of local government committees. Of these none were women.</p> <p>Notably, none of the community members (HH respondents) were part of the local government committees either.</p>	<p>We note that the baseline value for this indicator is not statistically robust as the sample size is not statistically significant. We recommend that the baseline values for this indicator be explored further during the CSO capacity assessment.</p> <p>R 2.1.1 can be revised as Number of CSO representatives included in local government committees, specifically including X Number/% of indigenous CSO representatives .</p> <p>We propose that by the end of year 3 of the project, at least 33% each of the CSO representatives who gain entry into local government committees are women and tribal/indigenous.</p> <p>Additionally, we recommend that there should be leadership training camps conducted for CSO representatives on a regular level with different trainings for grooming women leaders. Leadership trainings should come after dedicated legal training workshops for all CSO leaders.</p>
<p>R2.2.1 Increased proportion of eligible people in the target communities with satisfactory access to SSNP information by the end of the project.</p>	<p><i>% increase in eligible people with satisfactory access to SSNP information (disaggregated by indigenous and other vulnerable groups, including women).</i></p>	<p>Baseline Values:</p> <p>42.70% dissatisfied with access to SSNP information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 53.2% of tribals are dissatisfied with access to SSNP information • 42.4% of females are dissatisfied with access to SSNP information 	<p>We note that it was not possible to verify the eligibility of the respondents to SSNPs and as such we recommend the removal of the word "eligible" from the indicator. With government cooperation it may be able to assess this at mid-line and end-line and supplement the indicator and findings with this additional data.</p> <p>We also advise that the EVPRA should conduct a communication needs assessment and devise a through communication strategy to guide the information dissemination, and develop channels of inter-personal communication by developing a “Kala Mancha’ (Performance wing) of CBOs. This way the CBOs can use</p>

			<p>local art forms to disseminate information on SSNPs on a continuous basis.</p> <p>EVPRAs should leverage the power of mobile technology and the burgeoning network connectivity for spreading information. Provide updates on form submission processes, deadlines and responsible authorities.</p>
R3.1.1 Increased number of eligible applications to SSNPs	<p><i># of eligible applications to SSNPs (disaggregated by gender and indigenous and other vulnerable groups) by the end of year 3 of the project.</i></p>	<p>Baseline Value:</p> <p>5.32% of all HHs avail 1 of the 9 target SSNPs for the EVPRA programme</p> <p><i>*All HHs theoretically includes eligible and non-eligible HHs (refer to page 54 – box)</i></p>	<p>We have been unable to provide baseline data for the current number of eligible applications received by local government, which is noted as a limitation of this study.</p> <p>As such we advise that the project revise the indicator as follows: Increased number of applications to SSNPs. Target HHs should be finalised after confirming with LAs that the target HHs are eligible in the first place.</p> <p>We also suggest that EVPRA could focus on strengthening beneficiary selection processes and fool-proofing applications by roping in civil society and helping applicants with application forms, collating requisite documents, attending meetings, etc.</p> <p>If the project is to retain this indicator, or report against this at mid- or end-line, we recommend that WV seeks to obtain this data as a matter of priority from the local government in order to make this comparison. To support an increase in eligible applications, we advise that the project should encourage Union level small meetings of groups to encourage the rate of application.</p>
R3.2.1 Number of changes in national level policies by the end of the project.	<p><i>At least 3 progressive changes in the policies by the end of the project (E.g.; consolidating schemes into fewer ministries; improving national level policy; improving national level</i></p>	<p>Baseline Value: Zero.</p>	<p>Policy level dialogues and consultations with ministries, mainly Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Social Welfare should be the measure of the progress in policy level dialogue rather than the number of changes brought</p>

	<i>coordination; strengthening management and administrative delivery systems etc).</i>		about. It is a more realistic measure of the efficacy of advocacy measures than changes which depend on a multitude of factors and stakeholders.
R3.2.2 Number of publications items and research pieces presented and disseminated at national level, to government and civil society, to advance access to SNNPs by the most vulnerable.	<i>10 research and/or publication document items by the end of the project.</i>	<i>Baseline Value: Zero</i>	The targeted number seems fine, but dissemination should be a priority, at both national and local levels and at all nodal ministries and civil society stakeholders.

