

## **Final Report**

### **Mid-term Review for the PROSHAR Project in Bangladesh**

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**Submitted to**

**ACDI/VOCA**

**via email:** [zarney@acdivoca.org](mailto:zarney@acdivoca.org)

**by**

**Moneval Solutions Ltd, UK**

**([www.moneval-solutions.com](http://www.moneval-solutions.com))**

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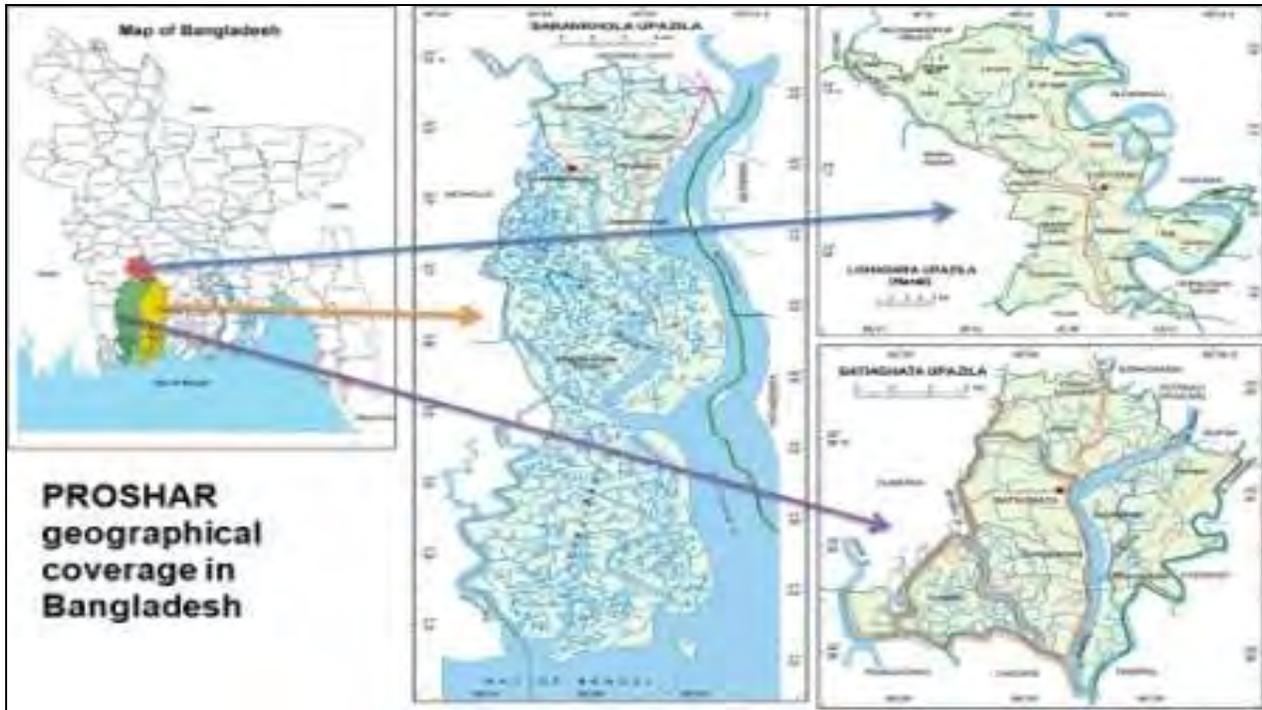
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### Map of the Project Area



Source: PROSHAR, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2013

## ACRONYM LIST

ANC	Antenatal Care
BCC	Behavior Change Communication
CBDMVG	Community Based Disaster Management Volunteer Groups
CC	Climate Change
CEGIS	Centre for Environmental and Geographic Information Services
CFW	Cash For Work
CGS	Care Group Supervisor
C-IMCI	Community based Integrated Management of Childhood Illness
CHCP	Community Health Care Provider
CMAM	Community based Management of Acute Malnutrition
CODEC	Community Development Center
CPP	Cyclone Preparedness Program
CRA	Community Risk Assessment
CSBA	Community Skilled Birth Attendant
DAE	Department of Agricultural Extension
DDM	Department of Disaster Management
DGHS	Directorate General of Health Services
DLS	Department of Livestock
DMA	Disaster Management Act
DMCs	Disaster Management Committees
DOF	Department of Forest
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRRAP	Disaster Risk Reduction Action Plan
EWR	Early Warning and Response
FFP	Food for Peace
FFS	Famer Field School
FFW	Food for Work
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
F-IMCI	Facility based Integrated Management of Childhood Illness
FtF	Feed the Future
FWV	Family Welfare Visitor
GIAP	Gender Integrated Action Plan
GM	Genetically Modified
GMP	Growth Monitoring and Promotion
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
HA	Health Assistant
HP	Health Promoter
HYV	High Yielding Variety
iDE	International Development Enterprises
IFDC	International Fertilizer Development Corporation
IM	Impact parameter

IMCI	Integrated Management of Childhood Illness
IPTT	Indicator Performance Tracking Table
IR	Intermediate Result
IYCF	Infant and Young Child Feeding
Kcal	Kilo Calorie
Kg	Kilogram
LOA	Life of Activity
LYV	Low Yielding Variety
MFI	Micro-Finance Institution
MODMR	Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief
MOEF	Ministry of Environment and Forest
MOH&FW	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTR	Mid-term Review
MYAP	Multi-Year Assistance Project
NDVC	National Disaster Volunteer Corps
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OC	Outcome
PCI	Project Concern International
PIO	Project Implementation Officer
PLM	Pregnant and Lactating Mother
PM2A	Preventing Malnutrition in Children Under 2
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
PNC	Post-natal Care
PNGO	Partner Non-Governmental Organization
PSF	Pond-Sand Filter
RDQA	Routine Data Quality Assessments
RUTF	Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food
RRAP	Risk Reduction Action Plan
SACMO	Sub- Assistant Community Medical Officer
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
SMC	School/Shelter Management Committee
SO	Strategic Objective
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
ToT	Training of Trainer
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization

## I. Executive Summary

With its overall goal of “Reduced Food insecurity among Vulnerable Rural Populations in select Upazilas in Khulna Division”, ACDI/VOCA, in partnership with Project Concern International (PCI), is implementing the Program for Strengthening Household Access to Resources (PROSHAR) funded through the USAID/FFP Title II development assistance program. The period is for five years beginning May 2010 and is being implemented in three Upazilas, Batiaghata, Lohagara and Sarankhola, of Khulna division. ACDI/VOCA serves as the lead agency in implementing the program and is responsible for overall project management and oversight, the livelihood activities and commodities management. PCI is responsible for managing implementation of activities related to maternal/child health and disaster risk reduction. ACDI-VOCA has signed partnership agreements with three NGOs, CODEC, Shushilan and Muslim Aid, each responsible to implement the program in one of the Upazilas. This report presents the result of a mid-term review commissioned by ACDI/VOCA and undertaken by Moneval Solutions.

PROSHAR is implemented through three strategic objectives that contribute to the attainment of the overall goal. They are: (i) Strategic Objective 1 (SO 1): Income and Access to Food of poor and ultra poor households improved; (ii) Strategic Objective 2 (SO 2): Health of Pregnant and Lactating women and children (with particular attention to children under 2) improved, and (iii) Strategic Objective 3 (SO 3): Institutions and Households prepared to respond effectively to shocks.

The **objectives of the MTR are** to:

- review the progress towards achievement of the program objectives and intermediate results;
- **adopt a qualitative method to understand the project’s progress towards the achievement of the outcome and impact level indicators;**
- assess the effectiveness and efficiency of technical, managerial and resource management strategies, structures and systems;
- assess the synergy between various program components and its effectiveness in enhancing the program performance;
- make specific recommendations on how the program can improve its strategies and program interventions; and
- assess the efficacy of the monitoring and evaluation system in place (in terms of human resources, database, reporting process, etc.)

### **Methodology**

The MTR is based on the application of qualitative assessments to the quantitative survey undertaken by the Annual Survey (Oct 2012) on a statistically significant sample of program beneficiaries with a view to assessing the results of the outcome indicators. It was based on (i) analysis of available documentation; (ii) interviews and discussions with stakeholders including partner NGOs, local and elected Upazila officials, and (iii) field visits and

discussions with direct beneficiaries. A critical part of the methodology constituted site visits and focus group discussions (FGD). This covered all categories of beneficiaries. They provided 'grass roots' evidence of the impact achieved thus far by the PROSHAR project and included discussions with directly participating beneficiaries, Government and elected local government officials.

## **Key Findings**

Project start up was delayed with direct distribution commencing about nine months after the scheduled period<sup>1</sup>. Notwithstanding the delayed start, the project has made progress in its total target number of beneficiary coverage. However, the full impact of the project is yet to be seen since the different components have had slightly different implementation periods, for example the crop production element of the livelihood component has had only one field crop cycle but two homestead/vegetable production cycles. Overall, across all the components, the project outcome indicators show variability, with some exceeding targets while others are lagging behind. The project has however gathered momentum and is expected to achieve a majority of its targets.

## **Program Achievements**

### **Strategic Objective 1: Income and access to food of poor and ultra poor households improved**

I.R. 1.1 Agricultural Productivity increased and diversified

- 1.1.1 Access to agricultural inputs, assets and technology expanded.
- 1.1.2 Producers have improved knowledge.
- 1.1.3 Producers adopt improved/appropriate practices.

The project has made impressive progress in beneficiary participation with a total beneficiary coverage of about 23,000 households against a target of just over 43,000 beneficiaries by end of LOA. The Annual Survey 2012 indicates that about 50% of beneficiaries adopted some new technology from about a dozen propagated by PROSHAR with improved seed variety (87%) and crop spacing (66%) being the most common among them. There appeared to be a significant variation in adoption rates with Sarankhola at about 70%, Batiaghata at nearly 60% and Lohagara at about 40%. Similarly from about a dozen recommended crops (rice, wheat, groundnut, potatoes, spices, oil seeds etc) about 60% of households cultivated PROSHAR recommended crops, mostly HYV rice. The dominance of rice **is a reflection of the farmer's priority of ensuring his own food security in addition to it being a very marketable commodity.** Thus while all farmers (about 99%) adopted rice, a crop which they knew well, the adoption of other cash crops was negligible (<2%). Changing entrenched technological approaches requires some time and it would be too early to expect a substantial uptake of new crops and technologies. However, there was

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<sup>1</sup> The actual field level delay was nearly 15 months. Since the IDP had a six month start-up, the official delay was nine months.

a significant gender disparity in the adoption rates between men (about 57%) and women (about 37%). In general, the gender gap in the adoption rates is a reflection of the cultural bias, the fact that women are perhaps more risk averse than men, but more importantly, it also reflects greater access to resources (including land) by men as opposed to women, limited rights over property and resources and limited decision making power. These percentages are anticipated to change as a consequence of the new FFS approach adopted with respect to livelihood.

Homestead garden production, mostly adopted by women producing primarily vegetables, has shown a participation rate of over 50% but with high variation between the Upazilas similar to that for other crops. However, the adoption rates of new technology with respect to homestead gardens by women are higher than for other crops. The results appear to contradict prevailing perceptions. It reflects the fact that when women are given command of their own resources (as is the case with homestead gardens), they are more open to new ideas. The message for training and support to women is clear but needs to be attuned to their specific command over productive resources. Evidence of this can be inferred also from the expansion in small ruminants production by women farmers in a majority of micro finance projects.

Fish farming in ponds, has been adopted by nearly half (50%) of the households, with a higher preference for carp (over 85%) than for tilapia (about 66%). Similarly, although raising livestock alone was not very common in the area, the extension support of PROSHAR has resulted in that nearly one third of the households adopted poultry production alone and about half of that both livestock (goats) and poultry. The livestock and fishery subsectors appear to have generated an increased demand although PROSHAR had targeted its support at agriculture at 50%, poultry and livestock at 30% and aquaculture at 20%. PROSHAR support in crop agriculture presents two clear perspectives. First, while access to inputs and technology has been an attraction with nearly half of them, farmers generally limited themselves to the crop they were more familiar with, rice, and a very low uptake of any other crop. Recognizing that this represents the results of basically one year of implementation, the prospects in the future with the adoption of the FFS appear positive. Second, while definitive information is not available, women farmers, when given command over resources as in the case of the homestead garden, are more responsive to new technology and ideas. The vegetable garden represents an area of activity that is left largely under the control of women and could be taken to reflect as a tangible dimension of their empowerment.

#### IR.1.2 Market Linkages Developed and Strengthened

- 1.2.1 Market actors integration enhanced
- 1.2.2 Producer cooperation improved
- 1.2.3 Post harvest value added opportunities expanded
- 1.2.4 Access to market services improved

With a view to promoting collective action to achieve economies of scale for bulk purchases and sales, PROSHAR facilitated stakeholders meetings linkage building workshops with

producers, input suppliers and traders (wholesalers, retailers and mobile sellers). Linkages were established with a number of seed companies. However with only one crop year under the project, it is still too early to see any major changes in the production environment. FGD discussions reveal that with existing production levels the motivation for scaling up on production by groups was still at a rudimentary level.

There has been limited success in this component due to a combination of factors that emphasize the need for significantly more capacity building in understanding markets taking into consideration the resource endowments of the different groups. There is a need for a greater focus on economic growth potential in the area among the different groups and ACDI/VOCA is proposing a grant to International Development Enterprises (iDE) to work with ACDI/VOCA in the identification of sectors with the greatest growth potential, transition producer groups to become more business oriented and integrated within the private sector and increase access to effective finance from the formal banking sector.

I.R.1.3: Non agricultural opportunities expanded and diversified:

- IR 1.3.1: Access to non agricultural inputs and technology expanded
- IR 1.3.2: Entrepreneurs have improved knowledge
- IR 1.3.3: Entrepreneurs adopt improved/appropriate practices

Support for off farm non agricultural activities have been restricted to only highly vulnerable areas targeting beneficiaries of whom 60% are women.

There has also been limited success with activity primarily concentrated around the formation of groups around the traditional off farm production of bamboo crafts, karchupi, tailoring, hand embroidery etc. In addition to the provision of training, producers were assisted with access to inputs and markets. Of the producers, over 43% reported increased market access and use as opposed to a participation of about 13% before PROSHAR. Gender disparity in access was reported with women having about half that of men. This reflects again the combined impact of cultural traditions in that although a large part of the productive activities were undertaken by women, the marketing was, when quantities were significant enough, undertaken by men. The limited number of groups is a reflection of the fact that off farm production is not a very common activity and the decision to restrict it to only the highly vulnerable areas, in addition to the requirement of forming 20 persons per group, made it difficult for the project to find adequate number of participants.

Overall, the strategy of interventions in agriculture is in the right direction, despite the lack of success in market access and linkages as well as that of off farm marketing. The potential however in these areas is significant. The prospect of reaching targets in crop agriculture, despite delays, is reasonably optimistic. While the positive power of the market as a driver can hardly be over-emphasized, the very structured nature of support by specific size of activity classified by land holding (very poor < 10 decimals, poor between 10 to 50 decimals) limits the producer to his subsistence level and does not allow him to respond to the market and generate a surplus (example very poor farmer restricted to pond size of less than 5 decimals) for fish production. While it would be advisable to re-visit the size

distribution of land as an indicator (among others) for division between the very poor and the poor, the MTR recognizes that given the remaining period of project life it would be better to concentrate on capitalizing the gains already made instead of venturing forth in new activities.

**Strategic Objective 2: Health of pregnant and lactating women and children under 5 (with particular attention to children under 2) improved**

I.R. 2.1: Malnutrition prevented and treated.

- I.R. 2.1 Malnutrition prevented and treated
  - 1.2.1 PLW and Children under 2's access to nutrition and health services improved
  - 1.1.2 Improved availability and access to CMAM
  
- I.R. 2.2 Improved effectiveness of health clinic services
  - 1.2.1 Integrated services of community health clinics improved
  - 1.2.1 Partnerships between health facilities and communities they serve improved

SO 2 basically aims at implementing the Preventing Malnutrition in Children Under 2 Approach (PM2A) - a food assisted approach to reducing child malnutrition by targeting a package of health and nutrition interventions to all pregnant women, mothers of children 0-23 months, and children under 5 in food-insecure program areas, regardless of nutritional or income status. BCC efforts are concentrated on (a) promoting essential nutrition actions (ENA), (b) key household hygiene actions, and (c) preventive and curative health-related practices like timely immunization, appropriate home health care, recognizing signs of malnutrition and illness, and care-seeking behavior including the provision of family planning services.

Behavior change has had some success due to a cascading effect of different behavior change communication (BCC) interventions such as trios care group sessions (mother groups, father groups and grandmother groups), community meetings, community mobilization through participation in various events (e.g. world breast feeding week, national immunization days, Vitamin A and de-worming campaigns, etc.), and through the dissemination of BCC materials (e.g. posters and brochures). During FY12, the annual survey indicated some evidence of changes in behavior. Thus, 99.7% of caregivers adopted at least three recommended behaviors **with respect to mother's or caregiver's hand washing habit and disposal of children's feces** as a result of PROSHAR interventions (target: 35%). The high levels of achievements are attributed to training through care group trios and distribution of counseling cards on breastfeeding to beneficiaries during GMP counseling.

The three major elements in the package of interventions has been the effect of the trios care group, the provision of ANC services and GMP monitoring. However, while the impact of BCC is clear and definite with respect to behavior that is entirely new, such as GMP visits, entrenched traditional behaviour is more difficult to change and requires time. Thus, while

the percentage of mothers' breast feeding their child is nearly 100%, the percentage drops to about 55% when it comes to exclusive breast feeding a child of under 6 months. The results of BCC activities have been variable and while utilising channels such as folk songs, world breast feeding week and other national and international events have been utilized, there is still scope for using additional channels of communications, such as wall painting, bill boards containing PROSHAR program messages and organizing songs and theatre involving local folk groups to induce changes in behavior. Changing traditional and cultural behavior requires time and while the project has made progress in some areas, the emphasis on BCC as the prime motivator has to be continued and expanded. PCI is aware of that need and has programmed itself for pursuing such an approach over the next year. The report suggests a number of such measures that would assist in widening and deepening the impact of BCC behaviors.

Survey results on the nutritional status of children are yet to display an impact. Delay in the treatment of SAM cases has been due to the delay in receipt of RUTF. However, with the provision of RUTF to outreach therapeutic centers (community clinics) as of October 2012, the impact in terms of a reduction in wasting should be noticeable soon<sup>2</sup>. The major vehicle for improving PLW and **children's (under 2) access to nutrition and health services has been** through GMP sessions in coordination with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in 100% program communities (all Expanded Program of Immunization – EPI- sites) with 94% of beneficiaries participating in the GMP. However, while the focus has been on underweight as the measure of malnutrition, it is too early to see any effect on stunting as an indicator on improving the nutritional profile. Improving nutritional practices will continue to depend on counseling by growth monitoring educators, growth monitoring facilitators and mother leaders.

With the goal of improving the effectiveness of the health services, a substantial amount of training has been provided to Community Health Care Providers (CHCP) of all 59 Community Clinics together with other specialized staff at the local levels. Although verified and documented is unavailable, the MTR team found a resurgence of the community clinics in the rural communities reflected in an increased demand for its services (evidenced from attendance records) as well as improved supply of medicines from the Government. 100% of health facilities currently have IMCI trained personnel and Community Clinic management committees have started functioning in all the 59 Community Clinics following training supported by PROSHAR. However, access to postnatal care at about 50% (2012) was marginally lower than the annual target (50.5%). A reduction in the number of government community skilled birth attendants (CSBA - 40 currently against a baseline of 60) is planned to be made up by PROSHAR supporting the Ministry of Health to train 60 community women along with MoHFW and NGO staff. Similarly, in strengthening partnerships between health facilities and the communities they served PROSHAR has supported local health authority to form community groups and provided training to a large number of community members

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<sup>2</sup> Of the two indicators of malnutrition, correcting the effect on stunting takes longer as opposed to that of wasting which is much shorter.

(teachers, religious leaders, elected members, care group leaders, village doctors/drug sellers).

### **Strategic Objective 3: Institutions and households prepared to respond effectively to shocks**

- 3.1 Disaster Risk Reduction Plans functional
- 3.2 Early Warning System Functional
- 3.3 Increased Knowledge and Skills

A major dimension of the program has been that of insulating beneficiaries against the recurring onslaught of disaster through a strategy of community mobilization, participation and capacity building. The program has been very active over the past two years in mobilizing local community groups and institutions. **Progress on “institutional preparedness”** has been positive with Community Risk Assessments (CRAs) for the selected most vulnerable 4 Unions completed with the help of CEGIS, the technical partner in PROSHAR, Disaster Risk Reduction Action Plans (DRRAP) prepared and Disaster Management Committees (UDMCs) of 23 Unions and 3 Upazilas have been revitalized. A direct result of the Plans has been the implementation of 10 projects in 2012 to reduce community risk to natural hazards and food insecurity. This includes construction of 8 Pond Sand Filters (PSFs to address the problem of drinking water). In addition, 99 assisted communities (viz, Wards) across 11 unions were supplied with disaster early warning and response (EWR) systems through the provision of early response, search and rescue and first aid supplies via the UDMCs. Thirteen DMCs (two UzDMCs and 11 UDMCs) were provided with materials for early warning, search and rescue and first aid, and 275 DMC members were trained on their use. The materials were identified and selected through a consultation with other local organizations with DRM capacity in the region. The supplies include the following items: megaphone, siren, rain coat, helmet, gum boots, warning flag, whistle, bicycle, FM radio and battery.

The creation and establishment of the volunteer Community Based Disaster Management Volunteer Groups (CBDMVG) composed of people from the community has been a critical factor in energizing DRM actions in the area. It has provided the critical link with disaster management down to the ward level. However, the role of the CBDMVG after project life is unclear. Although organized deliberately to be an informal, non-legally binding group of volunteers at the outset of the project and in consultation with the Government, they do **hold out the prospect of an advance complement to GOB’s plan to form the National Disaster Volunteer Corps.**

In terms of awareness creation and energizing vulnerable communities both at the institutional and at the individual level, the project has clearly achieved significant successes though its plans for the remaining project period still calls for providing training to nearly 25,000 people from all walks of life over the next two years.

The interventions have, in addition to awareness creation and preparation of the DRRAP provided the grounds for promoting the dimension of disaster preparation at the ward level through the CBDMVG. However, the prospect of transforming the DRRAP into reality remains unclear.

## **Synergy**

Integration among the three SOs has been a conscious element in the implementation of the PROSHAR program. It has aimed at promoting a three way exchange between the components with the aim of reinforcing each other. Integration between SO 1 and SO 2 include the involvement of SO 2 beneficiaries in FFS and the dissemination of information in production and marketing including inviting SO 2 beneficiaries to attend Farmers Field days. Conversely, it includes the participation of Master Trainers in Mother Groups meetings to provide information on new products and new methods of production. On the other hand SO 2 recommends the provision of information to SO 1 on the type of nutritious food crops or vegetables that should be planted by the homestead category of farmers. Similarly integration between SO 1 and SO 3 include the identification of hazards that could limit SO 1 activities through CRA and take actions to prevent it. In addition to the inclusion of SO 3 messages in SO 1, it aims to develop household level preparedness plans to better respond to shocks. It aims to include SO 1 beneficiaries in cash for work or food for work following a rapid assessment after disaster to ensure support.

## **Achievements in Program Processes**

### **Management**

Overall, starting almost 9 months behind scheduled start date, program management has successfully brought the project almost on track. This was addressed by (a) displaying a degree of flexibility in, for instance, revising two out of three component strategies, (b) a continuous process of improvements in the M&E system including the completion of the baseline survey, introduction of routine data quality assessments (RDQA), adaptation of McAid software, completion of annual results survey and successive revisions of the IPTT reflecting a role balancing donors requirement against partner NGOs own structure and requirements and promoting cross learning between areas and partners.

Besides the review of human and financial resources management, the MTR also looked at the elements of general program management that included the structures, program vision and leadership, program planning, problem solving and decision making, and communications. The review found that the prime awardee, ACDI/VOCA, has faced significant staffing challenges since the beginning of the program. Transitions have occurred with key positions, including the COP, Deputy COP for Program which later on was abolished, M&E Director, Finance Director, Team Leader DRM, Health and Nutrition Team Leader, and the program also faced significantly delayed recruitment of the mid-level positions. Even at present, at least two positions in ACDI/VOCA, M&E Director and Gender Specialist, are vacant. All this contributed to a somewhat fractured structure of program management.

