SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND PRODUCTION LINKED TO IMPROVED NUTRITION STATUS, RESILIENCE, AND GENDER EQUITY

HOUSEHOLD CENSUS (HHC) AND WELLBEING ANALYSIS

ABOUT SAPLING

The Sustainable Agriculture and Production Linked to Improved Nutrition Status, Resilience and Gender Equity, (SAPLING) is a six-year, USAID-funded Resilience Food Security Activity. The program commenced in October 2015 and has since worked with over 57,000 households in Bandarban District of the Chittagong Hill Tracts region. The program supports the Government of Bangladesh to improve gender-equitable food security, nutrition, and resilience of vulnerable households.

USING A MULTI-SECTORAL APPROACH, SAPLING HAS:

- Increased household access to diverse and nutritious foods
- Promoted maternal and child health and nutrition
- Improved household and community resilience

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SAPLING HOUSEHOLD CENSUS AND WELLBEING ANALYSIS

In November 2017, SAPLING completed a household census (HHC) and well-being analysis as part of its body of formative research. The HHC was used to inform the project about the participant population and community structures.

The specific objectives of the household census, were to identify:

01 Demographic information of all households
02 Eligible SAPLING participants
03 Available service providers and education, health, and market facilities
04 Potable water facilities

HHC qualitative and quantitative methods used:

01 Survey
02 Transect walks
03 Social maps
04 Wellbeing analysis
05 Household lists
06 Questionnaires

SAPLING enumerators were from the Chittagong Hill Tracts, had experience working with local communities, and had the appropriate language skills.

HOUSEHOLD CENSUS FINDINGS

A total of 57,004 households were surveyed from 1,577 villages (paras) in the five SAPLING sub-districts (upazilas). Urban areas where program activities were not planned were excluded, along with 36 villages where security and/or extreme remoteness made it impossible for staff entry.

Population characteristics

TOTAL POPULATION OF 5 SUB-DISTRICTS
265,992

GENDER RATIOS
Women: 49% | Men: 51% | Intersex: 0.01%

MOST POPULATED UPAZILA
Lama: 116,625

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE
4.67

LOWEST AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE
4.43 in Lama

HIGHEST AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE
5.06 in Ruma

Over 90% of households reported living in their sub-district for more than five years. Almost one-quarter of the sample (25%) was under five years of age. Adolescent girls (aged 10-19) also accounted for a significant percentage of the total population at 11%.

Ethnicities

There are 12 ethnic groups in Bandarban District, each with their own cultures and languages.

Bengali households	Marma households	Mro households
46%	30%	8%
26,354	17,278	4,516

1% or 578 households
had members of more than one ethnic group

11% or 6,320 households
were headed by women

14% of households in Lama
were headed by women

55%
of respondents were married

47% average literacy rate
(lower than national average of 73%)[1]