Focus areas and recommendations for improvement

Apart from the indicator specific recommendations, there are programme areas which need to be focused upon based on the findings of the study. Some of the key programme areas and the recommendations which could be used by the project have been specified in this section.

Defining the scope of satisfaction regarding SSNPs and SSNP delivery

There are a few new challenges that the baseline findings reveal and are not directly part of the EVPRA log frame. For instance, *quantity*⁵¹ of SSNPs as against high focus on *quality* of SSNP delivery. Likewise, there is already high sense of entitlement regarding the citizens' rights to certain basic services as part of a social contract. Accordingly, relatively few number of people report not having tried to access SSNPs at all, as against a high number of them (73.4% of all HHs) having tried but failed. **The EVPRA log-frame sets out a target of increased number of eligible applications to SSNPs. Instead, the focus should be on strengthening beneficiary selection processes and fool-proofing applications.**

While the local level governance challenges are significant, the study at the household level and the stakeholder interviews with the government and CSOs indicate that the resources at the disposal in the Unions (number of beneficiary cards and quantity of allowances) are way below the actual demand. A large chunk of vulnerable population continues to remain out of the social safety net, not only due to mal-governance, but in many ways due to lack of adequate funding for SSNPs. Accordingly, **policy level consultations and dialogues with the nodal ministries should be an important part of the EVPRA intervention.** Some focus is also due on sensitising governments about the need to involve civil society at the local level for better implementation of its programmes.

Transparency and Accountability measures:

Lack of awareness cannot always be subsumed to the lack of channels of communication or lack of a strategy to pass across key messages to the target population. In this case, there is a shortage of information in the public domain and hence, transparency rather than communication strategies have to be identified as the problem. One critical aspect noted is that the **district wise budgetary allocations of various SSNPs are not available in the public domain** which impacts any information dissemination or advocacy campaign to be planned. There is a need to work towards bringing these sub-allocations into the public

⁵¹Which nonetheless is a component of satisfaction – which is a stated goal of EVPRA

domain so that CSOs could be empowered with adequate information to take down to the level of the beneficiaries. **Putting across the information in the public domain has to be built into the policy level advocacy framework.** The nodal ministries have to be approached on a regular basis and pressure needs to be put on them to make the information public. This pressure can ideally be strengthened by organizing the CSOs into a collective. There is a need to work on the networking of CSOs beyond the regions where the programme is being implemented so as to give legislative advocacy more traction.

A well-laid out procedure can be set up toward ensuring accountability of Unions/Upazilas. The survey of respondents categorically reveals that ‘the transparency and accountability of existing government’ is questionable and thus the as-is situation is conducive for the intervention logic to pass muster. While 36% of respondents reported a negative experience at the Unions, about 51% all respondents have revealed that inducements and favours can help with SSNPs in terms of access and the quality of access. In fact, 2 out of every 5 respondents report the prevalence of bribery in SSNP delivery. About 34% of all respondents have also been discriminated against, the survey reveals. Thus, on several accountability and transparency related measures, Union/UpazilaParishads fare quite poorly. **Transparent information provision on selection criteria can go a long way in assuaging these fears.**

Targeting and beneficiary selection:

One of the major concerns highlighted in the baseline is the faulty and unhinged process of beneficiary selection marked by nepotism and political pressure. There is an urgent need of streamlining the process of beneficiary identification and selection so that the access of the marginalised community to the SSNPs can increase. There is **a need for the CSOs to work on the identification and creation of a database for the extremely poor population of the areas in which EVPRA works.** Evidence generation and thorough documentation possibly in collaboration with the Union councils can be a strong step towards proper identification of beneficiaries. A **participatory identification of poor (PiP)** process should be a part of the work of the CSOs and using steps like social and wealth ranking, a data base of the poor in specific areas need to be prepared. It must be ensured that the PiP process is inclusive and does not eliminate people due to lack of interest or political pressure. CSOs should prepare region **specific poverty maps** and together with the data base, this could prove as a good **resource for advocacy** with the government.