Relationship with PCI has been facilitated by a clear line of responsibility between ACDI-VOCA and PCI. This has contributed to an effective implementation structure which has been further assisted by the fact that both have located their field operation offices in Khulna allowing for easy communication. Supported by regular coordination meetings, the resolution of any issue is solved quickly. (see section on Human Resource Management). Relationship with partner NGOs has been good and PROSHAR has displayed a dimension of flexibility by changing its approach to a revision of the parameters for participating beneficiaries in both SO 1 and SO 2 activities and for cross training among the beneficiaries of the three interventions. Closely monitored by PROSHAR all 3 partners work in close cooperation and understanding supported by technical staff of PROSHAR. Regular monthly coordination meetings are held in the Upazila office of each partner by turn, allowing for the building of a team spirit and a platform for resolving any issues. However both PROSHAR and PNGOS suffer from the problem of high staff turnover. A decision by PROSHAR to encourage suggestions for other new activities will provide partner staff an opportunity for even greater involvement.

PROSHAR's link with Government is through the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MDMR), recently truncated from the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management. However, although links have been established at the district level, it would be prudent to establish links with the Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF) at the national level (since MoEF is engaged in a number of DRR activities and takes the long term view associated with climate change) if only to be aware of changes in policy directions. Relationships at the local Union and Upazila administration are very good with PROSHAR staff having close connections with them. The involvement of Upazila technical officers as specialists in the provision of training in FFS has had a positive effect and their involvement served as recognition of their professional status. At the Union level, the preparation of the CRA and the DRRAP, also generated close relationship with Union level officials.

### **Commodity Management**

Overall, the commodity distribution, transportation, security, tracking and reporting are functioning very well despite challenges and complexities in food commodities management and given the first experience of ACDI/VOCA and its sub-recipient PCI in managing a MYAP in Bangladesh.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

PROSHAR has an elaborate monitoring structure with close monitoring of inputs, outputs, and activities since the project started field operations. A continuous form of improvements to the M&E plan has been based on completion of the baseline survey, introduction of routine data quality assessments (RDQA), adaptation of McAid software, completion of annual results survey. All operational M&E staff are field based, except the M&E Director who is based in Dhaka, and operate on a regular schedule of monitoring reports. Balancing donor requirements (IPTT indicators) along with Partner NGOs with their own monitoring structure and requirements generate a large number of data with a heavy demand on their

staff occasionally creating problems. Staff turnover in M&E is a major issue both with ACDI/VOCA and PNGOs. A manifestation of high staff turnover was reflected in the fact that the review team found the COP for the project was also deputizing in the role of Director M&E. Because of the scope of PROSHAR and the limitations on size, the IPTT at present does not serve as an effective tool. Also, there are no IPTT indicators for measuring the impact of gender, for this reason gender has been dealt with as cross-cutting theme within the body of each SO. At the same time there have been a number of revisions to the IPTT making it an almost variable document.

## **MTR Recommendations**

**Continuation of project direction.** Despite a troubled beginning that delayed field implementation by almost 9 months, PROSHAR has made rapid progress. Yet a lot needs to be done if it is to achieve its targets. With the time line at the halfway mark, a closer look at the options indicates that no major changes in strategy or directions is warranted. A project that focuses so much on behavioral change to address the specific problem of nutrition of pregnant women and children and is complemented by measures that address the dual onslaught of extreme poverty and the effect of recurring disasters should be seen in a slightly longer time horizon than other projects. Small adjustments in program implementation have been outlined below that would deepen the gains achieved and not lose the successes achieved.

The recommendations largely deal with internal reorganization and a refocus of attention without calling for a major revision of the budget.

### **S.O. 1 Income and access to food of poor and ultra poor households improved.**

#### **Priority Recommendations**

- **Change parameters of non agricultural support.** To counter the inadequate response in off farm production due to it being restricted to only highly vulnerable areas, support should be provided in both the highly vulnerable and less vulnerable areas. At the same time, the requirements for group formation support should be changed from 20 beneficiaries/group to 10/group to allow more groups to be formed.
- **Support for fish ponds should be allowed by the ultra poor irrespective of the size of their ponds.** The current restriction for homestead fishery by the ultra poor in ponds is below 5 decimals and is too restrictive for wider adoption. As long as the beneficiary meets the category of being in the ultra poor, that restriction should be lifted.
- **Support for developing market linkages.** A renewed focus on developing market linkages is required and has already been planned by PROSHAR through the involvement of IDE in developing market linkages.

- **Study to identify the constraints and advise on measures for greater gender balance in livelihood activities.** A study to investigate the constraints to achieving greater gender balance in livelihood activities is required. It should investigate all the livelihood activities particularly in the area of crop agriculture.

### **Other Recommendations**

The existing classification between the ultra poor (below 10 decimals) and the poor (10-50 decimals) in terms of land holding is too narrow. The economic status of a farmer holding 10 decimals is unlikely to be drastically different from one holding 15-20 decimals. However, with a holding of 15-20 decimals, a farmer has the potential not only to attain his own food security but also generate a surplus. A study based on the size distribution of holdings should be undertaken to arrive at a judicious decision on the cut off between the ultra poor and the poor.

### **S.O. 2 Health of pregnant and lactating women and children under 5 (with particular attention to children under 2) improved.**

#### **Priority Recommendations**

- **Support for Behavior Change Communication**

To further emphasize and strengthen the BCC message a number of suggestions are being made. They include:

1. **Continue to emphasize the communication strategy by adopting additional channels covering the whole community.** Continue the communication strategy on two additional fronts: adding to the care group trios and adding an extra dimension to the communication message. While the care group trios has been relatively successful in encouraging PLWs to adopt behavioral changes, adding another senior member of the family (such as an elderly aunt) when mothers in law are unable or too old to function provides an element of surety and continuity to the concept of the care group trios. Similarly, to achieve a wider impact on behavioral change with respect to health and hygiene, use additional channels of communications with a wider dispersion, such as wall painting, bill boards containing PROSHAR program messages and organizing folk songs and theatre involving local folk groups. The objective would be to stimulate demand for services not necessarily specifically for ANC and GMP services but for other services.
2. **Create positive competition among beneficiaries for healthy behavior for sustainable change at household and community level.** This could include a number of measures such as:
  - recognizing and celebrating 180+ days of participation at mothers group level on a monthly basis

- recognizing care groups trios and change makers excellence in performance – measures for this has already been planned.
  - gratifying family adoption of optimal IYCF practices
3. **Establish and promote a club of mothers group graduates.** Holding mothers alumni meeting every few months or holding mothers corner in the annual breastfeeding day or other similar day celebrations where the role model mothers would be awarded and are allowed to speak on what they have done to improve the health and nutritional status of their children.
  4. **Use SO platform for greater dissemination of messages.** In addition to the provision of messages in FFS, utilize the farmer field days as another forum for delivering messages.

### **Other Recommendations**

5. Facilitate the refresher training for MoHFW basic health staff for quality service delivery. Also, facilitate organizing training for doctors and paramedics of MoHFW, NGOs and other providers in areas to be identified by PROSHAR and MoHFW.
6. Continue to facilitate joint planning and coordination between public and private sector stakeholders to maximize health service coverage in limited resource conditions. For example, coordinating with local NGOs providing ANC services helps to improve coverage significantly without additional human resources.

## **S.O. 3 Institutions & Households prepared to respond effectively to shocks**

### **Priority Recommendations**

- **Ensure effectiveness of training:** Given the significantly large amount of training still to be provided during the remaining period of the project, ensure that the quality of trainings is not compromised in the desire to meet training targets.
- **Mechanism to provide sustainability to ward level CBDMVG:** Explore with Government possible alternatives of converting the ward level volunteer group into a community based organization after PROSHAR with the possibility of its integration if and when the Government's plan to establish a national corps of volunteers at the ward level is formed.

### **Process Management**

A number of recommendations have been made regarding process management covering commodity management, knowledge management, human resource management, and environmental compliance have also been made. These can be found in the section on all recommendations in the report.

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## II. Background

### a. Overview of Project Strategies

Development indicators of Bangladesh have shown consistent improvements over the last two decades. Yet despite these successes, other indicators reflect a sobering picture: over a third of its population remains below the poverty line, indicators of landlessness are estimated at around 60 % and malnutrition rates among children are among the highest in the world<sup>3</sup>. This is further worsened by a recurring incidence of natural disasters destroying lives and severely affecting livelihoods.

In this environment, the specific objectives of developmental interventions by the Government and for most development agencies have been basically dictated by the physical and economic environment in which the people are placed. Inevitably they focus on promoting sustainable livelihood strategies that cover not only increasing production among the poor and marginal farmers but also improving income earning opportunities through increasing on- and off farm productivities and linking small holders to domestic markets. It implies the development of market linkages to expand value added opportunities, in general, developing value chain activities, and expanding knowledge and technology in non-agricultural activities. A wide body of research<sup>4</sup> appears to show that integrating people living in poverty into higher value markets by inducing targeted beneficiaries to engage or improve their terms of engagement within domestic, regional or international markets, can work. Complementing support for increasing and improving income and access is that of the need to support nutrition and mother and child health as an investment for the future development of the country. Finally, the vulnerability of the population to disasters that has a devastating impact on the population already living at a bare survival level has prompted the support of measures that insulate them from the effects of such disasters by strengthening their coping abilities.

**Project Description.** PROSHAR has been designed to reduce food insecurity among vulnerable rural population in select Upazilas in Khulna division (Batiaghata, Lohagara, Sarankhola) over a period of five years. Indirect benefits are anticipated to be created throughout the Khulna Division as a result of broader disaster early warning and response capacity. **Among PROSHAR's planned interventions,** over 400 villages will be reached<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Nationally, 41% of children under five years are moderately to severely underweight and 43.2% suffer from moderate to severe stunting, an indicator for chronic malnutrition. Underweight prevalence decreased slightly between 2004 and 2007. Of greater concern are the rates of wasting that increased over the same period reaching 17.4 %, exceeding the WHO emergency threshold level (15%), which indicates an urgent need for action.

<sup>4</sup> See <http://www.microlinks.org>

<sup>5</sup> In the event of a natural disaster such as a cyclone, humanitarian support will be carried out in all areas under Khulna division as needed.

**Results Framework.** The PROSHAR project has adopted a three pronged strategy that aims at addressing problems that are symptomatic, to a large extent, of the development problems faced by the region and other similar areas. The strategy provides a clear logic for how activities, interventions and outputs will contribute to anticipated outcomes and desired **impacts within Bangladesh’s overall country strategy (of USAID)**. The framework is as a result of discussions with USAID/FFP and the Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance-2 project (FANTA-2) following approval of ACDI/VOCA’s initial proposal.

PROSHAR is applying an integrated approach to food security by addressing the following technical areas: the promotion of sustainable livelihood strategies, improved health and nutrition using the Preventing Malnutrition in Children under 2 years of age (PM2A) approach and enhanced community ability to respond to shocks and vulnerabilities. The project also addresses gender and environment across objectives. The strategic objectives are:

**SO 1: Incomes and Access to food of poor and ultra-poor households improved:**

Based on value chain analysis, interventions are focused on enhancing on and off farm productivity through adoption of improved practices and technologies, developing sustainable relationships between public and private stakeholders and linking smallholders to profitable domestic markets. The interventions are anticipated to result in:

- IR. 1.1. Agricultural productivity increased and diversified
  - IR. 1.1.1 Access to agricultural inputs, assets and technology expanded
  - IR. 1.1.2 Producers have improved knowledge
  - IR. 1.1.3 Producers adopt improved/appropriate practices
- IR. 1.2. Market linkages developed and strengthened
  - **IR. 1.2.1 Market actors’ integration enhanced**
  - IR. 1.2.2 Producer cooperation improved
  - IR. 1.2.3 Post harvest value-added opportunities expanded
  - IR. 1.2.4 Access to market services improved
- IR. 1.3. Non-agriculture opportunities expanded and diversified
  - IR. 1.3.1 Access to non-agricultural inputs and technology expanded
  - IR. 1.3.2 Entrepreneurs have improved knowledge
  - IR. 1.3.3 Entrepreneurs adopt improved/appropriate practice

**SO 2: Health of pregnant and lactating women and children under 5 (with particular attention to children under 2) improved:** addresses the barriers to health and nutrition in vulnerable populations through the implementation of the Preventing Malnutrition in Children under 2 (PM2A), covering the prevention and treatment of child malnutrition, expansion of integrated clinical health services, improvement of household and community responses to health and nutrition challenges, and increased nutritional levels of pregnant and lactating women (PLW) and their infants. The interventions are anticipated to result in:

- IR. 2.1. Malnutrition prevented and treated
  - IR. 2.1.1 PLW and Children under 2's access to nutrition and health services improved
  - IR. 2.1.2 Improved availability of and access to CMAM
- IR. 2.2. Improved effectiveness of health clinic services
  - IR. 2.2.1 Integrated services of community health clinics improved
  - IR. 2.2.2 Partnerships between health facilities and communities (they serve) improved.

**SO 3: Institutions and households prepared to respond effectively to shocks.** Interventions aim at reinforcing local capacities and systems for disaster risk management to better identify, prevent, mitigate and respond to shocks and stresses associated with food security. At government level, PROSHAR will reinforce the Government of Bangladesh's efforts to mainstream disaster risk management into development efforts and address long-term trends, such as those associated with climate change. The interventions are anticipated to result in:

- IR. 3.1. Disaster risk reduction plans (DRRPs) functional
- IR. 3.2. Early warning system functional
- IR. 3.3 Increased knowledge and skills on disaster risk management

## **b. Project History and Operating Context**

PROSHAR is being implemented by ACDI/VOCA in partnership with Project Concern International (PCI). ACDI/VOCA serves as the lead agency with well-defined roles, responsibilities and opportunities for sectoral integration and cross learning. In addition to overall project management and oversight, ACDI/VOCA has the responsibility to implement the livelihood activities (SO 1) with the support of PNGOs and commodity management. PCI, which has a sub-grant agreement with ACDI-VOCA, has responsibility for managing the

technical oversight to the implementation of activities related to maternal/child health (SO 2) and disaster risk reduction (SO 3). In addition, ACDI-VOCA has signed sub-award agreements with three NGO partners each of which is responsible for implementation in one Upazila. The following table indicates the partners and their respective roles.

Institution	Role
<b>IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS</b>	
Project Concern International (PCI)	Leading SO2 and SO3 sectoral activities in all three Upazilas, with the exception of the commodities distribution in support of PM2A implementation.
CODEC	Multi-sectoral work in Sarankhola Upazila
Shushilan	Multi-sectoral work in Batiaghata Upazila
MuslimAid	Multi-sectoral work in Lohagara Upazila
<b>TECHNICAL PARTNERS</b>	
Cyclone Preparedness Program (CPP)	Provision of trainers for disaster volunteer training, disaster simulations, national preparedness days
Centre for Environmental and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS)	Support development of a disaster risk mapping model using Community Risk Assessments and Union Disaster Management Planning, testing and building capacity of PROSHAR & PNGO
Department of Community Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (C-IMCI), Ministry of Health	Lead facilitators for training of doctors, paramedics, health assistants and family welfare assistants

PROSHAR is intending to involve International Development Enterprises (iDE) with its experience in Bangladesh to assist the PNGO capacity building in the development of market linkages for specific commodities with growth potential, transition producer groups to become more business oriented and increase access to effective finance from the formal banking sector.

**Time Line and Phasing.** The Cooperative Agreement for the PROSHAR project was signed in June, 2010. The host country agreement was actually signed in August, 2010. A baseline survey was conducted in January, 2011. However, there was a delay in selecting and establishing an agreement with the three partner non-governmental organizations (PNGOs). The PNGOs were finally selected in May, 2011 nearly nine months after signature of assistance and the first sub-grant agreements signed in July, 2011 nearly eleven months after signature of the cooperative agreement while food distribution started in September 2011, nearly fourteen months after project signature. Activities could not be started until the baseline data collection had been completed. Program implementation followed a phased approach as follows:

Phase 1: One union covered in each of the three Upazilas – food distribution started in October 2011;

Phase 2: An additional six unions were covered, (four in Batiaghata and two in Lohagara) – food distribution started in November 2011;

Phase 3: An additional six unions were covered (three in Lohagara, one in Sarankhola and two in Batiaghata) – food distribution started in December 2011;

Phase 4: An additional five unions were covered (four in Lohagara and one in Sarankhola) – food distribution started in January 2012; and

Phase 5: The three remaining unions were covered (two in Lohagara and one in Sarankhola) – food distribution started in February 2012.

**Strategy Revisions** In June 2012, PROSHAR undertook a revision of its livelihood objectives and formulated a revised strategy document. The key shift in the strategy has been a refinement in the targeting of beneficiaries. The twenty three unions of the three Upazilas were classified into two area-based categories<sup>6</sup>: severely (7) and less severely vulnerable (16), and three beneficiary categories: ultra poor/most vulnerable, poor/vulnerable and smallholder farmer/on the edge (or marginal). The nature of support provided was linked to the particular category in which the beneficiary was placed. In the original strategy, the group was a multi-sectoral production group which did not create community cohesion around group input purchases or sales (too few people for each subsector). The revised strategy specifically states that the groups (10/group as opposed 25/group of the old) are created around subsectors, so not only is the training delivered to the same people that are in a single group, these people can also take decisions on bulk buying and selling, invite private sector service providers to meet with them, etc.

The revised operational livelihood strategy is based upon a market-driven approach to improve economic security of households, and has five interrelated elements:

- group formation and mobilization to facilitate marketing activities and capture economies of scale;
- capacity building of select local community members as Master Trainers of FFS, so that a key source of information for government and private sector services will remain beyond the life of the project;
- active learning through FFS to encourage uptake of new technologies and to generate multiplier effects of knowledge sharing;
- business practices modeled for sustainability; and
- strengthening value chains at the local level through improving stakeholder linkages.

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<sup>6</sup> Factors in assessing vulnerability included road vulnerability, ANC coverage, health facility to population, market accessibility, hazard, and socio-economic status.

From October 1, 2012, all SO1 activities are being implemented according to a revised livelihood strategy that in effect amounts to a classificatory approach to the distribution of support activities aimed at different beneficiary groups. Thus, it aims to cover the seven most vulnerable unions, amounting to about 77% of the rural population in those unions. In the remaining unions, households with less than 10 decimals of land (26.9% based on data collected during baseline) are receiving support for various homestead production activities. Livelihood activities to promote off-farm production or to promote commercial production that had already begun in the 16 less vulnerable unions will be continued. As a consequence of the revised strategy, approximately 65% of all vulnerable rural households (using the definitions presented above) will have the opportunity to participate in the program.

SO 2 activities are being implemented across all 23 unions of the three Upazilas. While a specific and identified strategy document was not prepared for SO2, project activities outlined in the PROSHAR technical proposal have been strategically planned to follow the PM2A Technical Reference Materials developed by FANTA/USAID.

PROSHAR modified its initial enrolment strategy to allow lactating women (with children under 6 months of age) to enroll in the program. This one-time shift allowed the program to expand its coverage given the initial program delays in implementation.

SO 2 activities cover a range of nine services that include: a) inducing behavior change through the establishment, training and promotion of care groups; b) growth monitoring and promotion of under two children, c) treatment of severely malnourished children with RUTF, d) integrated management of childhood illness, e) support ANC and PNC of pregnant and lactating women, f) strengthen community clinic provision of services, g) community mobilization of and awareness for active participation and sustainability, h) strengthen community integrated management of childhood illness (C-IMCI), and i) technical assistance to healthcare supports. Provision of food rations complements the services for two of the activities. They are the growth monitoring and promotion of under two children and support for ANC of pregnant and lactating women.

**SO 3 activities have been developed within a well defined DRM (revised) Strategy ("Disaster Risk Management Strategy", November 2012) that has laid out the objectives and activities to be undertaken over the five years project period but with a substantially improved and rationalized structure depicted by an Implementation Framework. Accordingly, activities of SO3 are focused on mobilizing communities and helping them map their risks and resources; revitalizing the existing disaster management committees (DMCs) at Union and Upazila levels; forming new community-based disaster management volunteer groups (CBDMVG); prepositioning early warning and response materials; conducting disaster preparedness trainings and preparing risk reduction plans. These are complemented by raising community awareness and behavior change in disaster risk management (DRM) practices.**

## **c. Review Methodology**

The starting point of the analysis is the result of the recent quantitative annual survey. The focus of the MTR has been the application of qualitative assessments to the quantitative data with the aim to deepen the knowledge acquired through the annual survey. The annual survey was undertaken on a statistically significant sample<sup>7</sup> of program beneficiaries and attempted to capture the information required to produce measurable results for those outcome indicators identified in the Indicator Performance Tracking Table (IPTT) and the Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP). The methodology adopted for the review used three complementary methods: (i) analysis of available documentation; (ii) interviewing and discussions with stakeholders, and (iii) field visits and discussions with direct beneficiaries to areas where the projects are being implemented. This was used to validate the results of the Annual Survey and arrive at a conclusion.

An analysis of documents covered the technical proposal, annual project reports, supplemented by the PMP, IPTT, intervention strategies and relevant national policy documents. This was complemented by discussions with stake holders including ACIDI/VOCA staff, staff of PNGOs (PCI, CODEC, Shushilan and Muslim Aid) staff of other technical partners (CPP, CEGIS) and review of other relevant documents produced by partners.

Discussions were held with Government officials including the technical staff at the Upazila level - the Upazila agriculture, livestock and fishery officers, the medical officer as well as the Family Planning Officer, the administrative head, Upazila Nirbahi Officer and the PIOs.

It also included discussions with representatives of local Government such as the Union Parishad Chairmen and members, chairperson and members of Community Clinic management committees, Cyclone Shelter Management Committees and the Union Disaster Management Committee as well as CPP and representative of IFDC and World Fish partners of FtF projects. (List of the people met is provided in Annex F.)

**Site Visits and Focus Group Discussions.** A very critical part of the methodology constituted the site visits and focus group discussions (FGD). **They provided 'grass roots'** validation of the impact achieved thus far by the PROSHAR project and included discussions with directly participating beneficiaries. This included food godowns (warehouses), food distribution centers, community clinics managed both by the community and by other volunteer groups such as the Smiling Sun, school and school management committees and cyclone centers.

FGD discussions were held with purposefully selected beneficiaries from vulnerable and non-vulnerable unions covering all categories of intervention support provided. They however

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<sup>7</sup> However, results that were statistically significant were not possible in 18 out of 36 p values due to insufficient number of responses.

represented, particularly with respect to livelihoods (i.e. SO 1), the groups prior to the adoption of the changed approach under the new strategy.

Upazila	Unions		Disaster/ Hazard	No. of FGDs
	Highly Vulnerable	Moderately Vulnerable		
Sarankhola	Rayenda, Dhansagar	Khontakata	Cyclone and Salinity	10
Lohagara	Joypur , Digholia	Itna	River erosion, water logging	14
Batiaghata	Surkhali, Gangarampur	Batiaghata	Cyclone, water logging, floods	7

A total of 31 FGD meetings were held across the three Upazilas.

The FGD discussions were undertaken with:

- on farm producers – male;
- on farm producers – female;
- off farm producers – male;
- off farm producers – female;
- CBDMVG volunteers – male;
- CBDMVG volunteers – female;
- Care group members– mothers;
- Care group volunteers – fathers;
- Care group volunteers – grandmothers; and
- Community Health Management Groups.

However, conclusions from the FGD have to be treated with some caution since the actual number of participants in the groups, apart from being purposefully chosen, ranged from 6-11 and were too small to provide any definitive validation of the survey results except in so far as to deepen our understanding and confirm that the conclusions were not dramatically different.

The provisional conclusions of the review team were discussed at a partner consultation work shop in Khulna where the review team presented its initial conclusions.

**Evaluation Questions:** A group of topical questions aimed at each category of interventions has been the basis for undertaking a qualitative review of the detailed quantitative survey carried out preceding the review. These are outlined in Annex d of the report.

### III. Review Purpose and Objectives

The main objective of the MTR is to assess the progress of program implementation, specifically progress made in **achieving the program's strategic objectives, and to guide PROSHAR** in making necessary course corrections in achieving its set Life of Activities (LOAs)/goals. The program which commenced in June 2010 is now roughly half way through its five year project life.

The specific objectives of the MTR are to:

- determine whether project objectives are in line with local needs and priorities;
- determine whether project strategies and activities are being implemented with close attention to local needs and are promoting desired behavior change; and
- identify program strategies and interventions that (a) are being implemented to increase ownership, accountability and cost-effectiveness; and (b) are impeding ownership accountability and cost-effectiveness.

Based on the results of the quantitative survey, the purpose of the review is to:

- review the progress towards achievement of the program objectives and intermediate results through the Indicator Performance Tracking Table suggesting changes, where necessary;
- adopt a **qualitative method to understand the project's progress towards the achievement of the outcome and impact level indicators;**
- assess the effectiveness and efficiency of technical, managerial and resource management strategies, structures and systems established to support program implementation;
- assess the synergy between various program components including linkages with Government of Bangladesh and other development programs, and its effectiveness in enhancing the program performance;
- make specific recommendations on how the program can improve its strategies and program interventions to enhance its performance with respect to the above mentioned objectives; and
- assess the efficacy of the monitoring and evaluation system in place (in terms of human resources, database, reporting process, etc.)