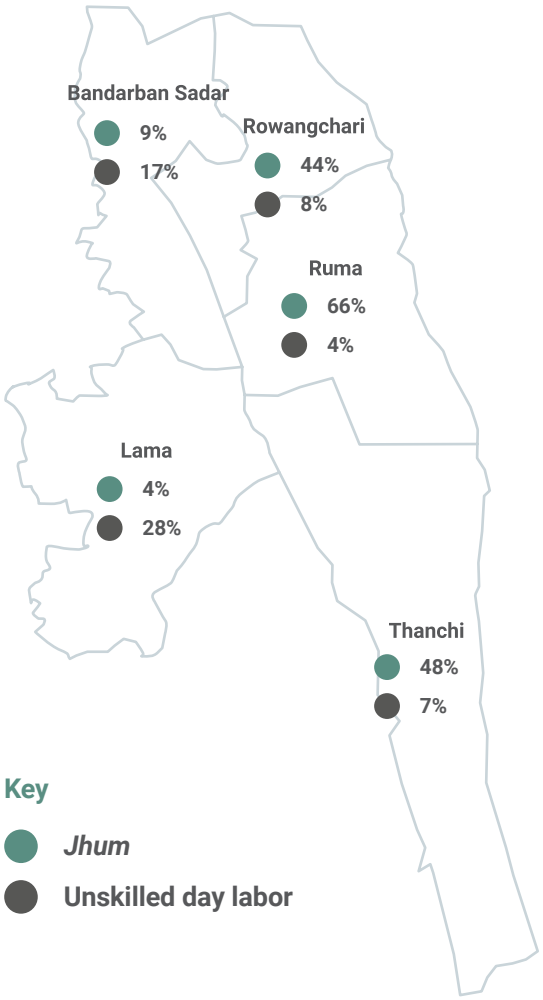
[1]http://uis.unesco.org/country/BD

Sources of income

The most prevalent primary source of income was *jhum* farming, which is a traditional form of shifting agriculture, practiced by ethnic minority groups. *Jhum* farming was followed by unskilled labor, paddy farming, agriculture day labor, other forms of farming, small entrepreneurship, and skilled labor.

Jhum farming	20%
Unskilled day labor	19%
Paddy farming	13%
Agriculture day labor	10%
Farming other than paddy	6%
Small businesses	6%
Skilled day labor	5%

Primary income sources by region



ACCESS TO ASSETS, SERVICES, AND FACILITIES

Mobile phone access

66%
households surveyed owned a mobile phone

67%
households surveyed had access to mobile phones

73%
households in Lama owned mobile phones

47%
households in Thanchi owned mobile phones

88%
households in the Bandarban municipality (pourashava) of Bandarban Sadar had mobile phones

6%
households in the Rekmari union of Thanchi had mobile phones

Electricity

28% (compared to 76% national average) households on average had access to consistent electricity supply

48%
households in Bandarban Sadar had access to consistent electricity supply

3%
households in Thanchi had access to consistent electricity supply

37%
through solar and other sources

14%
households on average owned radios and televisions

Access to improved sanitation and safe drinking water

8%
households reported improved sanitation access (access to covered toilets)

58%
households reported access to safe water

Access to safe water per sub-district

Lama	77%
Bandarban Sadar	65%
Rowangchari	42%
Ruma	17%
Thanchi	15%

Savings

Using a form of savings was low, with only 31% of households reporting having any form of savings. Of the households that had savings, the majority had savings in bank accounts (51% of households), and microfinance institutions (56% households). Only 15% of total households saved through a savings group.

Disasters

27%
households reported to have experienced some form of disaster in the previous 5 years

54%
households in Thanchi reported to have suffered from disasters in the previous 5 years

19%
households in Bandarban Sadar reported to have suffered from disasters in the previous 5 years

30%
households lost livestock to disease in the previous 5 years

24%
households experienced excessive flooding in the previous 5 years

21%
of households experienced animal attacks on crops in the previous 5 years

Other studies in the SAPLING formative research, and later, learnings through project implementation revealed that loss of assets due to flooding was so common that inhabitants often did not consider that to be a disaster.

Homestead Food Production

33%
of households across the 5 sub-districts engaged in home gardening for the 6 months prior to the study

46%
households in Lama engaged in home gardening for the 6 months prior to the study

16%
households in Ruma engaged in home gardening for the 6 months prior to the study

Jhum cultivation

Jhum cultivation was one of the most significant sources of income among ethnic minority households. This form of cultivation involves shifting cultivation of plots which are often located far from the household.

29%
households across 5 upazilas engaged in *jhum* cultivation

78%
households in Ruma were engaged in *jhum* cultivation

73%
households in Thanchi were engaged in *jhum* cultivation

59%
households in Rowangchari were engaged in *jhum* cultivation

Livestock rearing

Poultry, cow/buffalo, and goat/sheep rearing was a significant livelihood activity for many households.

Poultry	55%
Goat/sheep	34%
Cow/buffalo	20%

Conclusion

SAPLING's HHC informed targeted, focused interventions based on participant and community needs. The use of both qualitative and quantitative methods allowed for a rich variety of information to be collected to better inform the project about participant's lives and needs.

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