The intervention will have to adapt its strategies to the fact that the target upazilas have very low literacy rates, particularly in indigenous households where the share of illiterates is as high as upwards of 2/3rd of all such HHs.

Grievance redress process:

The lack of a well-laid out grievance redress system at the Union/Upazila level is striking as is the lack of knowledge in the community regarding the prevalent processes for redressing complaints. This is a major barrier to governance, particularly when complains on corruption and nepotism, as well as quality issues are so rampant. Accordingly, **the implementation may seek to co-create with Union Parishads and nodal ministries a uniform grievance redress system and monitor its functionality in the initial stages. Importantly, communities should also be made aware of their rights to have grievances redressed and the due processes to be followed therein.** In order to speed up the process **the use of mobile phones** is going to be useful here as well. The programme could aim at proposing and developing a hotline number for grievance redress and keep a dedicated CSO staff member in charge of addressing grievances. If successful, the same can later be scaled up across the country as a way of replicating an established best practice.

Addressing gender skewed access:

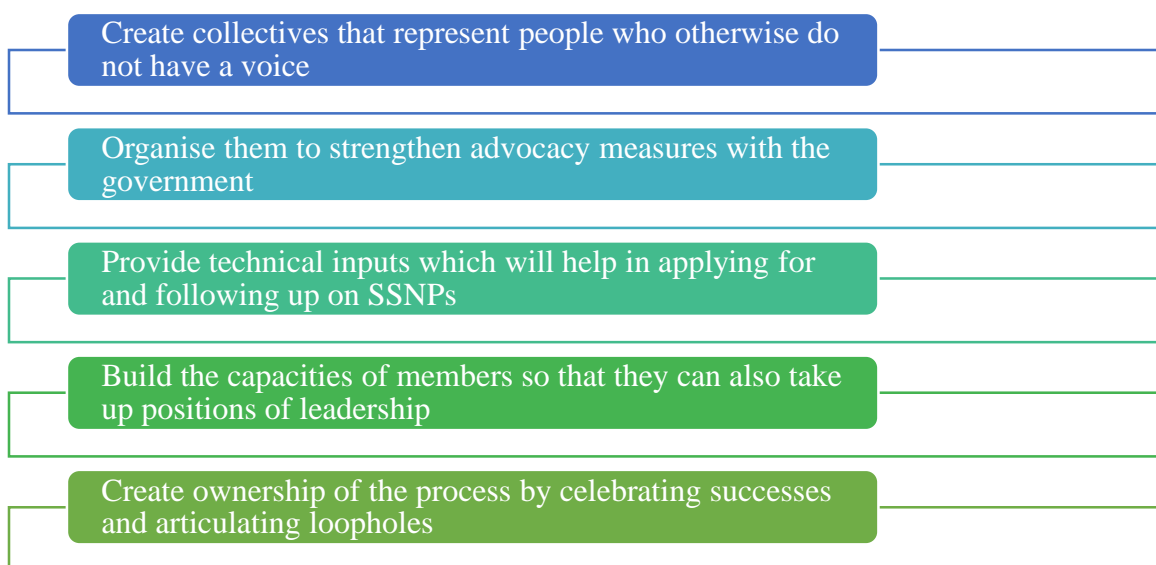
One of the most significant findings of the baseline study pertained to the gap in the level of information and access that women have to SSNPs. It is understood that it is not only the lack of information but the

overall patriarchal construct of the society which is hindering the participation of women in the process and hence, keeping them away from properly accessing the SSNPs. **CSOs have to work towards encouraging women to form collectives in the village and drive up membership.**

The one way of handling this is to counter individual insecurities by empowering them with collective strength. There should be women headed CBOs formed by the CSOs in the operational areas and special legal training camps just for women. The process should begin with female members of the CSOs reaching out to the villages and identifying natural women leaders from within the community. The natural leaders should then be used to mobilise and organise other women of the village to participate in the meetings of the CSOs and be a part of the process of PiP and information dissemination. The women should be encouraged to form community based organisations and should be handpicked to take up leadership based positions. The gradual increase in mobility and articulation of the women is needed to make a sustainable and long term transition towards better access of SSNPs.