The review also addresses the gender and empowerment dimension of interventions assessing the extent to which empowerment of women has been achieved (related to production, control over resources, income, participation in economic or social groups,

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leadership, and/or greater autonomy over their time); and of (marginalized) men (related to ownership, access and decision-making power and participation in economic or social groups). It undertook a review of the effectiveness of commodity management for the project as well as the progress in promoting desired behavior change (with respect to the adoption of technology, healthy care giving behaviors towards children including ante natal care, breast feeding, adoption of appropriate infant and young child feeding practices, changes in personal hygiene such as (hand washing with soap and water and disposal of wastes) disaster preparedness at the household level and responding to disaster warning actions to mitigate losses. Finally it assessed the appropriateness of the M&E system in place, assess the partnership relationships and the sustainability of the outcomes.

## **IV. SO 1: Income and access to food of poor and ultra poor households improved.**

PROSHAR interventions are based on in-depth value chain analysis and centered on enhancing on - and off-farm productivity through adoption of improved practices and technologies, developing sustainable relationships between beneficiaries and public and private stakeholders and linking smallholders to profitable domestic markets. The overall objective is translated through three operational objectives identified through the results as:

### **a. IR 1: Agricultural productivity increased and diversified**

- IR. 1.1.1: Access to agricultural inputs, assets and technology expanded
- IR. 1.1.2: Producers have improved knowledge
- IR. 1.1.3: Producers adopt improved/appropriate practices

#### **i. Description of Intervention**

Under the revised livelihood strategy, PROSHAR has adopted a very target oriented approach to the provision of support to farmer beneficiaries. The project targets farmers with a differentiated package of support based on their geographic location (in areas categorized as very vulnerable as opposed to less vulnerable) and on the size of land holding determining whether the farmer falls into the category of ultra poor/most vulnerable (less than 10 decimal), poor/vulnerable (10-50 decimal) and small holder farmer/on edge. to facilitate their access to inputs, assets and technology, the provision of training and demonstration to improve their knowledge and to facilitate the adoption of appropriate practices and technology. Homestead producers, holding land of less than 10 decimal, have been supported on the basis of the following criteria: (i) < 5 decimal sized pond for aquaculture; (ii) minimum of 5 decimal land for poultry production and for vegetable seed production; (iii) maximum of 10 decimal land for ruminant production; (iv) maximum of 10 decimals for livestock raising, and (v) minimum 1 decimal for homestead gardening. Commercial farming support was expected to be provided on the basis of: (i) a minimum of 5 decimals sized pond for aquaculture, (ii) more than 10 decimals for poultry; (iii) more than 20 decimals for ruminants; (iv) more than 35 decimals for livestock (milk or beef); and (v) a minimum of 20 decimals for cash crops (groundnut, mustard, sesame, sunflower, maize, rice seed, saline tolerant HYV rice, mung bean and lentil).

## **ii. Service delivery strategies and approaches**

The formation of groups and the provision of training and demonstration along with the provision of input supplies and access to inputs has been the basic package underlying support under this component. The earlier version of groups (of 25 farmers) provided with separately provided training and demonstration has undergone a transformation with the adoption of the revised livelihood strategy that operates on farmer groups (of 10 farmers each).

The revised strategy organizes farmers into subsectoral producer groups with the farmer field school approach that merges training and demonstration into one package. Beneficiaries observe all key steps in the production process and compare this to their own production methods in real time and adopt these technologies for reason of production and profit increasing the likelihood of achieving project outcomes. An important aspect is the creation of master trainers at the community level to lead subsector groups through training of trainers (ToT) to build community capacity that continues to function after the project ends. At specific weekly sessions (1.5 hrs each) throughout the season, additional messages are provided from Health/Nutrition Specialists on the nutritional value of the specific crop, the Disaster Risk Reduction specialists on how to reduce vulnerability during disasters and the Health Promoter of the PNGOs on behavioral changes in health and nutrition. Addressing disaster and climate changes issues are also addressed through TOT of Master Trainer and **incorporated in the Farmers' Field School's** Sessions.

In addition to training, all producer groups (both homestead and commercial) are being provided with a minimum of two seasons of support the first in which to test, through observation and own experimentation, the benefits of different aspects of improved technologies through the field school, and the second season to apply the technology on a broader scale. The ultra poor and poor farmers in highly vulnerable and the ultra poor in the remaining unions are also to receive one time micro-grants as in-kind contribution to purchase necessary inputs depending on the particular subsectoral crops they were to be producing. Commercial farmers could compete for one time small grants any time after receiving Farming as a Business (FaaB) training.

Based on market assessment the strategy outlines a menu of choices for both the homestead and the commercial producer and the extent of PROSHAR support to be provided. This ranged from homestead gardening to rice, sesame, mung beans as well as poultry, ducks, cattle, small ruminants (goats) and fishery.

## **iii. Implementation progress and achievement of results**

Implementation progress and results are primarily based on the quantitative survey. FGD were undertaken to deepen the knowledge acquired through the survey. However, it is important to note two points. First, the FGDs with farmer groups represent the results of basically one crop season with respect to field crops and two seasons with respect to vegetables (home garden). Second, they represent results not from the new FFS approach

but from the participants of the previous training approach. The close extension support implicit in the FFS is more than likely to have a positive impact in the future. Although the MTR is taking place approximately at the mid-point in project life, with respect to the agricultural component, the project has been in operation at the field level only over the last 16 months. Notwithstanding the delays, implementation on the agricultural front, specifically the production side, appears to be moving in the right direction.

**IR 1.1.1: Access to inputs, assets and technology.** The project has made impressive progress in beneficiary participation. It has already (up to January 2013) formed 1655 groups<sup>8</sup> with a total beneficiary coverage of about 23000 households against a target of just over 43000 beneficiaries by end of LOA. Overall, over half (58%) of the households cultivated some PROSHAR recommended crops from about a dozen propagated by PROSHAR with improved seed variety (87%) and crop spacing (66%) being the most common among them. There appeared to be a significant variation in adoption rates with Sarankhola at about 70%, Batiaghata at nearly 60% and Lohagara at about 40%. Similarly from about a dozen recommended crops (rice, wheat, groundnut, potatoes, spices, oil seeds etc) about 60% of households cultivated PROSHAR recommended crops. FGD responses were slightly higher (at about 70%) and reflect the effect of the small purposive sample that formed the basis for the FGDs. There was a visible gender bias with nearly 60% uptake by men as opposed to 40% uptake by women. The gender disparity was also reflected in the FGDs with 70% for men and about 50% for women. The adoption rate of close to 60% within the first year of operations can be considered a success given that the survey was conducted on beneficiaries who are yet to benefit from the FFS approach to production. However, the gender bias in the adoption rates is a reflection of the cultural bias, the fact that women are perhaps more risk averse than men but more importantly it also reflects greater access to resources (including land) by men as opposed to women, limited rights over property and resources and limited decision making power for women.

HYV rice was by far the most dominant commercial crop with nearly all the households in Sarankhola and about two thirds in Batiaghata and Lohagara being involved in it. Although other crops have been promoted (maize, sesame etc), almost all farmers produced HYV rice (100%) with just a few exceptions also producing LYV rice. The uptake in the other crops was marginal (less than one-tenth of beneficiaries). FGD responses particularly with male farmers however indicated a higher percentage (nearly 25%) also cultivating other crops. The dominance of rice is a reflection of the farmer's priority of ensuring his own food security in addition to it being a very marketable commodity. Thus while all farmers (about 99%) adopted rice, a crop which they knew well, the adoption of other cash crops was negligible (<2%). Changing entrenched technological approaches requires some time and it would be too early to expect a substantial uptake of new crops and technologies which however can change dramatically if the right combination of inputs and markets are found.

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<sup>8</sup> This is composed of nearly 433 groups formed under the old strategy of 25/group and 1222 groups of 10/group according to the new strategy (PROSHAR Livelihood Group) .

Home gardens, traditionally undertaken by women, had a participation rate of over 50% but a higher (70%) participation rate in Sarankhola<sup>9</sup>. FGD responses were close to 90% and again reflect the bias in the purposive sample chosen for the FGD. The adoption of new gardening practices also varied widely with 100% adoption in Sarankhola, 66% in Lohagara and 50% in Batiaghata. New gardening practices included improved bed, pit or heap system, the use of quality seeds, line sowing/transplanting, weeding organic fertilizers and others.

However, the adoption rates of new technology with respect to homestead gardens by women are higher than for other field crops. The results appear to contradict prevailing perceptions. It reflects the fact that when women are given command of their own resources (as in the homestead gardens), they are more open to new ideas. The message for training and support to women is clear but needs to be attuned to their specific command over productive resources. Evidence of this can be inferred also from the expansion in small ruminant production by women farmers in a majority of micro finance projects.

Fish farming in ponds, already present in the area, has generated a lot of interest. Nearly half (50%) of households were in fishery with a higher preference for carp (over 85%) than for tilapia (about 66%). FGD response was slightly lower at about 40%. The production of tilapia was in ponds that were an average of about 14 decimals and carp on an average of 16 decimals indicating a correlation of carp production with the slightly better off farmers. In similar vein as in agriculture, nearly two-thirds fish producers adopted improved techniques with most opting for adopting more than one method. Homestead production support for aquaculture however faces the challenge of financial viability if restricted to a maximum of 5 decimal land and there appears to be a need to increase the size limitation. Raising livestock alone was not very common in the area but the extension support of PROSHAR has resulted in that nearly one third of the households adopted poultry production alone and about half of that both livestock (goats) and poultry. FGD response confirmed a similar figure for goat production. PROSHAR has been propagating the production of layer birds instead of broilers and indigenous variety for homestead production. The contribution of these subsectors in asset creation could be high particularly for the very poor and vulnerable group with land holding less than 10 decimals.

PROSHAR support in crop agriculture represents the results of basically one year of implementation. The prospects in the future with the adoption of the FFS appear positive. However, while definitive information is not available, women farmers, when given full command over resources pertaining to the homestead garden are more responsive to new technology and ideas. The vegetable garden represents an area of activity that is entirely under the control of women and could be taken to reflect a tangible dimension of their empowerment. The inference therefore is the continuation of the effort to deepen the success achieved.

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<sup>9</sup> According to the Annual Survey 2012.

**IR 1.1.2: Producers have improved knowledge.** FGD with farmers indicated that they were responsive to messages and conscious of the prospects of improving their position with the technology or management practices propagated by PROSHAR. A whole series of training in agriculture, aquaculture and poultry and livestock was provided by the PROSHAR Technical Officer and Technical Coordinator in conjunction with government service providers from the Department of Agricultural extension (DAE), Livestock (DLS) and Fisheries (DOF) which will have an impact in the future. The fact that producers have acquired improved knowledge has been reflected in the adoption rates of technology in agriculture, fisheries and livestock (poultry). Thus, for instance, in agriculture about half (50%) of households adopted some new technology in production as well as in post harvest operations. Another dimension of increased knowledge has been the fact that when producers adopt technology, the adoption of more than one technology was common, for instance, with fish production, the adoption rate was high (80%) with respect to pond cleaning and liming while 30-50% practiced testing water color, fish disease management etc.

**IR 1.1.3: Producers adopt improved/appropriate practices.**

PROSHAR support in agricultural production has, within the limited period of its field operations, had an impact not only in the adoption rates of recommended crops but also in the adoption rates of technology and improved management practices associated with the individual crops as well as in fishery and livestock. In general, once introduced to new technology, producers adopted more than one technology. Thus, with respect to agriculture, the most common technology adopted was improved variety of seeds (87%) followed by maintaining proper crop spacing (66%) and the use of balanced fertilizer (50%). The response in FGD was about the same. About one third of the households used organic fertilizers, weed control and appropriate seed density. The most common improved post harvest techniques was ensuring maturity of seeds (76%) followed by drying seed after threshing. The greatest uptake of new technology was improved seed variety followed by proper plant spacing (nearly three quarters of farmers). Roughly 45% of beneficiaries over the three Upazilas adopted some improved seed production technology such as drying, cleaning, grading or preserving.

Similarly with livestock and poultry, producers were aware of the need for vaccination as well as for improved housing, breeding and supplementary feeding. About half the households adopted improved technology with vaccination (93%) as the most common followed by improved poultry housing (about 50%) and 30-40% improved breeding and supplementary feeding.

Fish producers were aware of the need for improved fish production technology with nearly two thirds of households reflecting the adoption of some improved production technology.

**Observations:** In general, the adoption rates of around 50-60% after one crop year with respect to field crops and about 70% with respect to homestead gardens can be considered to be a relative success. The very high rate of adoption of rice is understandable being the

indicator not just of food security but, given the marketability of the product, of financial security. In addition, there was a significant gender variation in the rate of technology adoption which mirrored that of crop adoption with a rough two third–one third split between men and women. A study to identify the causes of this gender disparity would contribute greatly in directing the course of the remaining period of PROSHAR.

## **b. IR 2: Market Linkages Developed and Strengthened**

- o IR 1.2.1 Market actors integration enhanced
- o IR 1.2.2 Producer cooperation improved
- o IR1.2.3 Post harvest value added opportunities expanded
- o IR 1.2.4 Access to market services improved

### **i. Description of Interventions**

PROSHAR's objective with respect to this component is to develop and strengthen relationships between producer groups and different players in the value chain with the objective of promoting collective actions to capture economies of scale when dealing with input dealers, buyers, processors and other service providers.

### **ii. Service delivery strategies and approaches – quality, successes and challenges**

In general, households in the three Upazilas have links with the local markets. While nearly all households bought some food for home consumption, half of them sold some agricultural outputs, in small quantities, usually to individuals in local markets or at farm gate. However, the pattern of marketing has not changed much over the past year.

With a view to promoting collective action to achieve economies of scale for bulk purchases and sales, particularly to develop and strengthen linkages between small and private services as well as the Government, PROSHAR facilitated stakeholders meetings (25) and linkage building workshops (31) with producers (575), input suppliers (both wholesale and retail-58) and traders (wholesalers, retailers and mobile sellers - 63). There have been little development beyond the holding of the workshops and meetings and the results have been **lower than anticipated due to the project's primary concentration** in forming farmer groups and the provision of training to them. The only tangible effect has been that linkages were established with a number of seed companies.

There has been limited success in this component due to a combination of factors that emphasize the need for significantly more capacity building in understanding markets taking into consideration the resource endowments of the different groups. Thus, with respect to

both the most vulnerable and less vulnerable groups the objective under the revised strategy would be to promote collective actions to achieve economies of scale when negotiating for purchases and sales by providing training in collective action. This training will be an integral module in the farmer field school. Marketing specialists will provide additional support to each commercial group, and will support the organization of meetings across groups with input suppliers and product purchasers.

It would also mean efforts to build awareness, through the subsector groups, of responsibilities of the Market Management Committees to support market activities, and build the capacity of groups to advocate for a fair and transparent execution of their responsibilities.

Similarly support would be provided for capacity building for commercial producers and off-farm producers using the Farming as a Business approach, where beneficiaries prepare business plans; these plans then will qualify them to compete for small business grants; these small business grants, which will require matching funds, will be competitively awarded, and will support inputs to expand or diversify existing businesses.

Furthermore, ACDI/VOCA is proposing a grant to International Development Enterprises (iDE), given its technical and cultural experience in Bangladesh, to:

- identify sectors with the greatest growth potential and transition producer groups to become more business oriented, with business plans to access these opportunities.
- build the capacity of PNGOs to be able to promote market linkages, which has been successful in the Bangladesh context.
- support PROSHAR to create farm business advisors to assist farmer based groups in managing their relationships with the private sector and assist with their business development.
- increase access to effective finance from the formal banking sector;
- promote collection points and bulking by producers, and
- improve networks among private sector actors and producers

### **iii. Implementing progress and achievement of results**

There has been very limited success in developing new market linkages. Although the linkage workshops have created awareness, producers have not availed of any new marketing channels and have generally followed the existing market channels. The absence of any success in collective pooling of input purchases or of sales of outputs has generally left market channels in its existing state.

## **c. IR 3: Non agricultural opportunities expanded and diversified**

- o IR 1.3.1 Access to non agricultural inputs and technology expanded
- o IR 1.3.2 Entrepreneurs have improved knowledge
- o IR 1.3.3 Entrepreneurs adopt improved/appropriate practices

### **i. Description of interventions**

Non agricultural income earning activities in the three Upazilas although not very active, do provide a modicum of opportunities for the rural households, implicitly women. These cover tailoring, handicrafts, largely from bamboo<sup>10</sup>, and the production of a local product, “karchupi” (specialized hand embroidery). The products are produced not as an enterprise but more as a means to utilize spare time, meet the market demand and earn some income. About 13% of producers participated in it before PROSHAR. Both inputs and outputs are bought and sold locally.

PROSHAR interventions aimed at encouraging off farm producers increase their knowledge and skills for greater production efficiencies, identification of quality inputs, meeting market demand and specifications for products such as karchupi and tailoring.

### **ii. Service delivery strategies and approaches- quality, success and challenges**

The basic approach in support of the expansion and diversification of non-agricultural opportunities has been through the formation of groups, the provision of specialized training and assistance to markets. The aim has been to induce a change in perception of the producers from a traditional approach to a more market oriented one based on improved knowledge and technology and an understanding of demand and supply.

### **iii. Implementation progress and achievement of results**

**IR 1.3.1: Access to non-agricultural inputs and technology expanded** - A total of 28 groups of 20 participants each were formed around bamboo crafts (14), karchupi (4), tailoring (7) and others (3). In addition to the provision of training, producers were assisted with access to inputs and markets. Over 43% of alternative livelihood producers reported

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<sup>10</sup> While often referred to as one of the first items for development in off market production support, it is important to note that a Dec 2011 study found bamboo the least attractive among all value chain based assessments for potential development. This is apart from questions of supply that has also been raised. See Bangladesh Value Chain Selection and Rapid Analysis – A Road Map for Inclusive Growth for Non Food Value Chains, Study for Feed the Future, Washington USA. Despite this bamboo has been retained as a possibility for development.

increased market access and use as opposed to a participation of about 13% before PROSHAR. Increased access was higher for males (over 60%) than for female producers (about 38%). (reference: Fiscal Year 2012 Annual Results Report pg 4)

**IR 1.3.2: Entrepreneurs have improved knowledge** - Access to improved knowledge was undertaken through the provision of trainings in different fields by resource persons from related organizations such as ADORE, Ashar ALO, as well as private entrepreneurs. The productivity trainings covered karchupi (80), bamboo crafts (280), tailoring (135), hand embroidery (19) and nakshikatha (40). A reflection of improved knowledge from the trainings particularly in the orientation of producing for the market has been that some producers developed a form of contract production approach by providing the inputs and marketing the outputs.

**IR 1.3.3: Entrepreneurs adopt improved/appropriate practices** - Over 25% of beneficiaries adopted at least one technology introduced by PROSHAR. The rates of adoption between men and women however were about the same at around 25%. This is a reflection of the importance of perception that the availability of markets presents in stimulating off farm production. Thus, while the adoption of technology was low, this was not perceived by the producers as the primary constraint.

In general, the restriction of non agricultural/off farm support to be limited only to the highly vulnerable areas has been one of the factors in the relative low uptake of activity in the field. The requirement of 20 participants per group has faced difficulties particularly in the highly vulnerable areas. There is a critical need to broaden the coverage by including the less vulnerable areas as well as the adoption of 10 producers per group. In addition, the implicit assumption is that the non agricultural activities of the type identified are undertaken by women. Men often take the role of the entrepreneur providing the interface between the market and the producer. While this also needs to be confirmed by undertaking a small survey, the assumption of an expanded intervention of non agricultural activities by women needs to be assessed against the time available to them after their work in the household.

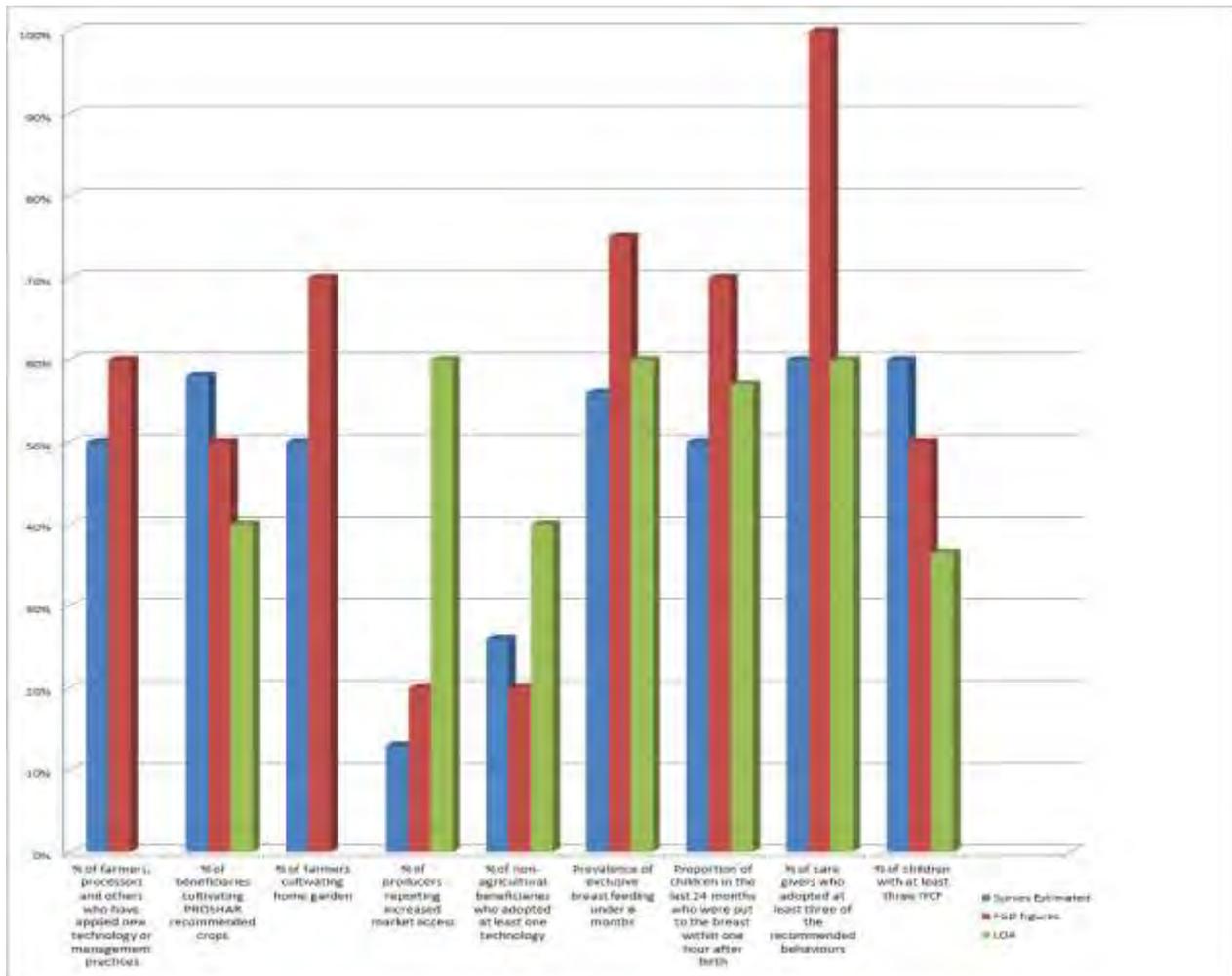
Overall, the strategy of interventions in agriculture is in the right direction. The prospect of reaching targets in crop agriculture, despite delays, is reasonably optimistic. However, while off farm activity faced some structural problems of design (limited in geographical area and size of groups), the development of market linkages appears to have been neglected and should be the focus for increased attention for the remaining period of project life. On the other hand, the positive power of the market as a driver can hardly be over-emphasized. The very structured nature of support by specific size of activity classified by land holding (very poor < 10 decimals, poor between 10-50 decimals) limits the producer to his subsistence level and does not allow him to respond to the market and generate a surplus (example very poor farmer restricted to pond size of less than 5 decimals) for fish production. While it would be advisable to re-visit the size distribution of land as an indicator (among others) for division between the very poor and the poor, the MTR recognizes that given the remaining period of project life it would be better to concentrate

on capitalizing the gains already made instead of venturing forth in new activities given that the objective under Title II is to reach the most vulnerable.

## **d. Program Qualitative Validation of Survey Results**

### **i. Focus Group Discussions**

The MTR team held discussions with 31 focus groups covering all aspects of the project. FGDs included male and female, on and off-farm producers, CBDMVG volunteers and the trios care groups all together. With the commencement of the FGDs, the MTR team realized the incompatibility of the approach of drawing conclusions from the FGDs with the results of the statistical survey given the selection choices and the very limited numbers of participants in the FGD. Under the circumstances the team adopted the position of using the FGD conclusions as a rough scale for comparison only. While there was no attempt to tabulate the response to the questions, the following represents a rough indication of their responses as against the survey figures and the project targets only as a comparison of the present status as opposed to the target goals. Most responses were generally within comparable range of the survey figures. Major variations reflect the influence of the purposeful and very small size of the sample. (See Annex j for Summary FGD Reports).