Increasing participation in CSOs

There was a clear correlation noted between the strength of CSO participation and the level of knowledge about the specifics of SSNPs. At the same time it was observed that education, income status and gender composition do play a major role in spurring CSO membership. For instance, Birampur has the highest number of educated people and the highest CSO participation. In the Panchbibi upazila, where the occupational income is the lowest. There are five steps which CSOs need to conduct at the grass-root level in order to work on the educational and income based gaps observed. When voluntary participation is lower, the programme model needs to take in an intensive outreach model pegged on stressing the importance of SSNPs. Triggering the importance of being a part of a collective and the role of the collective in improving access to SSNPs has to be focused upon. There are five aspects which the CSOs have to focus upon in order to improve participation. The following figure identifies those aspects.



Facilitating engagements with the government

The findings should form a basis for the objectives which the programme should focus on while working on extensive outreach and communication strategies for increasing participation of the marginalised communities. A discursive and non-confrontational engagement with the government is absolutely crucial to improve access to SSNPs. This has to be done through planned advocacy efforts by the CSOs as well as

prepared engagements by the community members with local government officials. There is a lack of confidence, fear and reluctance noted among the beneficiaries about reaching out to the government to demand their entitlements. The programme needs to focus on building those bridges by capacitating the communities they work with as well as sensitising the union parishad/upazila members to take cognizance of the grievances of the people.

Most respondents reported that Union and Upazila officials are at the receiving end of the corruption. Meanwhile, both the context analysis and qualitative findings indicate that the Union Parishads, on account of their centrality to SSNP delivery and proximity to the community, are most prone to not just corruption but also local political influences. Accordingly, **it is important that the EVPRA interventions target Union Parishads on a priority basis as part of its LA strengthening programme.** Unions should also be sensitised about the benefits of inclusion of communities/civil society in better implementing developmental programmes, especially in the backdrop of limited manpower and resources – which is identified as a supply side challenge in SSNP delivery. This could be done through workshops, interface meetings between the officials and the community/CSO members.

The second aspect of facilitating engagement is to build on the capacities of the CSO members. The programme would have to conduct capacity building workshops for CSO members on leadership development and people centred advocacy. It is very important that advocacy is understood from an information and evidence point of view so that the members are equipped with data to justify their demands. Therefore, there need to be trainings conducted on participatory evidence building exercises like social audits, PIP and wealth ranking. Engagement with the government needs to be considered as a pre-requisite for meeting project objectives and not just a desired activity.

R 1.3.1 should be monitored effectively in order to ensure that channels of communication between the CSOs and the government officials are always open and improve over time.

The final aspect would be to work on the confidence and the skills of the community to reach out to government officials. The first step would be to identify natural leaders from within the community and equip them with adequate information about the administrative structure. The community members need to be absolutely aware of the specifications of the SSNPs, the nature of their entitlements and the redress mechanisms available to them in order to communicate effectively with the government officials. Some of the aspects that need to be focused upon by the CSOs while working with the marginalised communities include-

- Enhancing their understanding on the roles of the local administration in disbursing SSNPs and identifying beneficiaries
- To approach government representatives with a positive attitude to address issues of faulty selection or service delivery
- To express their ideas in a clear and complete manner

The programme needs to look at providing platforms to encourage communication between government representatives and community members. The number of meetings conducted should also be built into the log frame so that interaction is actively pursued.