## ii. Meeting Targets

The following represents the prospects of achieving targets under SO 1:

Indicator	Current	LOA target
<b>SO 1- Income and Access to Food of poor and ultra-poor households Improved</b>		
OC1: Value of set of assets (including savings livestock etc in Taka))	48,453	60,566
<b>1.1 Agricultural Productivity Increased and Diversified</b>		
OC 2: No. of farmers, processors and others applied new technologies or mgmt practices	23,045	43,102

<b>1.1.1 Access to agriculture inputs and technology expanded</b>		
OC 3: No of beneficiaries who cultivate new crops/products as part of PROSHAR interventions	58%	40%
OC 4: % change in profit per unit cost of rice HYV	15%	35%
OC 5: Production as part of tech transfer		
<b>1.1.2 Producers have improved knowledge</b>		
OC 6: No of groups with women in leadership positions	10%	45%
<b>1.2 Market Linkages developed and strengthened</b>		
OC 7: % of agricultural smallholders reporting increased market access and use as a result of PROSHAR intervention	20%	60%
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>LOA Targets</b>
OC 8: % of producer group members bulking as a result of PROSHAR intervention	10%	30%
OC 9: % of alternative livelihood groups members reporting increased market access and use	43%	80%
<b>I.R.3 Non agricultural opportunities expanded and diversified</b>		
OC 10: % of non agricultural beneficiaries who adopted at least one PROSHAR introduced technology	25%	40%

## **e. Discussions of General Evaluation Questions for SO 1**

### **i. Relevance and Design**

There can be little disagreement on the relevance of the PROSHAR project in terms of its scope given the specific problems facing Bangladesh. Conceptually, project design interventions (in the revised livelihood strategy) address the three issues that plague the country - (the lack of) food security, malnutrition and susceptibility to disasters. However, the strategy falls short in its operational/implementation modality.

The adoption of a classificatory approach linking beneficiaries and the support to be provided in the revised livelihood strategy, suffers from the problems of inadequate coverage on the one hand and an overtly restrictive coverage on the other.

**Inadequate coverage of fishery, poultry and small ruminants subsectors.** The absence of an articulated rationale or assessment of three critical elements, the fishery, livestock (poultry) and small ruminants subsectors, leaves the revised strategy without a measure of the extent to which the interventions should be supported. This is particularly critical given the very positive experience that other poverty alleviation projects and

microfinance funding in general have had with respect to these three subsectors. There is a need to spell out the strategy in these subsectors

**Restrictive Specification of activity modules.** On the other hand, the strategy is explicit in some aspects of its support to the two forms of production under the project – homestead and commercial. The specifications with respect to the requirements and the services to be provided by the project by each activity/subsector modules have been specified for the homestead and the commercial farmer separately. The modules do not necessarily take into account the requirement for financial viability of the activity. Where homestead farming covers both categories of the ultra poor and the poor, the precise specification of land size requirements by activity modules can act as a restrictive limit to potential impact<sup>11</sup>. The specifications in the modules need to be seen as indicative and there is a need to permit a degree of flexibility in their application even within the limits of the broad classification of under 10 decimals as the ultra poor. Restricting the ultra poor to fish production to under 5 decimals is a nonviable proposition and needs to be changed to the 10 decimals that indentify him as an ultra poor farmer. Furthermore, in general an easing of the classification from 10 decimals to say 20 decimals would allow a considerably larger category of poor to benefit not at the subsistence level but generate a surplus.

**Restrictions on off farm group size and area of coverage.** Given that off farm activities is not very common, the formation of 20 beneficiaries per group, a requirement for support, has acted as a constraint in the formation of groups. This has been further constrained by the restriction that support for off farm activities is to be limited to the severely vulnerable areas. An easing of the restrictions both in terms of numbers per group, matching the agricultural activity groups of 10 beneficiaries per group, and widening the area of coverage to include the less vulnerable areas could have a significant impact for the poor and the ultra poor.

## ii. Efficiency

PROSHAR is being implemented with a high degree of efficiency to make up for the initial delays in becoming operational. The program has made substantial strides in implementation despite a practical delay of project start by nearly 15 months. This has been achieved largely through a very focused and organized approach by each of the PNGOs as well as the leadership provided by ACDI-VOCA and PCI. The systematic approach of a combined formulation of the annual program with the active participation of the PNGOs has been the first step. This succeeded in energizing and developing a degree of ownership of the program for each Upazila by the PNGOs as its own. A uniform organizational structure with adequate numbers of relatively qualified technical staff have been supported by monthly implementation and coordination meetings held in each Upazila on a rotation basis. This has been further supported through an intense and structured M&E system that has

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<sup>11</sup> Thus, the specification difference between homestead aquaculture and commercial aquaculture is less than 5 decimal and more than 5 decimal land (page 6 of strategy). Field appears to indicate that the financial viability of the enterprise becomes questionable if below 5 decimals.

aimed to monitor and ensure that the program is being implemented in a logical manner. The formulation of a Performance Monitoring Plan and the IPTT in support of M&E attempts to ensure the maintenance of a high degree of implementation efficiency.

### iii. Impact

With a major focus of the project on behavior change, it is still too early to comment on any project impact. IPTT figures provide 6 impact indicators that can be used for measuring project impact. However, these impact indicators refer to the anticipated impact by each of the components and there were no indicators for the project as a whole.

Impact Indicators	Base Line	LOA	% change
IM 1- Average number of months of Adequate food provisioning	9.0	10.2	13%
IM 2 Average Household Diet Diversity Score	6.6	6.9	4.5%
IM 3 Gross margin per unit of measure at the household level	12495	14994	20%
IM 4 Percentage of stunted children aged 0m-59m (height for age -2 SD)	42.4%	34.4%	23%
IM 5 Percentage of underweight children aged 0-59m	31.4%	24.4%	23% reduction
IM 6 Percentage of ever married women 15-49 y	23.9%	21.5%	11% reduction

With respect to IM 1 at the current rate of participation the prospects of reaching LOA targets appear to be positive and moving in the right direction. With participation already reaching about 25,000 beneficiaries and with the uptake of HYV rice as the almost unanimous crop for adoption, the total increase in production is likely to increase the months of adequate food supplies and reach the targeted increase in the number of months of food provisioning. Along with this increased production the increased participation of women in agriculture particularly in homestead vegetable gardening which is almost entirely for own consumption is likely to make the prospects for achieving IM 2 targets better. The additional prospect of the growth in fish production provides supporting evidence and strengthens the prospects of an improvement in the average diet diversity score. FGD discussions did indicate a degree of easing of the period of food shortage since project beneficiaries started participating in the project. They were more forthcoming with respect to the aspect that their intake of vegetables had increased thus providing improvement in their dietary diversity. The prospect of increase in gross margin of about 20 % is contingent on the pattern of production that farmers adopt. If current rate of increase in producing HYV rice holds into the future and farmers have access to purchasing quality seed and using farming practices that facilitate the adoption of technologies, the prospect of reaching the increased gross margin appears to be very bright.

With respect to IM 4 stunting and IM 5 under weight, there are at present no GMP indicators that provide an acceptable measure. It is not possible to predict when we will be able to get reliable measures. Whether we will be able to reach a reduction of the effect of both stunting and underweight of about 23 % will depend on factors that are not entirely under the control of the beneficiary. In similar vein, IM 6, chronic malnutrition of ever married women, there are, as yet, no measures of chronic malnutrition among married women and consequently it is not possible to make any judgement on this.

While these impact measures relate directly to the problems faced by the targeted beneficiaries, changes in behaviour can have an impact also on other aspects of life. While no measures are available on that they can still have a visible and significant impact.

#### **iv. Gender**

Gender considerations have been foremost in project design with a targeting approach that ensures 70% of the beneficiaries are women. To that end it has developed a Gender Integration Action Plan (GIAP) to ensure the integration of all activities from the dimension of gender. The specific provision of support for women in home gardens has been a direct measure not only of support to women but also an effort at empowerment as women establish command over the control of resources related to that part of the production effort. The home garden also serves as an element of empowerment as women feel better enabled to cater to aspects of the family food needs particularly that related to their children. Evidence of this empowerment can be seen from the fact that survey results, supported by FGD responses, indicate that women are more inclined towards the adoption of new technology than men. The participation of women in the FFS has raised the status of women and recognition of their leadership qualities by their selection as Master Trainers. Similarly, women support for increasing off farm production is another direct measure of gender sensitivity of project design. This is based on the implicit assumption that the women have time on their hand to devote to project activities in addition to all the other activities of taking care of the household and the children. The absence of IPTT indicators to measure the gender dimension of the project needs to be rectified by the appointment of a consultant to propose the measures for inclusion in the revised IPTT.

However, the disparity in the adoption rates of technology with respect to a number of parameters needs further analysis. While superficial arguments relating to culture are often advanced as an explanation, they tend to mask the combined effect of aversion to risk, control over family decisions, hereditary and property rights and control over family resources. Further analysis is required to analyze the critical factors and the extent to which they can be addressed by the project.

In similar vein project design has focused on support to women in developing market linkages and in the expansion of off market activities. This is based on the implicit assumption that the women have time on their hand to devote to project activities in addition to all the other activities of taking care of the household and the children.

## **v. Sustainability**

The introduction of technology and management techniques coupled with the mobilization of producer groups supported by building linkages between producers and the private sector are anticipated to provide the foundation for sustainability. Resource endowment barriers such as limited land access and/or available family labor can be overcome to a considerable extent by the introduction of new crops, technology and market oriented producer groups. The improvements in food availability and incomes once achieved, even in a small way, are the best guarantors for sustainability as farmers tend to ensure their gains. These can be further strengthened by facilitating links between producers and MFIs. Institutionally, the identification of Master Trainers to lead farmer field schools supported by technical officials of the Government and connected to private service providers (for inputs and outputs) will provide sustainability and an exit strategy for PROSHAR. The focus on the development of sound business practices, increased bargaining power and increased service linkage with government, local businesses and microfinance institutions provide the ground for sustainability and an exit strategy for PROSHAR.

## **vi. Coordination with Feed the Future Projects**

Opportunities for collaboration with Feed the Future projects in Bangladesh are being actively pursued. The collaboration is mutually beneficial to both FFP and FtF supported projects. Thus, while FtF operates in a critical role of providing technical assistance and support, PROSHAR provides the opportunity for FtF to disseminate and expand the **utilization of the technology. Currently, PROSHAR has established partnership with IFDC's Accelerating Agricultural Productivity (AAPI) to promote efficiency in the use of agricultural inputs through its emphasis on deep placement fertilizer technology. Partnership with IRRI/CSISA for quality seed replication for saline tolerant rice and for the development of orange fleshed sweet potato cultivation is also being implemented. Discussions are underway with a number of other agencies such as with World Fish for fish farming. The opportunities for greater collaboration do exist and project implementation measures must explicitly internalise those into their DIPs. Further linkages would refer to the USAID strategic plan and efforts by PROSHAR to integrate with it.**

## **V. SO 2: Health of pregnant and lactating women and children under 5 (with particular attention to children under 2) improved**

The objective of the component is to address the barriers to health and nutrition of the mothers and children. In pursuit of this, PROSHAR has focused on prevention and treatment of child malnutrition, expansion of clinical health services, and improvement of household and community responses to health and nutrition challenges. Intermediate results (IR) that are to be achieved under this objective are:

- IR 2.1: Malnutrition prevented and treated
  - IR 2.1.1: PLWs' and under 2 children's access to nutrition and health services improved
  - IR 2.1.2 Improved availability of and access to community management of acute malnutrition (CMAM)
- IR 2.2: Improved effectiveness of health clinic services
  - IR.2.2.1: Integrated services of community health clinics improved
  - IR 2.2.2 Partnerships between health facilities and the communities that they serve improved

### **a. Brief Description of Interventions of SO 2**

PROSHAR has aimed at addressing the issue of health and nutrition among mothers and children through the adoption of measures that encompass the Preventing Malnutrition in Children Under 2 Approach (PM2A). PM2A is a food assisted approach to reducing the prevalence of child malnutrition by targeting a package of health and nutrition interventions to all pregnant women, mothers of children 0-23 months, and children under 2 in food-insecure program areas, regardless of nutritional status. Because the women and children are the most nutritionally vulnerable members of the population, the program targets everyone in these groups with a special focus on protecting children from malnutrition<sup>12</sup> and its long-term consequences. PM2A integrates best practices in maternal and child health and nutrition (MCHN) programming and combines them with food assistance. In addition, the intervention includes expansion of clinical health services and improvement of household and community responses to health and nutrition challenges.

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<sup>12</sup> PM2A Technical Reference Materials ([http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PNADY354.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADY354.pdf))

## **b. Service Delivery Strategies and Approaches – quality, success and challenges**

The program consists of a range of services that cascade into an overall impact of nutritional and health improvement on the target population of women and children. The interventions can best be viewed under a package of services that include:

- Behavior change communication which includes trios care group sessions (mother groups, father groups and grandmother groups), community meetings, community mobilization through participation in various events (e.g. world breast feeding week, national immunization days, Vitamin A and de-worming campaigns, etc.), and through the dissemination of BCC materials (e.g. posters and brochures);
- The provision of Ante natal Care (ANC) and Post Natal Care (PNC) including Growth Monitoring and Promotion (GMP) services;
- The treatment of severely acute malnourished (SAM) cases;
- Strengthening the community provision of clinical services including the integrated management of childhood illness (IMCI) as well as the community case management of diarrhea and acute respiratory infections, and
- Technical assistance to support health care for all agencies, Government, NGOs and/or the private sector.

**Behavior Change Communication.** PROSHAR has developed its BCC strategy through an assessment and analysis of existing perception and practices, related to the MCHN behaviors, by undertaking a Doers and Non-Doers analysis of program communities at the beginning of the project. The BCC strategy has determined the reasons of why some people practice recommended MCHN behaviors while others do not. This strategy is used as a guiding tool for PROSHAR to plan and implement community mobilization activities involving primary, secondary and other indirect beneficiaries using a variety of IEC materials and channels of communication.

The lynchpin in the BCC strategy is the unique trios concept of care givers. At the community level a Health Promoter (HP) organizes care groups meeting to provide health and nutrition counseling separately to (a) mother leaders twice a month; (b) father leaders once in two months and (c) grandmother leaders once every month using given modules, flip charts and flash cards. The mother leaders, father leaders and grandmother leaders in turn provide the counseling and transmit the messages learnt from HP counseling to their respective peer groups. During counseling the care groups, the HP instructs the mothers to attend the local EPI centers for child immunization, ANC and PNC for pregnant and lactating women and growth monitoring of children on scheduled dates. The dates are supplied to her (mother leader) by the implementing HP who is herself an NGO staff. At the centre, trained government service providers conduct the EPI, ANC and PNC, while a GM educator(GME) assisted by mother leaders take the weight and MUAC of children. GMEs are volunteers and one GME covers 8 EPI centers per month. The GMEs and mother leaders are trained on

growth monitoring by the Growth Monitoring Facilitators (GMF) who are NGO employees. A Care Group Supervisor (CGS) oversees 5 HPs, and GMFs, who in turn are supervised by the Health and Nutrition Coordinator. The current level of attendance/participation of the mother leaders with their peers is satisfactory (92%-95%), grandmothers (80%-85%) but father leaders attendance is low which is only 65%-70%.

Assessment of the trios care approach indicates its versatility in dissemination and implementation of behavior change messages at household and community levels and a high degree of awareness and acknowledgement of its impact among the target population. The care approach has succeeded in bringing home the message of the need for adoption of measures that focus on the health of the pregnant mother, not only through behavioral measures such as taking extra rest and food and attending ANC sessions to monitor the health of the unborn child, but also monitor the growth of the child over the first 24 months of its life by attending regular PNC and GMP sessions. Three aspects however need resolution to continue the success achieved with the program. They are: (i) the less than enthusiastic participation among father leaders, reflected in their relatively low attendance at the regular care group meetings, (ii) widening the role of the mother in law to include other senior family members (such as an aunt) for families that have a sick and/or old mother in-law unable to perform the role and (iii) an operational role for the woman who has graduated from the program over the 30 month period although she is allowed to stay in the care group after her child turns 2 years of age.

### **Provision of ANC, PNC and GMP services**

PROSHAR basically facilitates the provisions of ANC and PNC services by linking beneficiaries with the health services delivery points belonging to the government or NGOs. As an indication of the success achieved by PROSHAR, reports from health delivery points indicates an increase in the demand for ANC and PNC services from the program areas. This has happened largely due to the integration of services, facilitation and the establishment of a partnership between the communities and the health services delivery points. Although PROSHAR did not provide any training, it has supported these services through filling up gaps, such as through the supply of equipment such as Sphygmomanometers, Stethoscope, Weighing Scales etc, where and when the Government was in short supply. Besides, PROSHAR has successfully facilitated development of joint action plan integrating ANC, GMP and EPI services together with MoHFW and NGOs.

Survey results indicated, 53% of pregnant women (PW) received three or more ANC visits as well as registering for services from qualified service providers (target: 39%). However, skilled personnel attendance during birth was recorded at 34% which is 1% higher than the baseline, though the target for FY12 was 35%. The percentage of women accessing post natal care among postpartum women, within 48 hours after birth, were estimated at 49.8% which is 5.5% lower than the annual target. The reason for the low achievement was a decrease in the number of government community skilled birth attendants (CSBAs) in the target areas (i.e. 66 during baseline to 40 at present). Mothers were not allowed to travel

outside their homes during the post-partum period, and therefore they could not receive **postnatal care**. PROSHAR plans to continue mobilizing the PW's family members to increase awareness through the care groups on the importance of delivery by skilled birth attendants and post-partum care within 48 hours and will train family members on how to assess mothers and newborns during the 48 hour post-partum period, and how to refer those with complications to other health facilities. MoHFW does not have a plan to train CSBAs in the near future. As a consequence, PROSHAR has planned to support MoHFW by training 60 community women along with MoHFW and NGO staff through an accredited training institute on CSBA to increase coverage. The CSBA training duration will be 6 months, and will follow the national curriculum, that includes 2 months of theory, 3 months of practicals at a hospital, and 1 month of field training. Similarly, 73% of postpartum women received Vitamin-A capsules within six weeks of delivery (target: 40%). This achievement is attributed to the combination of awareness raising provided through the care groups and the establishment of GMP services at EPI outreach sites where family members could access to Vitamin-A supply in time for a postpartum mother.

On the other hand, GMP sessions have been integrated with MoHFW run outreach EPI and Satellite clinic sessions. The GMP sessions are conducted by GM Educator assisted by mother leader. The GM Facilitator, a partner NGO staff, provides supervisory supports and guidance to GMP sessions. Currently, GMP sessions are integrated with EPI and Satellite centers through joint planning with MoHFW staff and are being conducted in each month. However, a review of GMP operation reveals a number of areas that need improvement. They are:

- Based on visits to GMP sites and discussions with participants, there is a need to improve the counseling skills of the GM Educator through structured training on counseling ;
- The current workload of GM facilitator (one GM facilitator responsible for 2 unions) need to be reviewed to ensure quality supervision;
- GMP data should be shared with care group trios and peers and also with the wider community to encourage the practicing of all the recommended behavior as suggested during counseling at GMP sessions, and
- For sustainability, PROSHAR may plan to involve Government (MOH&FW) frontline staff, such as Health Assistant (HA) and Family Welfare Assistant (FWA) for conduction of GMP sessions.

### **Conditional Food Distribution**

Supporting ANC and GMP sessions is the provision of conditional food rations for targeted beneficiaries. Pregnant and lactating mothers are entitled to receive food assistance from the end of the first trimester of her pregnancy through the nursing period for the child i.e. up to 6 months of age. Subsequently, monthly food rations are provided to induce the **child's attendance at GMP sessions up to 24 months of age. With the objective of ensuring**

that there is no substitution of food intake within the family, an additional supplementary monthly food ration is also provided for the same period. The supplementary monthly rations however vary by the 3-month lean and the 9-month non-lean period. The food rations are as follows:

Beneficiary type	Ration size per month	Reason for entitlement
Pregnant mother	Wheat 7 Kg, Vegetable oil 0.5 Kg, Lentil 2 Kg (It provides about 967 Kcal)	For receiving ANC check up and attending care group sessions
Lactating mother (during child's age 0-6 months)	Ration size same as above (same as that of pregnant mother)	For attending GMP and care group sessions
Child (6-24 months)	Wheat 3 Kg, Vegetable oil 0.5 Kg, Lentil 0.5 Kg (It provides 416 Kcal)	For attending monthly GMP and care group sessions
Family ration (per family per month)	Wheat 15 Kg, Vegetable oil 1 Kg, Lentil 3 Kg	3 months lean period
	Wheat 0.5 Kg, Lentil 1 Kg, Vegetable oil 0.5 Kg	9 months non-lean period

Beneficiaries in FGDs report considerable satisfaction with the particular type of lentils provided. However, varying the general monthly supplementary food rations by lean or non-lean seasons requires more management resources (in terms of measuring different amounts instead of one flat amount) which could possibly be reduced by having a flat rate over the year. A detailed study on the size, frequency, utilization and effectiveness of the ration could provide the grounds for a rational decision on whether the family rations for the full year is required, recognizing however that changes in ration size could jeopardize the participation of target women and other beneficiaries.

### **Treatment of SAM cases**

Severely acute malnourished cases (SAM) have been provided with ready to use therapeutic food (RUTF) - high calorie dense peanut-based foods, made of skimmed milk, sugar, vegetable fat, vitamins and minerals and used for the therapeutic purpose for treating SAM children. RUTF distribution, however, started late because of delayed receipt of supplies. After receipt of the supply of RUTF and on completion of the training of the concerned MoHFW staff, management of SAM children has been started through the community clinics and the health & family welfare centers (H&FWCs) at union levels.

## **Strengthening the community provision of clinical services including the community-based integrated management of childhood illness (C-IMCI) and community case management (CCM).**

Community clinics, one for every 6000 population, have been set up by the Government to act as a community outreach site in addition to providing basic health care within the reach of the community. Combined with the objectives of C-IMCI: i) ensuring community access to information and basic health services round the clock, ii) promotion of key family/household practices (selected expected behaviors), and iii) establishing partnership between community and health facility, they present a critical operational role in the provision of health and nutrition services. Though neglected in the past, the clinics have come to life and resurgence in their activities is clearly noticeable through the activism displayed by the Community Management Committees. PROSHAR has provided training for the service providers of community clinics on C-IMCI and CMAM and is providing assistance in strengthening the Community Clinic Management Committees. In addition, PROSHAR is playing a facilitating role with the MoHFW at upazila, district and national levels to ensure necessary supplies to community clinics.

### **Technical assistance to healthcare supports**

PROSHAR has provided training, logistical and facilitating support to health care facilities of the government, NGOs and the private sector to expand and ensure provision of quality services for its beneficiaries. The main challenge for PROSHAR would be to make sure that Government facilities are gradually becoming not more dependant on PROSHAR for training and logistical supports but rather that those support are being ensured from MoHFW.

## **c. Implementing progress and achievement of results**

### ***Intermediate result 2.1: Malnutrition prevented and treated***

#### ***Sub IR 2.1.1: PLW and children under 2's access to nutrition and health services improved***

Although still too early to perceive any significant changes, PROSHAR's involvement in the provision of ANC and PNC and the establishment of GMP sessions in coordination with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) has been extensive. It has provided services in 100% of program communities, 516 sites in 23 unions, combined with all EPI and satellite clinic (that provides ANC and FP services) with 94% of beneficiaries participating in GMP and 97% for ANC. GMP sessions monitoring and recording the growth of children 0-23 months and counseling for mothers and child care-givers on proper feeding and healthy practices including care-seeking is provided each month by the GM educator assisted by a trained mother leader.

According to PROSHAR Annual Report 2012, the nutritional status of PM2A children found to be underweight (weight-for-age < -2SD) was 21.6%, which was the same as the target for

FY12. While people are beginning to adopt practices under BCC, physical observations by the MTR team indicate a deficiency in the quality of counseling by growth monitoring educators, growth monitoring facilitators, and mother leaders. Their skills in active listening and negotiation can be improved through a more structured training from PROSHAR, which should lead to improved behavior change and lower rates of malnutrition.

**Sub IR 2.1.2: Improved availability of and access to CMAM**

While there are a number of options/formulas (F-75, F-100 etc.) that are suitable to treat SAM cases in a residential health facility management but for a community-based setting using Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) is more suitable. Recognising that, only preventive approaches, BCC, are often not enough to help those SAM children, PROSHAR has included the Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) together with the preventive and other curative services towards bringing down malnutrition in the fastest possible time in the program communities.