Enhancing effective communication:

Effective communication is a cornerstone of the project and is going to be very critical to the way the project progresses in the coming years. The baseline findings identified that while people are aware about their entitlements, there is much left to be communicated in terms of the specifics of the SSNPs. It just

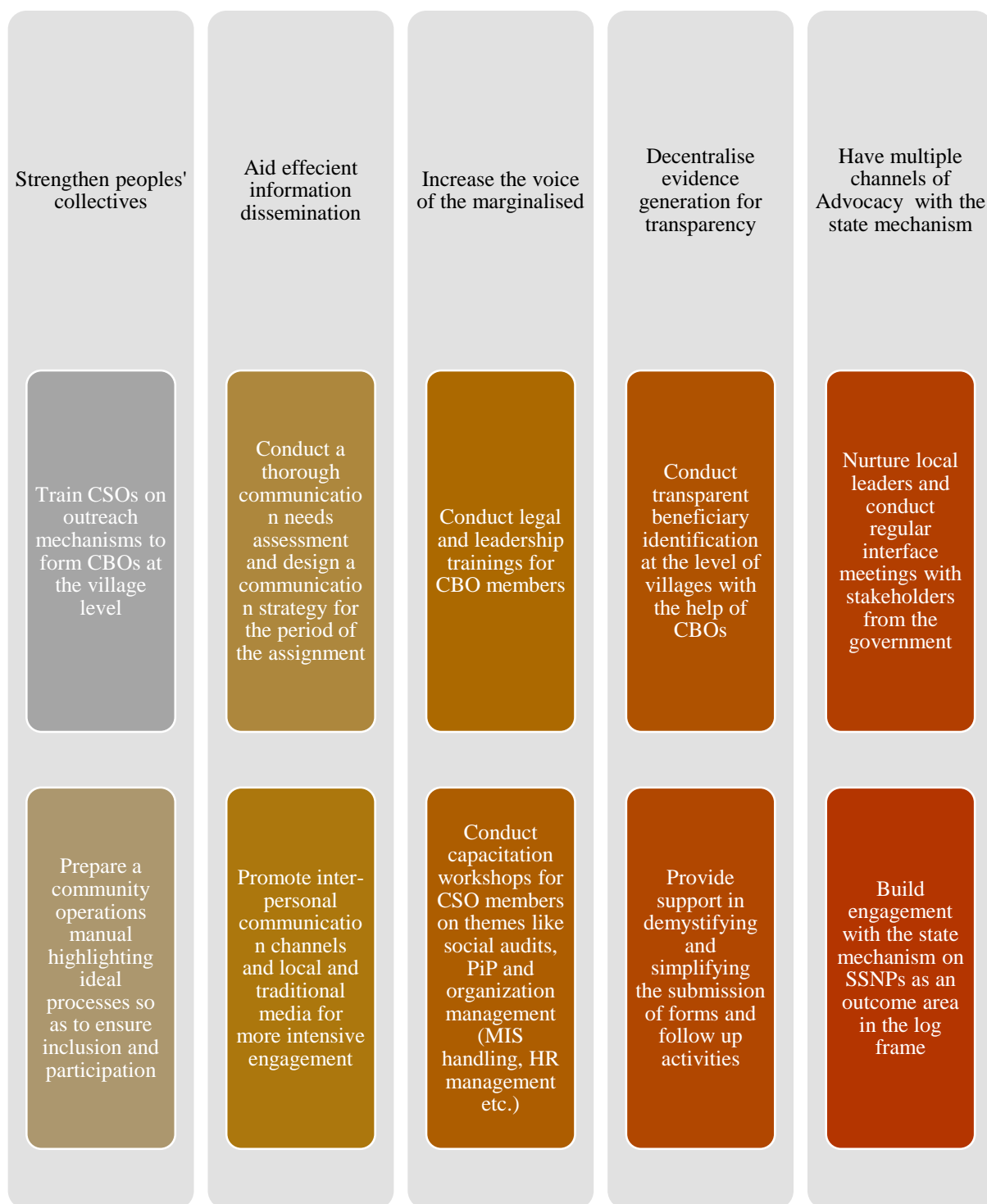
reveals that there is no concerted communication plan which is being implemented and it is being done in an ad-hoc manner. The programme needs to understand the communication requirements thoroughly and commission a communication needs assessment to identify the crucial areas in which communication is not up to the mark. Secondly, a communication plan needs to be put in place clearly outlining all the information which needs to be disseminated and the most effective ways of doing the same.