PROSHAR has provided training to Community Health Care Providers (CHCP) and Health Assistants (HA) all 59 Community Clinics together with respective AHI, HI and Sub-Assistant Community Medical Officers (SACMO) and Family Welfare Visitors (FWV) of 19 Union Health & Family Welfare Centers (H&FWC) to ensure identification and treatment of Severe Acute Malnourished (SAM) cases. The program has supplied a simple Bangla guideline to all the trained CMAM providers as well as other necessary logistics, such as MUAC tape, weighing scale, RUTF, Shelves for storing RUTF etc.

PROSHAR identified a total of 289 severe acute malnutrition (SAM) cases during a house-to-house child survey conducted in August, 2012, in all unions. But PROSHAR could not provide treatment to those identified SAM cases using RUTF during FY12 because (RUTF) importation was delayed. But those identified SAM cases were referred to health centers for treatment of underlying infections and other ailments. With the training and supplies provided CMAM activities have also started.

**Intermediate result 2.2: Improved effectiveness of health clinic services**

Accepting IMCI (Integrated Management of Childhood Illness) as the integrated approach for adoption, PROSHAR has provided capacity building support to Upazila and Union level health care providers under MoHFW to make them capable of implementing F-IMCI services. Similarly, the program has supported training of Union and Community level health care providers on C-IMCI to ensure community access to information related to key family practices (to improve child caring and care-seeking practices) and basic curative care (ARI, Diarrhea and SAM) for child health. C-IMCI also establishes partnership between community and health facilities.

In FY12, PROSHAR in coordination with the IMCI section of MoHFW provided training on F-IMCI to the doctors, nurses and paramedics of district hospital, upazila health complex and paramedics of union Health & Family Welfare Centers (H&FWCs). Also, PROSHAR targeted

training of 50% community based care workers, such as Health Assistant (HA), Community Health Care Provider (CHCP), Assistant Health Inspector (AHI), Health Inspector (HI) on C-IMCI to capacitate them appropriately classifying and treating ARI and Diarrhea among children of 0-59 months using community-based integrated management of childhood illness (C-IMCI) protocol. Accordingly, PROSHAR, in coordination with the IMCI section of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), trained 78 Health Assistants (HA), 42 Assistant Health Inspectors, and ten Health Inspectors on IMCI in the target area. The program also organized a district level workshop on monitoring and analyzing the progress of their service delivery.

After receiving training, the service providers of the community clinics and those of the H&FWCs have started classifying and treating ARI, Diarrhea and SAM cases following the protocol and supervised by Assistant Health Inspectors and Health Inspectors of MoHFW to ensure appropriate application of the IMCI protocol. While verifiable information on the flow of patients are not available, reports from the community group Clinic Management Committees supplemented by a review of the attendance book at the clinics reveal a significant increase in the flow of patients. This has also been matched by an increase in the flow of medicines from the Government without which the increase in the flow of patients would have been unlikely.

Similarly, there has also been an increase in the timely case reporting to health centers. This could be attributed to increasing levels of awareness on signs of childhood illnesses through BCC activities at different levels. Where the main challenge of preventing deaths from Pneumonia and Diarrhea is the timely identification and treatment of the cases, the increasing trends of early case reporting are a good sign of PROSHAR's contribution to the reduction of morbidities and mortalities among under five children

### ***Sub IR 2.2.1: Integrated services of community health clinics improved***

With 100% of health facilities having IMCI trained personnel (target: 30%), the health assistants and community health care providers have started providing treatment to children under five using the community-IMCI (C-IMCI) protocol. C-IMCI implementation was delayed due to the fact that the IMCI unit of DGHS could not provide training within the planned time period.

Annual Survey results also indicates 59.8% of children 6-23 months of age receiving 3 appropriate infant and young child feeding practices (IYCF) (continued breastfeeding, age-appropriate dietary diversity, age-appropriate frequency of feeding) against a target of 31%. 21.4% of children aged 6-23 months of age with diarrhea were offered increased fluids during illness (target 25%); however, 100% of children 0-23 months of age with diarrhea were continued with normal feeding during illness against a target of 64%. 35.6% children of 0-23 months who had symptoms of acute respiratory infection received advice or treatment from a trained health care provider against a target of 39%.

The IMCI section of DGHS, in collaboration with PROSHAR, completed the training of 78 health assistants, 42 health inspectors and assistant health inspectors (MoHFW health assistant supervisors), and 58 community health care providers on the C-IMCI protocol (target of 55 trained).

**Sub IR 2.2.2: Partnerships between health facilities and the communities (they serve) improved**

Establishing an effective and sustainable partnership between communities and health facilities is a challenging task. However, some of PROSHAR's facilitation efforts towards establishing the partnership are as mentioned below:

- Community clinics management committees have started functioning in all the 59 community clinics following training supported by PROSHAR. The community clinic management committee consists of members from the community and the health facility and has become a visible example of partnership between community and the health facility.
- Because of increasing community awareness, as a result of PROSHAR implemented BCC activities, patient flow has started increasing to the health facilities. The care group leaders are also playing a facilitators role in linking beneficiaries with the service delivery points.
- Overall, survey results on the nutritional status of children do not appear to have changed yet. Although there has been substantial improvement, one of the obstacles to improved nutritional practices has been the quality of counseling by growth monitoring educators, growth monitoring facilitators, and mother leaders.
- While the impact of BCC is clear and definite with respect to behavior that is entirely new, such as GMP checkups or care givers adopting recommended behavior, entrenched traditional behavior is more difficult to change and requires time. Thus, while the percentage of mothers putting a child to be breast fed within an hour after birth is nearly 100 %, the percentage drops to about 55% when it comes to exclusive breast feeding a child of under 6 months. The continuation of BCC activities to overcome the gaps between knowledge and practice will continue as an inherent part of the strategy and will need to utilize a number of other channels such as using a few more appropriate channels of communications, such as wall painting, bill boards containing PROSHAR program messages and organizing folk songs and theatre involving local folk groups have not been utilized.
- Changing traditional and cultural behavior requires time and while the project has made progress in some areas, the emphasis on BCC as the prime motivator has to be continued and expanded. PCI is aware of that need and has programmed itself for pursuing such an approach over the next year. The report suggests a number of

such measures that would assist in widening and deepening the impact of BCC behaviors.

#### **d. Qualitative information to check implementation progress/achievement of results**

The data on the quality and coverage of service delivery is from **the MTR team's** 12 FGD surveys of 61 pregnant and lactating mothers, 26 husbands of pregnant and lactating mothers and 8 father leaders, 12 mother leaders and 10 grandmother leaders coming from both economically vulnerable and non-vulnerable households participating in the program.

The selection of the participants was purposeful in that beneficiaries participating in the activity were chosen. Given that, as stated earlier in the report, no effort was made to actually collect quantitative estimates of their responses. Consequently, the response of the FGD women has often varied substantially from the statistically based survey results and should be taken only to deepen the understanding of the results rather than as a basis for comparison. FGD discussants often tended to overstate their case as a reference to their success under the project.

**Food Consumption:** All the FGD participants were aware of the conditional food ration and had no complaints about the quality and weight of the ration. Most of the mothers prepared roti and dal but some also prepared suji and khichuri (a multi-mixture food) with the ration supplies which the mothers and children ate together with their family members. Substitution of food by other family food and leakage of the foods was not a major problem. When questioned as a group, beneficiaries reported no substitution. However, when questioned individually some (about 25%) admitted to the sharing of some part of the food.

The extent to which the food supply lasted varied significantly with nearly half the discussants suggesting that household rations of wheat and lentil supply lasted for about two weeks while the ration oil supply lasted for one month in an average household. This was in stark contrast to survey data reporting that ration supplies for about 50% of the participants lasted for about four weeks. It is difficult to reconcile the data except to say that when it relates to elements that are directly consumed by beneficiaries, there is a natural tendency to underplay the extent of sufficiency with the hope that more could be forthcoming. In some households the mothers and children ate the ration foods for one meal a day and ate family foods for other meals in which case the food lasted for one month. They were aware that the oil contained vitamin A which was good for their health and nutrition. There was no difficulty of crushing wheat locally.

**Care Group Participation:** All participants were aware of the peer and care group functions and, as members of the groups, performed those functions. The group meetings and counseling were held regularly and, except for occasional variations, most of the mother group members and the grandmother leaders attended the meeting. The attendance

of the father leaders was more erratic. When questioned they responded that they could not attend due to other pressing work.

**Antenatal care:** FGD indicates almost all the mothers took daytime rest during the last pregnancy, two-thirds ate more foods than before and almost all took antenatal checkup mostly from community clinics or with qualified health workers. Most of the births were assisted by skilled birth attendants or qualified providers, and two-thirds of the mothers took postnatal checkup either in the health centers or with private physicians more or less in line with survey results.

**Post Natal Care:** Since PROSHAR started working in the community the utilization of the government and other facilities and services (EPI Centers, Smiling Sun, Union, Union Health and Family Welfare Center and Upazila Health Complex) in the locality has increased significantly. More mothers (nearly 90%) now go to the facilities for antenatal and postnatal checkups, immunization and growth monitoring of children, RUTF supply for severely acute malnourished children, and clinical and other services. In almost all the places they were received well and were satisfied with the services.

**Skilled Delivery:** Child births in the villages are conducted by CSBA using hygienic delivery kits.

**Health Care Behaviors:** More than half the beneficiaries were aware of the health and nutritional problems of pregnant and lactating mothers and those of the children, and some were aware of the 5 danger signs of pregnant women, 5 danger signs of childbirth and 5 danger signs of children under 2 years of age. FGD responses of % of mothers who adopted IYCF practices (continued breast feeding, age appropriate dietary diversity and age appropriate frequency of feeding) was at about 100 % as opposed to survey results that were at about 60%. Participants in the FGDs were eager to display the success achieved under the project and therefore tended to overstate their success.

**Household Sanitation Practices:** There were some interesting differences even within the same practice. Thus, while % of caregivers who adopted at least three of the recommended **behavior with respect to hand washing and disposal of children's feces were at about 100%** as in the survey, the % of household with soap and water at a hand washing station commonly used by the family dropped drastically to less than 10%. The implication is clear, BCC will have to continue to remain the major driver of the project.

FGD responses matched survey results with respect to mothers (and caregivers) washing hands with soap and water before and after eating and after defecation and urination, but was lower when it came to washing before cooking and eating, about 30% as opposed to survey estimates of about two-thirds.

Similarly while FGD responses were the same as that of the survey with respect to daytime rest for the mother, they were quite different with respect to antenatal checkups with survey figures at a high of 97% as opposed to FGD response of about 50% mostly from community clinics or with qualified health workers. Most of the births were assisted by

skilled birth attendants or qualified providers, and while survey figures estimate two-thirds of the mothers took postnatal checkup either in the health centers or with private physicians, FGD figures were a low 25%..

However, while nearly all the children 0-6 months old were ever breastfed, the difference between survey figures of exclusive breast feeding at 55% differed from FGD responses of about 30% was significant.

## e. Meeting Targets

PROSHAR has set targets for several health and nutrition indicators some of which are presented in the table below. Based on the annual survey findings, some targets have already been achieved. **However, the achievement on the ‘% of children aged 6-23 months with diarrhea who were offered increased fluids during illness’ was marginally below the target, and the achievement on the ‘% of households with soap and water at a hand washing station commonly used by family members’ was halfway below the target.** While a number of target indicators have already been achieved, the question of sustainability remains an open one.

### Outcome (OC) indicators with current achievement and LOA targets

Indicator Type	Indicator	Current Achievement	LOA	Prospects of Ptarget
OC12	Prevalence of exclusive breast feeding of children under six months	56%	60%	Achievable
OC13	% of children under 2 from PM2A household who are underweight (weight-for-age - 2 S.D.)	21.6%	17.5%	Achieved
OC14	% of severally malnourished children who recovered after receiving SAM treatment	-	80%	Too early to say
OC15	% of caregivers who adopted at least three of the recommended behaviors with respect to household sanitation practices as a result of USG assistance	99.7%	60%	Achieved
OC16	% of targeted health facilities with trained staff in IMCI as a result of PROSHAR intervention	100%	80%	Achieved

OC17	% of women who received at least 3 antenatal checkups by a qualified provider during pregnancy	53%	50%	Achieved
OC18	% of children 6-23 months of age with 3 appropriate infant and young child feeding practices (IYCF) (continued breastfeeding, age-appropriate dietary diversity, age-appropriate frequency of feeding)	59.8%	36.5%	Achieved
OC19	% of children aged 6-23 months of age with diarrhea who were offered increased fluids during illness	M -21.4% F - <u>21.4%</u> T - 21.4%	28.6%	Achieved
OC20	% of children aged 0-23 months of age with diarrhea continuously fed during illness	M - 100% F - <u>100%</u> T - 100%	72.6%	Achieved
OC21	% of children 0-23 months who had symptoms of ARI that sought advice or treatment from trained health care provider	M - 30.2% F - <u>43.2%</u> T - 35.6%	46.3%	Achievable
OC22	% of households with soap and water at a hand washing station commonly used by family members	11.8%	36.8%	Needs drastic improvement

Note: The above mentioned indicators have been taken from the updated IPTT indicators list supplied by PROSHAR.

## f. Other achievements

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for joint efforts has been signed between PROSHAR and DGFP/MoHFW to strengthen services which are as follows:

- Integration of GMP with EPI, Satellite Clinic and Community Clinic;
- Enhancing capacity of MoHFW service providers on F-IMCI, C-IMCI and CMAM;
- Providing logistical supports to 59 Community Clinics to facilitate quality service delivery;
- Facilitate operating regular outreach ANC services for wider coverage through coordinated program planning with MoHFW and NGOs; and
- Facilitate joint planning and supervision for quality implementation of programs

## **g. Discussions of General Evaluation Questions for SO2**

### **i. Field Setup**

Within a 16 months of field implementation PROSHAR has been able to create sufficient awareness, mobilization and motivation among the beneficiaries; created a group of trained and motivated service providers and program leaders capable of providing quality services and counseling; developed a set of useful training and counseling materials; provided GMP sessions integrated with Government EPI and Satellite Clinic and Community Clinic services; and motivated care group leaders and peer group members to attend meetings regularly. PROSHAR has made satisfactory progress towards linking community with health services and providers belonging to MoHFW, NGO and the private sector. It has successfully introduced F-IMCI, C-IMCI and CMAM services which are being delivered through MoHFW service delivery centers. The CCM part of C-IMCI needs to be strengthened involving suitable community volunteers such as mother leaders with at least eight years of schooling, to ensure round the clock services for childhood ARI and Diarrhea.

Within the scope of the field set up, the local level community clinics occupy a central position. However, a large number of them are in a pathetic state in terms of their infrastructure. The lack of appropriate physical facilities acts as a drawback to providing efficient services. There is a critical need for this to be addressed. The options are: (a) the managing committee of the clinics can identify the problems and follow it up the upazila authorities and government for fix up; (b) the community group managing committee can fix it up raising funds from the local community; or (c) the managing committee can occasionally invite local elites in the clinics and ask for their help to fix it. PROSHAR needs to play a crucial facilitating role in this.

### **ii. Behavior Change**

**PROSHAR's** Behavior Change Communication (BCC) Strategy which has been the driver of the SO2 implementation strategy was developed through involving a Doer and Non-Doer analysis in the program communities. As the driver for the entire component, BCC operates at several levels. Counseling to father groups, grandmother groups and trios which is an innovation in this program has contributed to the success achieved so far.

However, given the gaps that exist at various levels from household sanitation practices to maternity care practices, infant and young child care practices, caring for the disease burden of young children and finally the food consumption of PLWs, the emphasis on BCC will continue to play the most critical role in the success of this project. This will imply the adoption of additional measures which could include organizing community meetings with community change agents, such as teachers, religious leaders, village doctors, once in a month. It could also include widening the coverage to include the whole program community using few more appropriate channels of communications, such as wall painting, bill boards containing PROSHAR program messages and organizing folk songs and theatre

involving local folk groups. Other measures could include holding mothers alumni meeting every few months or holding mothers corner in the annual breastfeeding day or other similar day celebrations where the role model mothers are awarded and are allowed to speak on what they have done to improve the health and nutritional status of their children, which can substantially improve the motivation of other mothers.

### **iii. Coordination and Integration**

PROSHAR Health and Nutrition interventions have established a strong functional network and coordination with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare at the upazila as well as the national level and with the NGOs operating in the program communities. Since PROSHAR started working in the community, the demand for ANC, PNC, CMAM, child health including immunization and other basic curative care from the government and NGO facilities in the community has increased much due to increased awareness. Now more mothers and children are going to the facilities for services. PROSHAR's success in generating a working modality of coordination and integration with and between Government services is likely to improve further if the current momentum of implementation is continued.

### **iv. Sustainability**

PROSHAR's success in achieving its goals is the biggest guarantor of its sustainability. In its basic approach of improving, strengthening and utilizing existing services of the Government to achieve its goals, PROSHAR furthers the achievement of the Government's services itself. Ultimately, health and nutrition will remain a responsibility of the Government. However, PROSHAR's contribution in improving the efficiency and impact of the services provides the strongest argument for its sustainability. Given the Government's future plan for the expansion of a national nutrition service (NNS), the continued support under PROSHAR that is fully integrated with the core services of the government provides an even stronger prospect for its sustainability.

## **VI. SO 3: Institutions & Households prepared to respond effectively to shocks**

### **a. Introduction**

PROSHAR is intended to enhance capacities of vulnerable communities as well as concerned institutions to effectively respond to shocks and stresses caused by different natural (or man-made) hazards. In the process, closer links between community groups and different public and private sector institutions will be established. There is in fact, a particular focus in SO 3 to link vulnerable communities with relevant government and private sector institutions. This will serve to mainstream disaster risk management into all development initiatives and thereby address any long term trends associated with climate change.

As part of an integrated food security program, this objective can also be viewed as a practical mechanism to ensure sustainability of program benefits. Because SO 3 is positioned in a way that it is actually meant to ensure continuity of the positive gains achieved through all the interventions of PROSHAR: in livelihoods development (SO 1) and improvements in health and nutritional status (SO 2). Indeed, successful disaster management and adaptation measures to cope with climate variability in the long run will help build community resilience to future food insecurity, reduce vulnerability and improve community capacity to withstand shocks. As the program works in one of the most disaster prone and food insecure areas of the country and in three of the 45 priority Upazilas<sup>13</sup> identified by USAID for its activities, this component is particularly well justified from geographical, social and humanitarian perspectives.

At the Ward level, CRA (Community Risk Assessment) is a methodology already utilized by the GOB but adapted by PROSHAR to prioritize information collection and mapping at the ward level, through direct engagement of typically marginalized groups; and prioritize identification of community risks through a food security lens. This would result in a disaster risk reduction action plan. In this particular strategy, the role of local volunteer groups (CBDMVG- Community Based Disaster Management Volunteer Group) will be crucial. The challenge here is how to address the problem of finances for implementation of (at least) parts of the plans that are of high cost (e.g., road and embankment building, canal digging and so on). Some of the plans are going to be implemented by available local resources if the DMCs (Disaster Management Committees) are active, but a lot of the major plans will remain a wish list in absence of adequate funds. For a decentralized development process for the people at the margins, the RRAPs (Risk Reduction Action Plans) can be used as useful tools to attract finances from the central government authorities. This will require vigorous advocacy and lobbying at regional and national level.

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<sup>13</sup> There are a total of 507 Upazilas or Sub-districts in the country now.

The Disaster Management Committees at Union and Upazila level play a crucial role in both responding to sudden-onset hazards and reducing longer term disaster risks and vulnerabilities of the communities. Although, the Standing Orders on Disaster (SOD) has details on how the DMCs should function, most of these local level committees remain non-functional due to lack of funds, among other reasons. PROSHAR interventions have made **many of those functional again in its working areas and some are truly "revitalized."** However, it is not unlikely that many of these Committees will relapse after the PROSHAR assistance has ended. The past experience of forming hundreds of LADC/LADPs (Local Area Development Committee/Plan) developed in late 1990s/early 2000s through the erstwhile DMB (Disaster Management Bureau) has shown how quickly they became dysfunctional due to lack of resources and use. Although the DMCs now have a stronger structure and mandate though, PROSHAR has found out that even in these disaster prone areas which had drawn a lot of national and international attention a few years ago after cyclone Sidre and Aila, the DMCs remained rather inactive! Currently, the revitalized UDMCs are dependent on PROSHAR/PNGO support in organizing monthly meetings, logistics and resource support. The impact of PROSHAR intervention in capacity building, institutional linkages and advocacy will however sustain for a considerable period of time among the concerned people, but not without an active institutional driver. DMCs have rarely been seen operating on their own without external support. However, despite these limitations, the DMCs at different level remain the most relevant institutional structure on disaster and climate change issues. Therefore, ways need to be found to address this problem - as discussed below.

As a PROSHAR component, SO3 cuts across all community groups and most local institutions that PROSHAR works with. The particular community based work approach followed by it is very effective in building local ownership of program structures, processes and benefits. The inclusion of all community groups and key local institutions has an impact in creating a better local level understanding of relevant issues and ownership of knowledge and experiences.

## **b. Component Strategy**

PROSHAR has developed a well defined Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Strategy ("**Disaster Risk Management Strategy**", November 2012, draft) (revised) that has laid out the objectives and activities to be undertaken over the five years period. This is broadly in keeping with the Technical Application of May 2010, but with a substantially improved and rationalized structure depicted by a clear Implementation Framework. Compared to the original articulation of objectives and intermediate results in the project application (May 2010), the SO 3 Strategy has a completely reorganized and refined version of the component definition. The framework given in the Strategy divides it into 3 clear Intermediate Results (IRs) of a) DRR Plan, b) Emergency Response and c) knowledge and **skills to meet the component objective of "Institutions and Households prepared to respond effectively to shocks.** Neatly matching the objective, the corresponding IRs read as follows:

IR.1) Disaster Risk Reduction Action Plans Functional; IR.2) Early Warning Systems Functional and IR.3) Increased knowledge and skills in Disaster Risk Management.

The detailed community and institutional level activities and results under each IR together with expected outcomes are systematically described to help, among others, keep track (monitoring) of the progress very well. The key assumption for the strategic approach is that alongside the big emergencies, different shocks and stresses experienced (e.g., slow on-set and chronic hazards) by vulnerable communities can erode any food security gains. Different people in the community are affected differently (e.g. women, children, people with disability, older persons) by these natural trends or man-made actions – some of which do not receive emergency response at local or national levels. But they can have the same disastrous effect on food security. Therefore, people need highly adapted and context specific interventions to help people become more resilient to shocks of all types.

Accordingly, activities of SO 3 are focused on mobilizing communities and helping them to map their risks and resources; revitalizing the existing disaster management committees (DMCs) at Union and Upazila levels; forming new community-based disaster management volunteer groups (CBDMVG); prepositioning early warning and response materials; conducting disaster preparedness training and preparing risk reduction plans. These are complemented by raising community awareness and behavior change in disaster risk management (DRM) practices.

**PROSHAR's principal GoB link** has been with the old Ministry of Food and Disaster Management (MoFDM). Because, that was the line Ministry for the project with which the agreements were signed. Two separate Ministries have now emerged out of MoFDM: one is the Ministry of Food and the other: Ministry of Disaster Management and relief. As far as SO 3 is concerned, PROSHAR needs to continue its technical links with the new Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR). It has already established links with ministry at the district level and a link with the Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF) is evolving. The MoEF has been engaged with many DRR activities particularly to address climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. Establishing linkage with this Ministry should help PROSHAR in many different ways from information sharing, policy lobby to strategic guidance in addressing impacts of climate change in the program areas.

### **c. General Progress**

Despite a slow start, the program now seems to have gained a momentum and achieving rapid progress. The major ground-work for the program appears to be already complete with 207 Community Based Disaster Management Volunteer Groups (CBDMVG) established across twenty three Unions. Members of the Union and Upazila Disaster committees have been given orientation training on disaster management and according to most recent data in January 2013 given by the field staff in Khulna, 300 local school teachers and members of local school management committees (SMC), 674 members CBDMVG and 150 CPP (Cyclone Preparedness Program) volunteers have also been trained on DRR and emergency

response. These figures (a bit higher than the ones in Annual Results Report 2012) seem to positively compare with the targets set in the IPT Table as shown below. Further details of progress have been noted in the respective IRs below. The FY 2012 was practically the start of the program and achievements during the year have been impressive with progress made in different counts that exceeded the annual target.

As noted before, the new Disaster Risk Management Strategy is a substantially modified and improved guide for the SO3 component compared to what was in the original program proposal. The titles of the 3 IRs and the sub-IRs have been changed and re-worded, although the key themes and thrust of the program has remained more or less the same. Hence, the MTR has mainly used the SO 3 Strategy paper as the key reference. Progress in this early stage of PROSHAR appeared to have been monitored following the key IRs only rather than by sub-IRs. Accordingly, the Annual Results Report 2012 has also reported against the 3 main IRs of SO3. This MTR for SO3 has also followed the same structure for the sake of brevity and consistency.