Most CSOs reported that they do not work exclusively on SSNPs but are aware about and committed to address the challenges in SSNP delivery. The enormity of challenges demand an in-depth scheme-specific knowledge of SSNPs. Only about 15% of the respondents said that they have witnessed SSNP awareness programmes. Likewise, less than 10% of all respondents received their SSNP related information from CSOs/NGOs. Since respondents are relatively more positive on the intent and accountability of CSO personnel, **there is a potential for higher satisfaction levels on SSNP delivery (which is also a targeted outcome of EVPRA) once CSOs, equipped with in-depth knowledge and dedicated personnel for SSNPs, are involved in it.**

The success of the intervention will partly hinge on whether it is able to leverage the high prevalence of word-of-mouth information sharing (the source of information on SSNPs for almost 90% of all households, which means villages or hamlets comprise information clusters). Following this logic, CSOs should encourage and initiate formation of community based organisations (CBOs) at the village level (i.e. VBOs) to provide a platform for collectivisation of interests. This would also encourage people to more forcefully demand their rights, while providing them with self-confidence and leadership skills. The communication strategy needs to look at inter-personal communication as a mode of reaching out to people with low educational qualifications and no proper employment opportunities.

The use of mobile phone is poised to drive success of EVPRA given very high ownership of mobile phones, compared to mass media assets (such as radio and TVs). The use of mobiles has been a proven success in engendering development in several developing countries including in Bangladesh. SMS campaigns can be done, for example, to provide updates on SSNPs, vital information on schemes, etc. that currently elude the community. Use of technology will also reduce budgetary requirement for conducting mass awareness campaigns. Particularly with awareness drives, higher usage of audio-visual communication tools, such as documentaries would be useful, in addition to leveraging the popularity of local/traditional group communication modes such as oral communication, public gatherings, plays, etc.

The recommendations based on the findings can be summed up in a five pronged approach which the project could adopt to improve the access of the marginalised communities to SSNPs they are entitled to.



7. CONCLUSIONS

This report has attempted to analyse information collected through the EVPRA baseline survey regarding the socio-economic context and status of SSNP delivery and access in five upazilas that are targeted under the intervention.

Specifically, it has provided baseline values for indicators in a wide range of areas, including: demographic, social and economic status of households, level of awareness regarding SSNPs and extent and quality of access to services under it. Where baseline values have not been provided these can be established through further dialogue with government and CSOs. In addition, information has been collated from government and civil society stakeholders regarding challenges/barriers to SSNP delivery. The findings from this study are expected to be used as a benchmark against which progress made by the EVPRA intervention in the target communities can be established and measured.

The summary of key findings have been presented in the Executive Summary at the beginning of this report. The findings mostly paint an unsatisfactory picture regarding the governance of SSNP schemes and the level of access that households manage given not only the huge demand-supply mismatch but also governance issues such as corruption, nepotism and political interference.

The situation is aggravated by demand side bottlenecks such as widespread illiteracy, low exposure to mass media, poor actionable awareness on SSNPs, and a general feeling of vulnerability and disempowerment that restricts the target population from forcefully demanding their rights to SSNPs, which are meant as a mechanism for the State to meet its Constitutional obligation to ensure social equity.

The level of satisfaction regarding delivery of SSNPs is largely on the lower side, especially on parameters such as transparency and availability of and access to important information. Both current beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, males and females, tribals and non-tribals are by and large affected by poor service delivery, the survey finds, with differences in their degree in some parameters.

In this context, the EVPRA intervention is not just timely, but also has set out for itself a set of objectives very much in alignment with the need of the hour. The Recommendations section provide a review of specific indicators of the logframe and also provides some recommendations regarding the same. Some suggestions are also provided regarding the way forward for the project in terms of strategy and focus.

8. ANNEXURES



SSNP service delivery in Dinajpur, Bangladesh



**This project is funded by the
European Union**



**This project is implemented by World Vision in
collaboration with Pollisree and PUMDO**

“The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of World Vision, Pollisree and PUMDO and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.”