#### **d. The New DM Act and PROSHAR**

A brief review of the new Disaster Management Act 2012 (Act No.34, effective from September 2013) was undertaken to assess implications for PROSHAR. This is basically a law to give legal cover to many different initiatives undertaken by the government of Bangladesh on disaster management. For example, the Standing Order on Disaster and the National Plan for Disaster Management (2010-15) are now to be considered as legally binding procedures and plans (violations are prosecutable) for the country. It formalizes the creation of the Department of Disaster Management by dissolving the Disaster Management Bureau and Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation. Among other points of interest it pledges to establish a National Disaster Management Research and Training Institute, form a National Disaster Volunteer corps, and create a National Disaster Management Fund. A couple of points of the Act are of immediate relevance to PROSHAR. One is the status of CBDMVGs. While trying to institutionalize Ward level DMCs may seem like an extra-legal act under the current law, the community based volunteers initiative of PROSHAR may be an **advance compliment to GoB's plan to form National Disaster Volunteer Corps (NDVC)**. As PROSHAR is a government approved program, it does not need to worry about the legality of its program components, but it would be advisable to start a process of dialogue with the DDM/MoDMR on how PROSHAR CBDMVG experiment can be harmonized with the planned NDVC – or vice versa. Although it is a bit early, this may need to be made clear that CBDMVGs were deliberately organized to be an informal, non-legally binding group of community volunteers, but if the circumstances demand, a possible merger with NDVCs (if operationalized in the near future) might be an option.

The other point of relevance is the provision of punishment for creating conditions for disaster by individuals or organizations. Influential people creating water-logging for their profit by putting up barriers on water sources and causing salinity can now be legally dealt with (if found guilty, one can be fined up to Tk. 3 Lacs, or/and sentenced to minimum 1year

to a maximum 3 years Jail sentence). Information like this can at least be useful to include in the Disaster Management training that PROSHAR is conducting now, so that affected communities become aware of their rights in this respect.

The DM Act is still like a framework law, which says that appropriate rules and regulations for many different planned actions and institutions will be further delineated. This may be an opportunity for people and organizations (like PROSHAR) working in disaster risk management to recommend appropriate addendums to benefit disadvantaged communities and individuals.

## **e. Intermediate Results**

### **IR 3.1: Disaster Risk Reduction Action Plans Functional<sup>14</sup>**

#### **Brief description of interventions**

With the objective of vulnerability reduction of the communities exposed to various hazards, PROSHAR deals with both emergency response and longer term disaster risks including effects of climate change. The SO 3 also stocks equipments and supplies needed to address emergencies immediately before and after a sudden on-set disaster to save lives and assets. Two of the three geographical areas that the program works in are cyclone prone (Batiaghata and Sarankhola), while the third (Lohagarah) is mainly affected by drought, salinity and river bank erosion, in addition to high level of poverty and malnutrition. So, each of these areas has disaster risks of one kind or the other. Batiaghat and Sarankhola Upazilas have experienced two devastating cyclones in the recent past (i.e., Cyclone Sidr in 2007 with wind speed up to 240 km p.h. storm surge rising up to 20 feet high and Cyclone Aila in 2009 with storm surge up to 20 feet/2.6 meter) claiming many lives and rendering thousands of people homeless. These cyclonic storms accompanied by tidal surge have washed off homesteads and livelihood assets of most people living there causing them further vulnerable. With little or no alternative choice, a large number of such vulnerable people continue to live there, despite the knowledge of possible repetitions of such disastrous events. Besides physical exposure to natural shocks, people in these areas suffer **from multiple vulnerabilities including those of social and economic nature. So, "building resiliency" for these groups of people required a comprehensive and thoughtful intervention plan that PROSHAR embodies.**

One of the key thrusts of the program under SO3 has been organizing the community groups and concerned local government institutions to produce context specific risk reduction action plans. A lot of preparatory work has gone into this during the FY 2012 that includes field-testing of a particular methodology of CRA closely adhering to the government

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<sup>14</sup> only 4 of the 13 "vulnerable" unions had DRRAPs prepared with input from communities, and these DRRAPs had not been implemented by the government.

sanctioned process. CRA manuals have been produced for Upazila, Union and Wards (draft). A reputed development organization specialized in Geographical Information System and DRM, Centre for Environment and Geographical Information Services (CEGIS) was contracted to carry out field research and produce Ward level CRA manual. The innovative part of the program was to extend the CRA process down to Ward level (according to SOD, DMCs are only up to Union level and above). This is however, not a completely new idea as one or two other INGO programs were also experimenting on a similar approach. However, **PROSHAR's objective was to make it as specific as possible to the local context so that maximum effectiveness is ensured.** It has thus developed its own approach and a particular **method to conducting CRA and developing RRAPs. Since there is no formal 'Ward' level local government structure in place, CBDMVGs (as an alternative mechanism) were formed to reinforce the national DMC structure and ground them in the available School and Shelter infrastructures.**

### **Service delivery strategies and approaches – quality, success and challenges**

The DRRAPs that came out of the CRA process have prioritized many risk reduction activities and plans. Based on those, two studies were undertaken: one on PSF and the other on shelter. The process of re-commissioning some of the unused PSFs as well as building a few new ones has started. The community-managed one new PSF that the MTR team has visited looked impressive as the community members have come together to form a very effective management system and a committee to oversee its operation. Funded by PROSHAR, this was an expensive device costing about Tk.90,000. The community provided the pond and land on which the PSF is built. In areas where water crisis is a major problem, the value of a source of clean, non-saline potable water is indeed very high. Because, it helps them reduce **their cost of living, as the community won't have to fetch water from long distance or boil** them anymore. It has also reportedly brought down the incidence of diarrheal diseases and children can be safely washed and their food cooked by the PSF water. Data on how much HH savings did PSF generate for the 52 households using it now, and how much did incidence of diarrheal disease decreased was not available at the time of this visit less than 3 months after it was operationalised. It will be very useful for PROSHAR and its PNGO to record such information in order to compare the cost they incurred now (Tk.50 to Tk.100 per household depending on financial ability) against costs incurred before the PSF? However, discussion with the users group and their committee members revealed that the particular management arrangement followed there had brought about a communal harmony that was unprecedented. People of all social, economic and religious backgrounds come together to contribute their time, money and effort to keep the system running. So, this was seen as a symbol of unity, community pride and a source of life, as they put it!

The MTR team has also observed the new latrines built by the program in the cyclone shelters and spoke with the members of the management committees. They are well built, clean and well maintained. The management committees looked enthusiastic and committed to ensure that these facilities had stayed that way for a long time to come. The absence of separate toilet for women before was considered as a great disadvantage that was removed

now. Again, in the community settings where women's needs were generally ignored, this initiative appeared to have made people more gender sensitive and more aware about the practical needs and security of women. In our discussion with Shelter Management Committee, the women members said that the provision of separate wash room for women had made people aware of the fact that specific needs of privacy and security of women must be taken into consideration in all development plans.

Assessments for limited physical infrastructural support to reduce disaster risks (e.g., pond-sand-filters (PSF) and toilets in cyclone shelters), were conducted and at least one new PSF unit built by the program was seen operational already with an effective management system and a committee in place. The similar model of management can be introduced to **"re-activate"** many non-functional PSFs reportedly in existence in the program area. Because, water crisis (potable drinking water) in most of the FGDs was reported as the major problem for the people, reviving inactive PSFs by re-organizing the management Committees after the successful Dhansagor model in Sarankhola, should receive priority over the next two years.

The DRRAPs have created a lot of enthusiasm among the community people as they hope that many risk reduction actions would soon be undertaken. However, there are sectoral issues (e.g., agriculture, water management, health) and responsible government departments need to have a mechanism to address those through their line departments - all of which are headquartered in Dhaka. Lest the communities are faced with disillusionments about their plans, PROSHAR is committed to helping the community with limited resources so that they can implement some of their plans with food for work (FFW) and cash for work (CFW) schemes. Moreover, PROSHAR might need to work in spheres beyond the program area. One consolation for the local community however, is that in the next stage of the project, PROSHAR, with its FFW and CFW instruments is going to implement 300 small projects identified through CRAs.

PROSHAR may have, albeit unwittingly, raised expectations of the people that it (PROSHAR/USAID) will address the chronic disasters like water-logging and river erosion of the area. This was the impression the MTR received while discussing with some of the community groups and government officials. For example, knowing it well that we were short term external consultants to PROSHAR for this particular evaluation, one senior Upazila official suggested that we convey their request to PROSHAR and USAID to help prevent river-erosion problem of the area. Similar suggestions and requests were also received from the community groups engaged with SO1 activities in different places. Although, the MTR team has tried to dispel these ideas as much as possible, the program needs to make it clearer to the people that the program is implemented following a particular plan of actions with particular development objectives. It may be a good opportunity for the program to make a clearer position on this so that the government departments and local people are sure of what to expect and what not to from PROSHAR. For some their unmet needs, people should be encouraged to make demands on appropriate government authorities for assistance.

## Implementation Progress and achievement of results

The program has been very active over the past two years to mobilize local community groups and institutions. There is a plan to develop 13 CRAs in the 3 Upazilas (4 in Sarankhola, 7 in Batiaghata and 2 in Lohagarah) completed with risk reduction action plans (RRAP) over the life of the program. During 2012 four CRAs (against a zero target) were piloted with the help of CEGIS and a report on those was being finalized. Although, different organizations have already developed different CRA training manuals in Bangladesh (e.g., CARE, Action Aid, Save the Children, Oxfam GB and GoB/CDMP), the purpose of PROSHAR developing yet another was explained to meet both PROSHAR and GoB standards. The more important reason however seemed to be to have a Ward level focus, which not all other models have. This is intended to reinforce the national DMC structure through the creation of CBDMVGs at Wards and utilizing the existing Ward level infrastructure of schools or cyclone shelters. The PROSHAR model of CRAs are going to have their focus on the specific vulnerable groups like pregnant and lactating women (PLW), landless farmers, day laborers and adolescent girls.

Since developing risk reduction action plans with the dormant DMCs at Union and Upazila levels was not possible, the first had to be the re-activation of those and its members with right voluntary zeals so that they can function well. Accordingly, the program has **“revitalized” 23 Union Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) and 3 Upazila DMCs**. The target for FY 2012 was 15, although achievement of the program was way above that figure. The actual achievement was 26. Accordingly, the Annual Results Report 2012 reports that 564 members, that include 98 women from 14 DMCs, have been trained on disaster management. During the same period, 3 CRAs have been completed with accompanying DRRAPs for them. These were pilot CRA/DRRAPs, as the partner organization was to finalize the methodology.

The process of multi-hazard vulnerability and resource mapping was based on CRA results (of the 3 Wards) to undertake community level risk reduction interventions. Ten projects were known to have been undertaken in 2012 to reduce community risk to natural hazards and food insecurity. This includes construction of eight Pond Sand Filters (PSFs to address problem of drinking water). This was intended particularly for the benefit of the PLW and small children of the program who are more directly targeted by SO 2 area of the program. This will directly address the risk of poor health outcomes of the community in general. Besides, it was one of the recommendations of the Baseline study report of 2011. During the FY 2012, as noted before, two Toilets in the two cyclone shelters with separate provision for women and men were built.

With revitalizing of Union and Upazila Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) complete, the big volume of work ahead is developing and implementing DRRAPs at Ward level. Management of implementation of the 304 FFW/CFW planned projects is going to be a challenge. PNGOs and PROSHAR has already had some experience on that by implementing a few pilot infrastructure projects like building toilets in cyclone shelters and PSFs at

community level. Therefore, this experience should help expediting the field implementation of (mainly) small infrastructure plans.

Generally speaking, the progress of work in SO 3 has been encouraging with a number of major tasks completed. This includes mobilizing and sensitizing community members as well as the key stakeholders like the members of local government bodies through training and simulations on disaster management. Moreover, through ToTs, capacity of local partner NGOs on providing training on DM has been raised. This is likely to have a sustainable and multiple effect in building community capacity (knowledge and skills) in disaster preparedness, mitigation and risk reduction. Since the new SO 3 strategy has only recently been operationalized, a small amount of flexibility may become a necessity with regards to meeting some of the numerical targets to reflect the changing realities and focus. Besides, depending on resource **availability, support to UDMCs to implement RRAP's may be** increased, commissioning impact studies on interventions like, PSF, behavior change communication strategy, and offer capacity building training to other stakeholders like school teachers, boys Scout and Girls Guide.

### **Other achievements**

Multi-hazard vulnerability and resource maps have been developed based on the preliminary results of CRAs. These information can also be used by SO1 farmers as these are supposed to identify possible unutilized natural resources that can be used by the landless farmers who have little or no access to land or water bodies for livelihood generation. The unit had already made a considerable progress during these early days of the program which is likely to enable the component to achieve its targets with relative ease in the coming days.

### **IR 3.2: Early Warning Systems Functional**

The key objective of this intermediate result is to enhance the **emergency response capacity** of the local community through coordinated action at ward and Union level in response to national early warning signals. Besides having early warning system functional, mechanisms for improving the safety and protection of vulnerable groups are also to be ensured.

### **Brief Description of Interventions**

The members of the Community-Based Disaster Management Volunteer Groups (CBMDVG) are being mobilized to monitor and disseminate national early warning signals at the ward level. The sources from which they receive messages on signals are radio news and weather forecasts, units of Cyclone Preparedness Program (CPP) where available, Union Parishad/Upazila Parishad offices and NGOs. Dissemination of warning signals at village level are going to be done through CBDMVGs under the guidance of CPP and/ or Upazila disaster management committee, announcing through megaphones and public address systems that mosques and temples have.

For the purpose of a coordinated emergency response, CBDMVGs are assisted to develop and implement ward-level emergency response plans, and preposition essential emergency supplies given by PROSHAR. Currently, the trunks containing such materials are being delivered to the field sites. CPP had already been provided with such materials for their use in the program area. In order to mobilize village and household level preparedness during the early warning period, key community groups and their leaders are being trained. For a rapid and effective early warning system, linkage between Upazila and Union DMCs (Disaster Management Committee) has been established. Union Disaster Management Committees (UDMCs) are also helped to develop emergency response plans.

### **Service Delivery strategies and approaches – quality, success and challenges**

While the community level groups organized by the program (CBDMVGs) awaits the emergency response materials, the program has already provided 13 DMCs with first aid, early warning and search and rescue related equipments. Training on the use of these equipment and articles have also been given. This has been a successful move as the UPs visited by the MTR team has found that the UDMC members there were sufficiently encouraged, motivated and prepared to use the materials during the time of need. These large tin-chests have helmets, first aid kit, megaphone, radio set, boots, flashlights etc.

Regarding ensuring quality of the materials provided, these have gone through a review by the program management and no complaints on that has so far been received. The CPP director in Dhaka has expressed his satisfaction to the MTR team on their (separately) receiving similar emergency response materials (28 items).

However, these boxed items being supplied to the community groups and UDMCs will need periodical opening and checks so that they are found functional during the time of emergency. A particular guide in this respect together with provision for half-yearly drills using the materials may be a useful provision.

As PROSHAR works in 3 Upazilas, its engagement with the respective Upazila administration is very important. Because, this is the crucial level of government administration that has effective central level contact as well as control over micro-level operation. Compared to that Union Parishads, although the oldest democratic body in the country uninterruptedly run by locally elected **people's representatives** since after the British left India in 1947, they are unfortunately still very weak in terms its control over resources, personnel and administrative authority. PROSHAR appeared to have utilized the opportunity of engaging Upazila level government wings quite efficiently. Some of the government departments and their officers, e.g., the Agricultural Officer, Livestock Officer, Health Inspector or Medical officers are being invited to conduct training sessions organized by PROSHAR for the community groups. This is a very effective way of keeping the government departments interested and in contact with the program so that their continued support is ensured.

The SO 3 with support from CPP has organized three emergency response Simulation exercises in the Upazilas which were very well received by the community and the local

administration. The officers from different government departments and local leaders participated in these events while the Upazila Nirbahi Office (UNO) had chaired. PROSHAR intervention has been received with much appreciation for its complementary role in local area development and disaster risk reduction.

### **Implementation progress and achievement of results**

According to Annual Results Report 2012 ninety-nine assisted communities (viz, Wards) across 11 unions were supplied with disaster early warning and response (EWR) systems through the provision of early response, search and rescue and first aid supplies via the UDMCs. Thirteen DMCs (two UzDMCs and 11 UDMCs) were provided with materials for early warning, search and rescue and first aid, and 275 DMC members were trained on their use. The materials were identified and selected through a consultation with other local organizations with DRM capacity in the region. The supplies include the following items: megaphone, siren, rain coat, helmet, gum boots, warning flag, whistle, bicycle, FM radio and battery.

The year 2012 fortunately did not see a major emergency and monitoring of trigger indicators associated with vulnerabilities identified in the CRAs, has been planned for in 2013 onwards.

### **Meeting targets**

Based on the above observation, the prospect of achieving the targets for IR 3.2 looks quite good. Supply of EWR materials to Union and Upazilas have almost been completed and DMC members have been trained on the use of those. The process of distribution at Ward level has started and the target of total 117 units to distribute by the end of the project is not going to be difficult as 99 would have been covered by the end of 2013. Because, the time consuming phase of identifying and procuring the materials is almost over. Training on the use of the materials and their supply was going on during the time of this MTR and the staff hoped that it would be completed within the next few months.

### **IR 3.3: Increased Knowledge and Skills**

IR 3.3 is to strengthen capacity of the community to better prepare and respond to disasters. This is intended to be achieved through improved coordination between different local government structures and communities. Since the frontline humanitarian workers and volunteers are based in the communities, their preparedness to rapidly respond in a coordinated fashion to emergencies need to be ensured through life saving practices and **changing 'risky' behaviors of the people.**

## **Service Delivery strategies and approaches – quality, success and challenges**

PROSHAR's contribution in building local knowledge and skills in disaster management will go a long way in meeting the needs of the people in handling disaster risks and emergency response and impacts of climate change. The approach to building local capacity and local ownership of actions through the use of different communication materials are also likely to have longer term effects. The approach to developing behavior change materials seem thorough and appropriate to meet local acceptability and needs. Building Trainers among the PNGOs through ToTs was invaluable. Although, the partner NGOs are all very well experienced in disaster management work, they are also faced with problem of recruiting well qualified and skilled staff to work in these remote areas. Therefore, it is very important to keep an eye on the quality of 'skill transfer' at the field level.

The communication materials developed so far look impressive and useful. As observed by the Annual Results Report 2012, the materials have multiple uses and values: "SO 3 BCC materials targeted improvements in the way community members monitor and respond to early warning signals, support vulnerable persons (e.g. PLW, children, the elderly and disabled) during emergencies, utilize safe water resources, and take adequate household preparedness measures".

The simulations created a lot of enthusiasm among the local community and are useful emergency drills in making people aware of what needs to be done during emergencies. This will also enable community groups to test the effectiveness of the pre-positioned emergency equipments and supplies. Additionally, this program component in 2012 has provided disaster management messages to livelihoods (SO 1) and health/nutrition (SO 2) beneficiaries in order to help save lives and assets. The SO 3 program however feels that this is not sufficient to change knowledge or attitudes related to disaster preparedness so, in FY13, PROSHAR plans to organize and facilitate training events directly with livelihood and health/nutrition beneficiaries. Appropriate training aids have been developed for the purpose. PROSHAR will also provide training to SO 2 Health Promoters (HP) on the developed materials, which they will replicate at trios meetings and directly with group members. The team will also provide training to livelihoods master trainers on critical aspects of disaster preparedness related to protection of assets. These master trainers will, in turn, train their producer group members. Thus, the SO 3 component demonstrates its close integration with the other components of the program.

## **Implementation progress and achievement of results**

Some of the most important and visible actions undertaken by SO 3 included mobilization of 9 DMCs, 6 local schools and 54 communities (as opposed to planned 36) who have observed *National Disaster Preparedness Day* and *International Day for Disaster Reduction* by organizing rallies, cultural activities and holding school-based art competition. An estimated 16,800 people were sensitized through this program.

Training was given on disaster preparedness for 860 people (which included 20% women) in 2012 against a target of 4,168. This was far below the target although, the program believed that this gap could be filled in soon with partner NGOs now have their own master trainers to conduct round the year training programs. The above trainings were attended by DMC members, teachers and school management committee members, religious leaders, Cyclone Preparedness Program (CPP) volunteers, and NGOs and community-based organizations. Each training session was designed to support the development of an **action plan and appointment of a "champion" to support** the implementation of the plans, with partner NGOs serving as mentors. Future trainings will be facilitated by PNGO training officers as they have been groomed by ToTs. In fact the PNGOs have already trained 92 teachers and school management committee members, and 30 religious leaders in disaster preparedness in September 2012. Further details in this respect may be found in the Annual Results Report FY 2012, pp.9-10.

### **Meeting Targets**

The PNGOs now are now equipped with training and orientation to cover a large number of people with disaster management training in their respective field areas. A good quality planning, monitoring and work supervision would be necessary to achieve the target of covering 49,885 people trained by the end of the project life.

The effective ground level mobilization work for the component has been reflected in the beneficiary awareness on DM issues and in the enthusiasm of CBDMVGs. One of the major tasks ahead remains training for over twenty five thousand people over the next two years. As discussed before, it is possible to achieve the target on time given that a decentralized approach has been planned whereby the trained PNGO staff will be mainly responsible to deliver the training in their respective areas. Since the PNGOs are tasked to deliver a large number of training within a relatively short period of time, all that PROSHAR (and PNGOs) need is to remain vigilant about ensuring quality of training. The pressure to meet target should not cause to compromise in the quality of trainings.

### **Summary of progress and prospects**

About half way through the project life, one would like to know whether the program component can meet its targets by the end of its life in 2015? After closely reviewing the progress so far, we can reasonably conclude that although it has still a lot to cover at least in terms of numerical targets, it is not impossible to accomplish those over the next two years. With foundation for SO3 being laid and key targets reached, and under the current rate of rapid progress, there is no reason that the targets for LOA will not be achieved. If there are no major disruptions caused by natural or political disasters, the program is going to gain a further speed and meet its final (LOA) targets by the middle of 2015. The following table on output and outcome targets can be used as an example in support of this view:

Indicator	Base	Current/ (FY1-3)	LOA target
OP13: No. of unions with <i>pre-positioned emergency supplies in accordance with their emergency plans as a result of PROSHAR intervention</i>		4-11 (48%)	23
OC23: No. of functional DMCs and CBDMVG at ward, union Upazila level		15-60 (45%)	133
OP14: No. DMC members trained in prevention, mitigation, preparation and response		2,187	3,375
OC24: # of DMCs that have comprehensive Disaster Risk Reduction Plans		15	15
OP15: # of projects included in DRR plans accomplished with non-PROSHAR resources		3	12
OP16: # of projects included in DRR plans accomplished with PROSHAR resources.		76	304
OC25: Percentage of USG-assisted communities that have constructed/developed physical infrastructure		23%	50%
OC26: No. of communities (WARD) with emergency plans as a result of PROSHAR intervention		99	117
OC27: No. of Wards with EWR systems in place as a result of project assistance.		99 (56%)	117
OC28 # of communities participating in training and awareness campaigns		36	207
OP17: No. of people trained in disaster preparedness		860-31,025 (62%)	49,885

Please note that the above table is based on most recent update of the IPTT and PMP in February 2013. We have been informed that a further revision of the figures is being done to reflect the new "Disaster Management Strategy" and rationalisation of the targets. Further clarification on the above figures should be useful to the readers. For example, under OP 13 not all 23 Unions will conduct CRA and produce RRAPs. Actually CRAs will be conducted in the most vulnerable 13 Unions only, while the rest 10 will have a simpler vulnerability mapping approach simply because the geographical context of these latter Unions do not justify full CRAs now. Similarly, not all 207 CBDMVGs need the same emergency response supplies, because those materials are meant mainly for sudden on-set hazards like cyclones. One of the working areas (Lohagorah Upazila) hardly faces a cyclone but has other pressing needs like supply of potable water. With growing realisation of these factors, the programme is trying to further adjust its targets in light of the Disaster

Management Strategy. The MTR appreciates the capacity of the programme to make such adjustments.

A qualitative analysis of the above would also reflect an equally positive picture of progress. Take for example, the IR 3.1 (Disaster Risk reduction plans (DRRAPs) functional). For this to be accomplished, the component has undertaken time undertaking research to develop a set of CRA manuals, which are now ready in printed form for use. The ground work for CRAs has also been completed with training to staff on the methodology for conducting Union and Upazila CRAs and developing DRRAPs. The other key achievement was the formation of all 207 Community Based Disaster Management Volunteer Groups (CBDMVGs) who will be the active participants for the Ward level CRAs. Similarly, the process of distribution of EWR (IR 3.2) materials has already started after completing a thorough process of procurement. It should therefore be complete within the next few months.

Similarly, training on disaster preparedness, one of the key tasks of the program, progress so far has reportedly been satisfactory with modules and BCC materials developed and PNGO trainers trained on those. Therefore, staff of PROSHAR and PNGOs looked confident that they can meet the target of training a total of about fifty thousand people by the end of the project period as planned. However, a lot depends on the performance of the current year which seems to have an ambitious target. In any case, it will require strong management of time and resources as well as a good plan of operation to guide the rest of the process.

## **f. Discussions of General Evaluation Questions for SO 3**

The PROSHAR works in the most disaster prone South-Western part of the country that has a history of repeated cyclonic storms accompanied by tidal surge. Among other chronic problems, water logging, salinity, drought, pest attack, flooding, lack of drinking water and river bank erosion are the key ones. The challenges of working in a remote area like this with marginalized groups of people faced with all these problem are indeed very high. This component of PROSHAR cuts across all communities and key institutions that the program works with. SO 3 helps to mainstream the disaster risk reduction (DRR) concept into all of the development interventions. So, it helps giving people and institutions an effective ownership to the program initiatives, thus ensuring sustainability of the benefits;

Production of DRRAP precedes a number steps including completion of Community Risk Assessments (CRA). The program has made a good start by completing the Upazila and some Union RRAPs. The FGDs conducted by the mid-term evaluation has revealed that the process of revitalizing disaster management committees and conducting CRAs and producing RRAPs have certainly deepened the understanding of local people about the local risks. Staff of the partner NGOs seemed well aware of different CRA models and was generally appreciative of the PROSHAR one for its particular focus on women and children. The risk (and resource) mapping process being very thorough, it has served as a useful tool for raising community awareness and knowledge about the issues. The other value of the

**CRA process was to give a community a comprehensive conceptual orientation on the “risk environment” that they lived in** – which includes both slow and rapid onset disasters including those resulting from Climate Change.

The CRA is also a very educative process, as the concerned community is made to explore what resources (local or external) were there that could be employed to address the risks and how were those going to be mobilized? It is important to make them think realistically what is to expect from where and how? During the FGDs, the team often faced with interesting approaches by the community members for looking into their needs sympathetically! Although, this was not completely unexpected for the MTR team, the bigger question they were confronted with was, how a tangible link between local level development plans and the central resource allocation system of the country is to be established?

Progress on “institutional preparedness” is positive with Community Risk Assessments (CRAs) for the selected most vulnerable 4 Unions completed, Disaster Risk Reduction Action Plans (DRRAP) are prepared and Disaster Management Committees (UDMCs) of 23 Unions and 3 Upazilas have been revitalised. Sustainability of these efforts and the benefits will largely depend on the PNGOs ability to continue generating funding for these activities, until community capacity to independently assume this role is developed. In any case, achieving this goal will require a strong national level policy commitment and action for an effective decentralized development process.

It is believed that in the past few years, uneven weather patterns combined with over exploitation and depletion of water resources in different parts of the country have negatively impacted on food security, particularly for small and marginal farmers and the rural poor in general. For areas like Sarankhola and Lohagorah in particular, water security (especially for drinking purposes) is going to be an emerging concern as food security is. It is not surprising that the Baseline Report of 2011 has highlighted this as one of the major **problems. The MTR agrees with the observation of the finding that: “Given the centrality of water concerns for food and livelihood security PROSHAR should consider identifying opportunities to address the water supply problem through other agencies involved in this sector and/or through an auxiliary spin-off project.” Water insecurity, further exacerbated by climate change, is arguably the most impactful factor on the country’s food security.** Therefore, PROSHAR may think of investing resources into finding alternative practical solutions to the problem. Feasibility of alternative technologies like rain water harvest and surface water treatment can be assessed through expert help. It was encouraging to learn in this connection that the issue will be addressed, in part, through joint SO1/SO3 action-research on water issues associated with food insecurity, in collaboration with international and national universities. Meanwhile, concerned government agencies should be taken to task so that they can be adequately responsive to the problem as well.

The first step for achieving above objectives is to form community based disaster management volunteer groups (CBDMVGs), who are trained and helped to link up with the existing government structures for disaster management, i.e., DMCs at Union and Upazila

level. In addition to that the key community leaders and groups are mobilized and trained in basic disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and response techniques. One of the most important tasks however, is to revive and revitalize the disaster management committees formed as per the SOD requirements. In most places, these committees are known to function only when a big disaster hit the area. Otherwise, due to lack of resources and external patronization, these committees are often seen to have gone inactive. Since PROSHAR offers a lot of planned actions (e.g. CRA) and materials to face disasters with, the committees are seen rejuvenated.

Based on a barrier analysis and consultations with communities locally appropriate and acceptable communication materials are developed. These materials include flash cards, pocket guide, documentary film and the like. These are used for appropriate behavior change actions and to raise awareness among people about disasters and how to prepare for and respond to those.

## VII. Program Quality and Cross Cutting Areas

Despite the initial difficult period, PROSHAR has made progress. The question is to what extent has some cross-cutting issues affected or could affect the quality of the program.

### a. Partnership/Consortium Quality

PROSHAR is implemented by ACDI/VOCA in a partnership with PCI and three NGOs Muslim Aid, Shushilan and CODEC. It also is associated with three technical agencies, the Cyclone Preparedness Program (CPP) of the government for the provision of trainers for disaster volunteer training, the Centre for Environmental and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS) to support the development of a disaster risk mapping model using Community Risk Assessments and Union Disaster Management Planning and building the capacity of PROSHAR and the other PNGOs and the Department of Community Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (C-IMCI) of the Ministry of Health. While ACDI/VOCA guides the whole project there are clear lines of responsibilities assigned to each partner.

### b. Partnership with Government

**PROSHAR's link with the Government** has been through the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management (MoFDM) with which it has had close cooperation. While the recent re-organization of the Ministry into two - the Ministry of Food and the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief should in principle, assuming that PROSHAR would be attached to MDMR, facilitate a more focused implementation of the project, one would have to wait and see how the division will impact on the handling and management of food supplies.

On the other hand, while MDMR will remain PROSHAR's primary partner, disaster management also needs to take a long run view. It would be prudent to establish closer links with the Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF) which is engaged in a number of DRR activities to address climate change and mitigation. Although there is no direct involvement of PROSHAR in climate change measures it would be strategic on the part of PROSHAR to establish some operational links with MoEF. This could help in many different ways from information sharing, policy lobby to strategic guidance in addressing impacts of climate change in the program areas.

**More specifically PROSHAR's direct relationship with Government functions through the Steering Committee** which meets regularly including undertaking field visits to the project area.

Relationships with Local Government through the Disaster Management Committees at the Union and Upazila levels are very good. Although, the Standing Orders on Disaster (SOD)

has details on how the DMCs should function, most of these local level committees remain non-functional primarily due to lack of funds. In an almost client relationship, the availability of PROSHAR support have made many of them **operational and some “revitalized.”** However, the long run view on their operational effectiveness is an open question. Nevertheless, if the objective of seeing some of the projects identified and prioritized under DRRAP are to be implemented, the relationship is vital and needs to be nurtured.

Relationships at the local Union and Upazila administration are very good with PROSHAR staff having close connections with them. The involvement of Upazila technical officers as specialists in the provision of training in FFS has had a positive effect and their involvement served as recognition of their professional status. At the Union level, the preparation of the CRA and the DRRAP, also generated close relationship with Union level officials.

### **c. Relationships with PCI**

ACDI/VOCA’s relationship with PCI as a partner sub-grantee has meant a first time involvement for both in Bangladesh in a major USAID FFP project being funded through a MYAP. A similar partnership exists in a similar MYAP project in Liberia. Whether it was the inexperience of dealing with Bangladesh or not, the project suffered significant delays in the beginning. However, since operations began project implementation has gained an impressive momentum. The clear line of responsibilities between ACDI/VOCA and PCI has contributed to an effective implementation structure assisted by the fact that both have located their field operation offices in Khulna allowing for easy communication. Supported by regular coordination meetings, the resolution of any issue is solved quickly. Both ACDI-VOCA and PNGOs however suffer from the problem of high staff turnover (see section on Human Resource Management).

### **d. Relationship with partner NGOs**

Relationships with the three partner NGOs with distinct area based responsibilities are good. Of the three, CODEC, has an advantage in that it is involved in all three MYAPs currently under implementation. Closely monitored by PROSHAR all three partners work in close cooperation and understanding supported by technical staff of ACDI/VOCA and PCI. Regular monthly coordination meetings are held in the Upazila office of each partner by turn, allowing for the building of a team spirit and a platform for resolving any issues. These are in addition to operational workshops held with the PNGOs as for instance the one held for the implementation Yr 4 plan formulation. A decision by PROSHAR to encourage suggestions for other new activities will provide partner staff an opportunity for even greater involvement.

## e. Targeting

PROSHAR has gone to great lengths to target specific support for specific categories of people. An initial identification of clusters of households (less than 200) with a subsequent community led well being analysis identified factors of household vulnerability that was confirmed by the community. Subsequently, the application of 6 parameters allowed the further classification of 7 unions as the most vulnerable<sup>15</sup> and the remainder as less vulnerable. On the argument of not applying a one size fit all approach, PROSHAR calibrated its support by vulnerability (very vulnerable or vulnerable) and income/well being. The element of targeting was carried further by specifying precisely the parameters of different types of activity and the amount of support that would be provided.

**In principle, PROSHAR's targeting approach cannot be faulted. However,** in practice, the classification of a farmer with less than 10 decimals as very poor and 10-50 as poor and on that basis specifying the size and extent of activity that would be supported is difficult to defend, particularly since the next slab is large, **10-50 decimals. If the project's primary** goal of reduced food insecurity is to be ensured, in addition to providing nutrition support for women and children and strengthening the capacity to deal with disasters, the classification of the poor in a category that could be eased to say 25 decimals would allow beneficiaries not only to generate enough food for themselves but also create a surplus for income growth. For that matter restricting off farm support only for the most vulnerable areas could conflict with the reality that a very poor farmer with less than 10 decimals is unlikely to engage in karchupi or handicrafts and more likely to work as a laborer for income.

## f. Gender

The principal focus of the project is on reduced food insecurity interpreted to include objectives related to livelihoods, health and nutrition and disaster risk reduction and response . While the disaster risk reduction is gender neutral the focus of the project has been on women. Recognizing the position of women in ensuring household food security has been a critical factor and consequently, gender consideration has determined project design in all aspects with 70% beneficiaries in SO 1 and 100% of SO 2 being women, although males are also included through their participation in father groups, CG trios and being trained as part of clinics group support. Gender considerations have ensured that training for CBDMVGs include women and that at least three out of eleven member of the group are women. While the emphasis in project design has been on women, the critical question is whether the results have been positive. The absence of any IPTT indicators makes it difficult for a clear answer although project management does collect some gender disaggregated information. Thus with SO 1 although a very major part of the effort is directed towards

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<sup>15</sup> The numbers reported as severely vulnerable and less vulnerable are sometimes in conflict with 7 identified as most vulnerable most time and 13 as most vulnerable in some other reports.

women and there is no dearth in their participation, the difference in adoption rates of crops and technology between men and women raises questions about impact. Other factors related to ownership and property rights, control and decision making over household resources could well be the critical factors that limit their benefits from the effort. There is a need for a study to identify the factors limiting their participation and access to benefits.

In similar vein project design has focused on support to women in developing market linkages and in the expansion of off market activities. This is based on the implicit assumption that the women have time on their hand to devote to project activities in addition to all the other activities of taking care of the household and the children.

## **g. Social and Behavior Change**

The distinctive aspect of PROSHAR has been its focus on social and behavior change. Where the rationale of the project is the reduction of food insecurity encompassing health and nutrition, livelihoods and insulation against disasters, social and behavior change is in effect the crux of the PROSHAR interventions. It is inherent in strengthening the ability of households and institutions to induce changes in the productive environment for greater sustainability, improved health and nutrition and to be able to respond to shocks from natural disasters.

While improving income and access to food for poor and ultra poor households (SO 1) has a dominant technical approach covering introduction to new crops, adoption of new technologies, management techniques and marketing forms, the facilitating influence of social and behavioral can be both a cause and an effect of development. Social and behavioral change can facilitate the intervention goals only if the technical dimension recognizes the differing resource endowments of the participating beneficiaries and attuning the technical solutions to those differences. While the FFS approach makes an effort by at least categorizing beneficiaries into specific subsectoral groups, it does not go far enough. The result is a differential in rates of adoption both by crops (rice a priority for all and only the slightly better off farmers might be willing to venture into other crops) and by gender (differential between men and women farmers). There is a need to factor the social standing of the farmer into the technical message for greater impact. Behavioral change measures if embedded into the technical messages have a greater chance of success. This is particularly aimed at encouraging group behavior in marketing inputs and outputs, developing collective bargaining capabilities etc.

Improving health of pregnant and lactating women and children under 5 (with particular attention to children under 2 years of age), SO 2 is overwhelmingly dominated by the dimension of behavioral change. The component implicitly deals with the implementation of the PM2A concept. Commencing with an analysis of perceived social norms, inducing behavioral change has involved the implementation of the trios care group approach supported by a Health Provider – a tiered structure of mother leaders, father leaders and

grandmother leaders – focused on a broad dissemination approach and one-to-one communication strategy.

The **mother's group platform** is now being used as an extended Health and Nutrition program by training mother leaders in identifying SAM cases, conducting growth monitoring and promotion sessions, involving them in national health day campaigns, piloting hand washing stations etc. The change in social behavior is being pursued by involving the community in taking responsibility for the community clinics including supporting their physical rehabilitation. Perhaps more than any other the aspect of cause and effect of social change and behavior has the most direct impact on and through SO 2 interventions.

Over the period of project implementation, some changes in behavior have been noticed. Notwithstanding the success, there is nevertheless a gap between knowledge and practice. Further, social change through SO 2 targets only the PLM category in society. The extent to which the dispersion of the messages beyond the target groups is an open question and will be captured in a final evaluation survey. In addition, the sustainability of the messages in terms of their adoption as part of normal behavior is also an issue that needs to be clarified perhaps by undertaking a survey on beneficiaries say two years after they have graduated from the program even if it is with a very small sized group.

SO 3 – Institutions and household prepared to respond effectively to shock takes a collective approach in addressing issues that affect the whole society and adopts a broad community based approach. The focus on community level awareness raising and capacity building adopts a BCC focus through community events like simulation exercises, film shows, docudrama, folk songs and key leaflets with key messages on disaster preparedness, early warning and post disaster management. The expected behavior changes are anticipated to cover a range of measures that range from the monitoring of weather bulletins and response to early warning signals to the adoption of a proactive approach that would cover increased household preservation and prepositioning of emergency supplies, dry foods, valuable documents and emergency funds. While some behavioral changes has been seen at the collective level, in the active response of the CBDMVGs and local communities (school committees, local elected officials and Government officials), to what extent this has impacted at the individual level is yet to be seen. Fortunately there has not been a recent disaster to verify this.

## **h. Integration**

Integration among the three SOs has been a conscious element in the implementation of the PROSHAR program. It has aimed at promoting a three way exchange between the components with the aim of reinforcing each other. Integration between SO 1 and SO 2 include the involvement of SO 2 beneficiaries in FFS and the dissemination of information in production and marketing including inviting SO 2 beneficiaries to attend Farmers Field days. Conversely, it includes the participation of Master Trainers in Mother Groups meetings to provide information on new products and new methods of production. On the other hand SO

2 recommends the provision of information to SO 1 on the type of nutritious food crops or vegetables that should be planted by the homestead category of farmers.

Integration between SO 1 and SO 3 include the identification of hazards that could limit SO 1 activities through CRA and take actions to prevent it. In addition to the inclusion of SO 3 messages in SO 1, it aims to develop household level preparedness plans to better respond to shocks. It aims to include SO 1 beneficiaries in cash for work or food for work following a rapid assessment after disaster to ensure support.

Integration between SO 2 and SO 3 activities has been pursued through the inclusion of SO 2 representation in disaster mapping under SO 3 and the identification of DRR needs of SO 2 beneficiaries ensuring their inclusion in designing the DRR plan. While providing gender sensitive training to volunteers and building their capacities to help vulnerable groups provides one dimension of integration, improving the early warning system targeting the most vulnerable groups, constitutes an equally strong degree of integration between SO 2 and SO 3.

Similarly, project management recognizes that it is not sufficient to change knowledge or attitudes related to disaster preparedness so, in FY13, PROSHAR plans to organize and facilitate training events directly with livelihood and health/nutrition beneficiaries. Appropriate training aids have been developed for the purpose. PCI with support from partners (Government) will also provide training to SO2 Health Promoters (HP) on the developed materials, which they will replicate at trios meetings and directly with group members. The team will also provide training to livelihoods master trainers on critical aspects of disaster preparedness related to protection of assets. These master trainers will, in turn, train their producer group members.

## **i. Sustainability/Exit Strategies**

Project design for all three components of PROSHAR has been formulated with an exit strategy in mind. In the case of SO 1, the provision of support has been targeted for a period of two years, the first year with inputs along with intensive training and capacity building and the second year to provide technical assistance support. The improvements in food availability and incomes once achieved as a consequence of the support, even in a small way, are the best guarantors for sustainability as producers tend to build on their success. As women homestead farmers improve their period of provisioning their household food needs both in terms of quality and quantity, sustainability of their actions provide a measure of reassurance to the exit strategy pursued. Some of the performance parameters for the component however raise questions on the sustainability of the results particularly the gender disparities in the adoption rates of crops and technology. While, it may be too early to make definitive conclusions despite the delay in project implementation PROSHAR needs to address the reasons for gender disparities in adoption rates and take measures to address them by undertaking a small study to that effect.

The phased implementation of the PM2A approach under SO 2 is for an approximate period of about thirty months for each beneficiary. The exit strategy is based on the combined effect of strengthening preventive and curative health and nutrition services both at the government level and more importantly at the community level supported by a heavy emphasis on behavior change communication and conditional food rations. Sustainability of project actions that define the exit strategy is dependent on the effectiveness of the care group approach adopted under the project. At the individual level, the intensive one-to-one communication strategy has had some impact in bringing about changes in behavior. However, there is still a gap between knowledge and practice and the question as to the sustainability of the messages after project support has ended remains an open question. Stimulating service demand through a focused BCC approach can itself provide a supply response in the provisioning of the service. Thus, educating a woman on the importance of ANC for her health and the health of her unborn child helps to increase the depth and extent of ANC service in the area and the sustainability of the message, resources allowing.

Similarly, response from the involvement of the community as reflected in the resurgence of activities at the community health clinics provides another dimension of the sustainability of actions under the component. Thus, when the government ensures the delivery of quality service at community clinics (adequate staffing and medicine supplies) community members become motivated to collaborate and improve physical structures (providing furniture, repairing tube wells or construct an access road).

While awareness raising and behavior change provide one dimension of the exit strategy for SO 3 activities, the development of the Disaster Risk Reduction Action Plan (DRRAP) in the 13 unions through the CRA provides the other element by laying the groundwork and prioritizing measures to insulate the community against the onset of such disasters. The mobilization and training of the CBDMVGs and a host of other stakeholders such as the UDMC, CPP volunteers, religious leaders, school management committees etc provides the software side of DRM measures. The formulation of the DRRAP provides the hardware side. Implementation of DRRAP is beyond the scope of the project and needs to be integrated with other development measures of the Government for the complete sustainability of DRM measures.

## VIII. Implementation Processes

### j. Commodity Management

#### A. Overview

PROSHAR over its life (FY 2010 – 2015) original proposed distribution of 14,860 MT of Title II commodities including wheat, lentils and vegetable oil as food rations to the PM2A families and in-kind wages to the FFW workers. At the proposal stage, the program also proposed monetization of 97,370 MT of wheat to meet part of the cash need for program deliverables. In addition to the Title II commodities the program during its first two years of implementation planned to provide nearly 33.0 MT of Plumpy Nut annually as Ready to Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) to the Severely Acute Malnourished (SAM) cases. The program revises the original proposed level of commodities based on annual reviews of commodity needs of the program.

Management of distribution and monetization of commodities involves complexities and challenges. Yet ACDI/VOCA and its sub-recipient PCI are managing a MYAP for the first time in Bangladesh both the organizations bring their global experience with Title II commodity management and apply best practices developed over nearly three decades to PROSHAR. ACDI/VOCA is responsible for commodity call forward, shipment and logistics. PCI is responsible for selection of direct distribution beneficiaries and monitoring of commodity receipt and use. ACDI/VOCA delivers the commodities at the food distribution points in accordance with distribution plan and PCI works with the beneficiaries to ensure appropriate identification and receipt with PNGOs participation in the distribution of commodity.

All Title II commodities bound for Bangladesh are shipped to the Port of Chittagong. The port has adequate facilities for the accommodation of dry bulk vessels, break bulk vessels and container ships. Wheat for monetization is delivered in bulk shipments.

#### B. Standard Operating Procedures

Development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) – Keeping in mind of the challenges and complexities PROSHAR has developed the SOP in accordance with USAID Commodity Reference Guide and Regulation 211<sup>16</sup>. The SOP contains all aspects of management of commodities imported for distribution to the targeted program beneficiaries. In addition to the SOP, PROSHAR has developed the Warehouse Insect and Rodent Mitigation and Management Information Guide drawing upon industry wide commodity management best practices. Fumigation of the commodity is done in accordance with the Pesticide Evaluation

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<sup>16</sup> Regulation 211 governs the Transfer of Food Commodities for Food Use in Disaster Relief, Economic Development and Other Assistance.

Report and Safer Use Action Plan (PERSUAP) approved by USAID. Responsibilities relative to the monetized commodity management include delivery to the GoB upon arrival of the shipment at the port. The sale to the GoB is considered final upon completion of commodity offloading and handed over to the GoB at the port of entry. Realizing the importance and usefulness of SOP the program has recently initiated development of a SOP for the management of commodity monetization in accordance with USAID FFP Monetization Field Manual and Host Country Agreement for PROSHAR. The matrix below provides an analysis of the effectiveness of the SOP in efficient commodity distribution by PROSHAR involving tracking from receipt at port to distribution at communities.

**Matrix: Analysis of Effectiveness of SOP**

SOP Activities	Effects	Indicators of Effectiveness
<p><b>Commodity Receipt:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prior to arrival of commodities at the port, ACDI/VOCA provided orientation to the clearing and forwarding agent, transporters and surveyors and completed all necessary paper work and authorizations.</li> <li>• Conducted Discharge Survey of Direct Distribution (DD) and Monetization (MTZ) commodities</li> <li>• Dispatch commodities (DD)</li> <li>• Hand over commodities (MTZ)</li> </ul>	<p>Smooth discharge of commodities from mother vessels and dispatch to PROSHAR warehouses</p>	<p>No demurrage charges reported</p>
	<p>Smooth handover to the GoB</p>	<p>No funding pipeline breaks reported</p>
<p><b>Transportation:</b> Selected experienced, reliable and solvent transportation agencies through open competition for delivery of commodities from port to the warehouses and food distribution points</p>	<p>Timely arrangement of transports and delivery of commodities at</p>	<p>Insignificant amount of in-country transit loss reported</p> <p>(Refer to Table 4 at Annex – h Commodity Loss Summary)</p>
<p><b>Logistics Assessment and Road Mapping:</b> Visits to the PROSHAR working area and identification of potential route, mode of transport accessible and estimated cost of transports to reach the FDPs</p>	<p>Maximize efficiencies and minimize costs in timely delivery of food commodities</p>	<p>Rigorous cost analysis conducted into all programming decisions</p>

<p><b>Commodity Storage:</b> Adherence of the ideal warehouse management principles referred to in the Commodity Management SOP #02. (Proper commodity spacing and stacking, and security and safety including pest control.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain proper storage condition at all times</li> <li>• Ensure quality of commodities</li> </ul>	<p>Minimal loss/damage of the stored commodities reported</p>
<p><b>Food Distribution Management:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selection of food distribution points (FDP)<sup>17</sup> is made based on the size of the target beneficiaries and easy access for the beneficiaries</li> <li>• Formation of Food Distribution Committees comprised of local community people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orderly distribution of food rations in adequate quantity at the FDPs</li> <li>• Transparency in food rations distribution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great satisfaction of beneficiaries on the arrangements and logistics at distribution point</li> <li>• Beneficiaries reporting satisfaction on the quality</li> <li>• Orderly distribution noted during the visit</li> <li>• No commodity leakages or short-supply reported</li> </ul>
<p><b>Monitoring and Reporting:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal Control Monitoring by the M&amp;E team in addition to the Commodity team; Commodity Team Bi-monthly meetings</li> <li>• Recording and Reporting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountability of resources</li> <li>• Detecting discrepancies</li> <li>• Resolving issues quickly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No unresolved issues noted</li> <li>• Staff are alerted on any indication of irregularity</li> </ul>

### C. Implementation Status

As of September 2012, the program has received 4,110 MT of wheat, refined vegetable oil and lentils, representing 28% of the original total MYAP level of 14,860 MT for distribution and 46,730 MT of wheat out of the total approved level of 97,370 MT for monetization. In addition to the Title II commodities, PROSHAR received 32.70 MT Plumpy Nut (RUTF) in September 2012.

By December 2012, the program has utilized 1,663 MT out of the 4,110 MT of commodities arrived in-country and received nearly US \$13 million in equivalent Taka have been received from the sale of the commodity sold to the GoB. A total of 770 kilograms of RUTF out of the total 32.70 MT received in-country were distributed to 131 SAM children through December 2012. The status of commodities received for distribution and monetization is provided at Annex - h of this report.

<sup>17</sup> There are 69 FDPs in 23 unions in the three program Upazilas.

## **D. Findings/Observations**

**D.1. Commodity Management:** The MTR observations relative to the commodity distribution and monetization are as below:

- All commodity management staff are on board and received on-the-job-training. Most of the staff have experience in the Title II commodity management. Four warehouses have been rented with a total storage capacity of 2,130 MT. Two of the four warehouses rented by PROSHAR are owned by the Ministry of Food and located in Khulna serving as main storage of program commodities. The rest two warehouses are located in the two program Upazilas, Lohagora and Sarankhola. These were rented from private owners as there was no space available in the government warehouses.
- Program provided orientation in food ration distribution management to 365 (244 male and 121 female) Food Distribution Committee (FDC) members. Of these FDC members, 169 (109 male and 60 female) have received refresher training.
- Need-based pest control has been done with the application of pesticides as per PERSUAP approved by USAID. PERSUAP is developed per Regulation 216 – Environmental Compliance.
- Warehouses are insured as part of the ACDI/VOCA global insurance coverage; premium is paid out of the NICRA (Overhead).
- Call forward (import) of direct distribution commodities include wheat, lentils and vegetable oil which are within the recommended levels per Bellmon analysis. Imported commodities have no impact on local production and market and pose no pressure on public storage capacity. Wheat selected for monetization qualifies the Bellmon requirement that the commodity does not depress local market and production. The amount of commodity monetized qualifies the Bellmon requirements as it is within the potential level recommended in the BEST analysis.
- Besides routine monitoring by the commodity team the environmental specialist conducts monthly visit to the warehouses. PROSHAR Commodity team has recently been trained on the use of a software<sup>18</sup>, developed by Save the Children under the USAID-funded Jibon-o-Jibika program implemented during FY 2005 - FY 2010..
- The GoB deposit of monetized proceeds in FY 2010, the first year of monetization under the program, was delayed by about 2 months of the due date which according to the HCA is 90 days of receipt of the commodity. The deposit of sale proceeds of the FY 2011 consignment was on schedule. The FY 2012 deposit was delayed by

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<sup>18</sup> See Section VIII.B – Monitoring and Evaluation for detailed information on McAid.

about five months due to increase of commodity value that the existing allocated budget could not absorb as the required amount of monetization proceeds of the FY 2012 shipment is greater than by 8.2% of the original GoB budget provision of Tk.390 Million. This incident has equally affected the other two MYAPs – SHOUHARDO II and Nobo Jibon. PROSHAR is paid nearly 92% of the monetization proceeds by the GoB from the available budget allocation and the remaining balance is expected in March, 2013. The GoB has suggested that the MYAP implementing agencies inform the concern ministries about the amount of wheat and cost before the finalization of the GoB annual budget. Nonetheless, the GoB could have expedited the release of money available while waiting for budget amendment which is expected in March, 2013<sup>19</sup>. A copy of the GoB minutes of meeting on the payment of monetization proceeds under MYAPs is provided at Annex - i.

- The GoB has expressed their satisfactions with the current Title II monetization program and informed the MTR team that the arrangement provides them with necessary wheat for the safety net programs under the Public Food Distribution System (PFDS)<sup>20</sup>, savings of hard currency as the payments to the Awardees are made in local currency, and use of the proceeds for the improved food security of the poor and extreme poor and provision of the 90-day period for depositing the monetization proceeds.
- There have been no reports of commodity loss, damage, risk during transfer from warehouses to the FDPs by multi-mode transports (truck, boat, van, head-load, etc.) by the transporters contracted by PROSHAR. Total losses to date is highly insignificant, 4 MT out of 4,110 MT arrived in-country for direct distribution, while most losses accounting by marine loss.
- The 2012 commodity call forward and shipment were delayed until GoB relaxed its **requirement for certificate of "fit for human consumption" from the donor. All the MYAP awardees, ACDI/VOCA, CARE and Save the Children, had great difficulty securing the USDA of "fit for human consumption". The GoB has modified its import policy on the Title II commodity shipments under the MYAPs. The modification was made not only because of the benefits Bangladesh enjoys from the Title II food aid but rigorous follow-up and strong advocacy from the MYAP awardees with the assistance of USAID.**

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<sup>19</sup> The GoB Fiscal year is July-June and any budget revision is done in March.

<sup>20</sup> This is consistent with the USAID Office of Food for Peace Bangladesh Bellmon Estimation (BEST) dated August 2009 BEST Report findings. The report (page 3) states, "... **monetized wheat has been sold to the GOB and has entered the GOB social safety net program. This is a notable feature of the monetization program in Bangladesh. Monetization provides both financing for the awardees' programs (the direct beneficiaries of Title II food aid), saves the GOB vital foreign exchange and improves food security for beneficiaries under the GOB social safety net program (who are thus indirect beneficiaries of Title II food aid).**" According to the PFDS off-take report of the Directorate General of Food that up to 80% of the PFDS wheat goes to non-commercial food based safety-net channels that target the most vulnerable populations.

- The RUTF offtake is found to be very low, only 770 kilograms from October to December 2012, leaving a stock of 32.0 MT having left with only 18 months of expiry time. The consignment of 32.77 MT arrived in September 2012 with the shelf life ending in July 2014 for distribution to SAM cases for an estimated 12-month period in 56 community clinics.

## **D.2. Capability to Shift Resources for Emergency Response**

The matrix at Section B illustrates the distribution chain management system which is equally important to effectively channeling food commodities<sup>21</sup> for emergency response. Emergency assistance is challenged by the damaged infrastructures and arduous situation in the affected areas. Extra precautionary measures therefore are must to ensure quality, safety and security of food commodities during deployment from warehouses to the distribution sites. PROSHAR has arrangements for transports available within 24 hours of notice and staff deployment within 24 hours of the strike of a disaster. The program, in addition to strengthening its partner NGOs disaster management capabilities, has reengaged the UDMC and CPP volunteers and formed CBDMVG which are essential for effective emergency response.

## **E. Conclusion**

### **E.1. Commodity Management**

- Overall, the commodity distribution, transportation, security, tracking and reporting are functioning very well despite challenges and complexities in food commodities management and given the first experience of ACDI/VOCA and its sub-recipient PCI in managing a MYAP in Bangladesh. Relative to the generation of money from commodity monetization the sale price met the cost recovery benchmark making the cash pipeline uninterrupted. As illustrated in the matrix under Section B of the SOP of the commodity management is found to be effective in timely delivery of quality food rations with minimal loss meaning PROSHAR has devoted much effort to ensure commodity management. The MTR did not find any significant issues with **PROSHAR's commodity distribution.**

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<sup>21</sup> Unanticipated Emergencies: In addition to the integrated Development Relief approach, where no contingency plan was built into the MYAP for unanticipated emergency needs in a host country, up to ten percent of in-country Title II commodity stocks may be diverted from the approved purpose in response to the emergency, with FFP/M/R approval. If additional tonnage above the ten percent is sought for diversion from a MYAP for use in meeting an emergency need, and/or the awardee seeks replacement of the food aid commodities diverted, FFP/W approval is required. Awardees should contact the applicable AOTR and FFP/M/R in such cases. This approval must be received prior to the transfer of any additional food aid commodities and funding. (Ref. FFP MYAP Guidance)

- Distribution end-use monitors work at the community level to monitor distribution and ensure appropriate use. For example, they use the end-use monitoring tool to collect relevant data from the PM2A households.
- The shelf of the RUTF stock will end in July 2014. At current rate of distribution, only 770 kilograms in three months, the stock will exceed the shelf life before being fully utilized for the targeted beneficiaries.

## **E.2. Capability to Handle Commodities in Emergencies:**

PROSHAR is prepared to have transport available within 24 hours of notice and staff deployment within 24 hours of a disaster. However, the proactive collaboration with the disaster management committees at the different government administrative levels is required to respond effectively. Information available on the experience and performance of ACDI/VOCA, PCI and PNGOs staff in emergency preparedness presents a positive sign towards effective and efficient response during emergency response. However, the program has not been able to accurately measure the effectiveness of the preparedness systems due to the fortunate lack of emergencies since the inception of PROSHAR in 2010. In terms of logistics, PROSHAR has the advantage of being able to mobilize in the shortest time as it will continue to use its own and the PNGO offices at the Upazilas.

## **F. Lessons Learned**

**Teamwork Makes A Difference:** The 2012 commodity call forward and shipment were challenged as the Title II Awardees had great difficulty securing from USDA a certificate of "fit for human consumption". In the absence of USDA certification, ACDI/VOCA along with CARE and SC, with the assistance of USAID, have been successful in negotiating for an alternative arrangement with the GoB for the Title II commodity imports. The GoB has relaxed its import policy because of the benefits Bangladesh enjoys from the Title II food aid.

## **k. Monitoring and Evaluation**

### **A. Overview**

PROSHAR monitoring and evaluation system is progressing well in monitoring of inputs, activities and outputs since the beginning of program strategic objectives activities in October, 2011, one-and-a-half years from the program start-up. Due to late start-up, repeated revisions of the indicators included in the Indicator Performance Tracking Table (IPTT), finalization of the M&E strategy and staff turnover with M&E positions have affected the M&E system to be fully functional.

## **B. Monitoring and Evaluation System**

The program has begun work on a number of improvements to the M&E system, such as, completion of the baseline survey, introduction of routine data quality assessments (RDQA), adaptation of McAid software, completion of annual results survey. The MTR findings of the M&E System and comments on the M&E Plan are provided below.

### **i. Findings - M&E System**

#### **Staffing**

PROSHAR M&E unit is led by ACDI/VOCA with regular support from the ACDI/VOCA Headquarters M&E Director, M&E Specialist, Gender Specialist and MIS Specialist. All operational M&E staff are field based and operate on a regular schedule of monitoring reports. Balancing donor requirements (IPTT indicators) along with Partner NGOs with their own monitoring structure and requirements generate a large number of data with a heavy demand on their staff occasionally creating problems. Increased focus on data quality assurance as a level of effort by M&E staff and program staff that was not anticipated in the initial phases of the project may be resulting from overwork and de-motivation.

Staff turnover in M&E is a major issue both with ACDI/VOCA and PNGOs. A manifestation of high staff turnover was reflected in the fact that the review team found the COP for the project was also deputizing in the role of Director M&E. However with the position of the Director of M&E in Dhaka, supervision and coordination becomes difficult. On the other hand, the frequent need to collaborate with USAID and the other MYAPs requires a presence in Dhaka. There is a need for a Deputy or Associate M&E officer at the Khulna level. The recently approved PREP has included a Deputy Director at the Khulna level.

#### **Indicator Performance Tracking Table (IPTT)**

Because of the scope of PROSHAR and the limitations on size, the IPTT at the present does not serve as an effective tool. For example, it is missing some key outputs indicators associated with the activities of livestock and FFW. Also, there are no IPTT indicators for measuring the impact of gender, for this reason gender has been dealt with as cross-cutting theme within the body of each SO.

#### **M&E Systems – ACDI/VOCA and PCI**

PCI is responsible for SO 2 and SO 3 implementation. In pursuit of that from the start of the project, the PCI M&E team has been providing all inputs and actively participated in a wide range of PROSHAR M&E related activities relevant to the SO2 and SO 3 components of the project including:

- Baseline survey;
- Conducting different surveys and studies on SO2 and SO3 which contribute to PROSHAR;

- Collecting SO<sub>2</sub> and SO<sub>3</sub> program service data, analyzing the data and providing feedback and guidance to the SO<sub>2</sub> and SO<sub>3</sub> teams for program improvement, and
- Compiling information and producing monthly, quarterly and Annual reports for SO<sub>2</sub> and SO<sub>3</sub>.

## **ii. Review/Comments on May 2012 M&E Plan**

The May 2012 PROSHAR M&E Plan is an update of the M&E Plan submitted with the MYAP Revised Technical Application dated May 2010.

### **Role of Commodity Team in Program M&E**

PROSHAR Commodity Team roles and responsibilities relative to the M&E management need to be included in this section (Section IV). For example, the role of the Commodity team in the use of Maternal and Child Aid (McAid) software for beneficiary and commodity tracking. McAid is a web-based real-time and beneficiary tracking software and has been found to be an effective M&E tool. The PCI M&E team has only recently started using the McAid system. Before this time, they had created a working data collection and analysis system that was responsive to the needs of SO<sub>2</sub>/3, developed studies to address perceived gaps in implementation, and were in constant contact with field teams, as a means of ensuring that they are responding to the challenges and needs of the program.

### **Development of Exit Strategies for PNGOs**

Since it is critical to strengthen the capacity of the PNGOs the plan needs describing the development and implementation of exit strategies relative to their M&E capacity. For example, the exit strategy should include orientation of M&E staff in the implementation of a qualitative M&E component.

### **Usefulness of the Studies**

There have been several studies done and many are planned. It is important to see whether the objectives of those completed studies have met or not. There is a need for a more detailed examination of the studies, the rationale for undertaking them, the outcomes and the process improvements put into place as a result.

### **Common Layout**

Common structure of indicators, common to Food for Peace (FFP) and Feed the Future (FtF) programs, is mandated for all three MYAP implementing partners – CARE, SC and ACDI/VOCA. All 3 MYAPs will benefit from support by both FFP and FtF so that indicators have standard definitions and the data can be readily collected and be comparable. The M&E plan should discuss the common layout and its implementation, most importantly how ACDI/VOCA will coordinate with the other two MYAP implementing partners.

## **Incorporation of Revised Program Strategy**

The subsequent change of the Livelihood Strategy (SO1) and DRM Strategy (SO3) has not been reflected in the M&E Plan. Until all key positions are filled, ACDI/VOCA should consider using outside experts to revise the Plan.

## **Contingency Plan**

The plan shall include contingency/back-up plan to handle M&E activities in the event of **staff turnover. This is more critical for the PNGO M&E implementation. The PNGOs' core M&E staff time shall be devoted to PROSHAR M&E.** These staff shall receive training/orientation on PROSHAR M&E process and implementation. ACDI/VOCA plans to engage a consultant effective March 2013 until the long-term M&E position is filled in.

## **M&E Plan Diagrams**

The diagrams used in the plan need to be focused, simple and user-friendly. A flow diagram of roll out of the M&E and MIS in the beginning section of the plan would be useful (see Flow Diagram).

## **M&E Life Calendar**

The plan at Section IX describes the key M&E activities and their implementation periods. The plan shall include a calendar of M&E activities indicating the tools, users and schedules.

## **Detailed Implementation Plan**

The M&E plan has no reference to the Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP). It is necessary that the revised plan describes the relevance of DIP to the M&E system.

**C. Specific Recommendations on M&E:** The recommendations of the MTR on the M&E are listed below:

### **Staff Turnover**

Concerned PROSHAR awardees, and partner implementing agencies and organizations shall include **"Back-up Plan" to meet the need during the transition from staff turnover to recruitment,** such as, local internship program to capture potential staff to cover the workload in a cheaper way. There has been strained relationship among the MYAP awardees when staff from one MYAP was hired by another. MYAP implementing partners should coordinate timing whenever a staff from one MYAP is hired by another. This practice would be beneficial if it is extended to other USAID funded projects.

## **IPTT Limitations**

A program needs to have a good tool that can be used to monitor progress against all outputs and provides indicators for assessing impact. The program should use appropriate tools for including the output and outcome indicators that are not covered in the IPTT. For example, the outcome indicators of the FFW activities (person-days of employment created by FFW) and measuring the impact of gender such as increased percentage of women reporting increased incomes from their own activities as well as diversification of income sources.

## **Address M&E Plan Review Comments**

PROSHAR should address the comments of the MTR on the M&E plan referred to Section B.ii. – Review/Comments on May 2012 M&E Plan.

## **I. Knowledge Management**

### **Overview**

Although there is no knowledge management<sup>22</sup> strategy, an intensive and regular monitoring system is in place supported by a detailed PMP. The knowledge brought into the program through staff meetings, discussions and feedback and participation in workshops are found to be useful in internal learning within PROSHAR M&E systems. Sharing of information and lessons learned through program reports, success stories, case studies and quarterly coordination meetings have thus far contributed to some extent in disseminating knowledge outside PROSHAR.

### **Findings/Observations**

The partner NGO field staff reported internal learning from interaction of the program status under the three program strategic objectives through technical coordinators and field officers briefing in the weekly meetings and monthly and quarterly program review meetings. The PNGO staff, have only access to documents on file as there are no LAN services available at their offices.

PROSHAR's prime and sub-recipient partners are missing the optimum benefit of internal learning as the program lacks strategy, guidance and focal person for knowledge

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<sup>22</sup> Knowledge management refers to how knowledge is brought into a program, how it is generated and used within a program, and how it is generated and disseminated outside of a program. It is an effective decentralized process/mechanism of sharing of internal, cross-organizational and cross-program learning.

management and incentives to support staff in knowledge-in and knowledge-out. More discouraging with respect to knowledge management in PROSHAR is discontinuation of posting of the program documents in the web-portal and issuance of the PROSHAR Newsletter. There are not many documents have been disseminated very widely outside of the program apart from the Baseline Report, some program monitoring reports and the previously the PROSHAR Newsletter. The PROSHAR Gender Specialist was focused on this dimension of knowledge management, but the position is vacant now.

A process for information sharing has been integrated into the M&E system. The MTR finds the need of concepts of farmer driven innovation, participatory monitoring and evaluation approaches and technical support for the design of climate change adaptation, food for work (FFW) and cash for work (CFW) activities. Sharing of lessons learned and effective practices will help support a multi stakeholder expansion of market driven programming, decision-making and resource allocation for food security and livelihoods programs in Bangladesh and elsewhere. These information will be disseminated through project reports, success stories, case studies and quarterly coordination meetings. The incentive support may be in the form report outs meeting, retreat, brownbag, mentoring and so on.

#### **m. General Management**

Both ACDI/VOCA and PCI are managing a large Title II MYAP for the first time in Bangladesh. Although partner selection took more time than expected, partners chosen have good local knowledge and political and social capital reflected in the choice of groups and rapport with the government officials. Managing conflicting interest and expectation of government is a challenge which requires careful handling. PROSHAR staff appear to be competent and reflect high degree of commitment, particularly relative to vision, leadership and communications.

Besides the review of human and financial resources management the MTR also looked at the elements of general program management that included the structures, program vision and leadership, program planning, problem solving and decision making, and communications. The MTR found that the prime awardee, ACDI/VOCA, has faced significant staffing challenges since the beginning of the program. Transitions have occurred with key positions, including the COP, Deputy COP for Program which later on was abolished, M&E Director, Finance Director, DRM Coordinator, Health and Nutrition Team Leader, and the program also faced significantly delayed recruitment of the mid-level positions. Implementation in all components is behind schedule as a result. Even at present, at least two positions in ACDI/VOCA, M&E Director and Gender Specialist, are vacant. PROSHAR has internalized its learning process and revised its improved livelihood and disaster risk management strategies. It has also changed its approach to the inclusion of SO2 beneficiaries. This is a dimension of flexibility in internalizing the lessons learned. PROSHAR now represents a "best practice".

The program's commodity management system has been found to be effective in efficient delivery of food rations to the targeted beneficiaries and optimum cost recovery from the sale of commodities. The commodity and financial resources management has proceeded smoothly without any pipeline break.

#### **d.1. Human Resources Management**

**A. Overview:** ACIDI/VOCA and its three partner NGOs are experiencing staff turnover from time to time. Currently 334 out of 337 direct staff in all PROSHAR partners are filled-in. Transitions have occurred in key positions including the COP, DCOP, Director Finance and Grants, Director M&E, SO2 and SO3 Team Leaders, Environmental Coordinator, Gender Specialist, Finance Manager, Finance Officer and GoB Liaison. Implementing agency-wise status of staff is provided at Table 6, Annex – h.

**B. Observations:** The most important HR issue of PROSHAR is the availability and retention of staff to implement the program.

1. **Staff Recruitment:** PROSHAR's staff recruitment is challenged by non-availability of experienced and qualified persons required by the job position. It is a demand and supply issue as there appears to be small pool of qualified staff in-country. The recruitment of a position takes longer time than expected.

2. **Staff Turnover:** The driving factors of staff turnover and retention issues have several different dimensions:

- Good number of national and international NGOs and emerging new projects providing opportunities to switch organization;
- Employees in the field (PNGOs) not fully empowered to perform the job responsibilities and lack of clear division of tasks Staff moved on (higher position, attractive remuneration).
- Lack of adequate living conditions (challenging logistics and cost of living) in the field office locations.

2. **Staff Reorganization:** PROSHAR has made the following changes of its original staffing to increase technical support and monitoring oversight:

- Eliminated three Agricultural Coordinator positions. In lieu of them three Economic Growth Program Coordinator positions have been created and assigned to the Upazilas.
- Eliminated the Livelihoods Team Leader (SO1) position and created Director Economic Growth.
- Eliminated Poultry and Livestock Coordinator, and Production Specialist positions and created Poultry and Livestock Specialist.

- Eliminated Livelihoods Specialist position and created one Livelihoods Grants Manager position based in Khulna and 2 Livelihoods Grants Specialist positions based in Sarankhola and Lohagora.
- Eliminated a Marketing Specialist position and created a Deputy Team Leader Off-Farm.
- Created a Deputy Team Leader On-farm position.
- Transferred the Team Leader DRM position from ACDI/VOCA to PCI.
- Transferred the DRM Coordinator position from ACDI/VOCA to PCI.
- GoB Liaison position is abolished and responsibilities given to the Resource and Commodity Specialist. The new title of the position is Government Liaison, Resource and Commodity Specialist.
- Environmental Coordinator position has been upgraded to Environmental Specialist position.

The recently approved PREP has included a Deputy Director at the Khulna Office to strengthen the M&E unit capacity in the field as the position of the M&E Director is located in Dhaka. Yet supervision and coordination by the M&E Director from Dhaka becomes difficult but there are frequent need to collaborate with USAID and other MYAPs in Dhaka.

3. **PROSHAR Team Retreat:** PROSHAR team retreat held in April/May, 2012 is a positive step of the current management towards staff development. A number of changes in leadership since the beginning of program have challenged program staff towards common vision and mission, consistent work environment and effective performance. One of the recommendations of this all-hands team-building retreat, staff development initiative suggested formal and alternative development activities supported by the PROSHAR Senior Management and employee-led.<sup>23</sup>

4. **Office Holiday Schedule:** PROSHAR offices at Dhaka, Khulna and Upazila follow the official USAID/Dhaka Mission's holiday schedule<sup>24</sup> and work on a five-day workweek. The

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<sup>23</sup> Retreat Recommendations are: 1) Support and track Task Force Teams; 2) With respect to the Staff Development Initiative, explore alternative activities that have impact and low cost; 3) Incorporate the new team values in performance expectations; 4) Ensure effective and regular team meetings that include ongoing attention to team building; and 5) Creating a positive team culture.

<sup>24</sup> The ACDI/VOCA Bangladesh office holiday schedule coincides with the official USAID/Dhaka Mission's holiday schedule. (Ref. ACDI/VOCA Bangladesh Personnel Manual, 20 November 2010).

PROSHAR PNGOs maintain a six-day workweek and observe the GoB holiday schedule. These different holiday schedules constrain communication between the PROSHAR offices (manly the Khulna and Upazila offices) and the Government Offices and PNGOs for a numbers of days (around 20 days) in a calendar year. The Dhaka PROSHAR office as well **doesn't get much benefit out of this holiday schedule. Moreover, among the two holiday schedules, GoB and PROSHAR, the program staff prefer the former to the latter which will provide them opportunities for much more enjoyment of holidays.** The staff however under the impression that the PROSHAR holiday schedule is mandated by the USAID policy.

## **C. Lessons Learned**

Some organizations are "chosen" or "offer" as training ground. There are organizations chosen for career building because of their reputation not remuneration. These organizations also offer training for skill development. As a consequence staff retention is challenged, particularly the mid-level positions which is found to be not an exception for PROSHAR.

### **d.2. Financial Management**

#### **A. Overview**

The revised total budget of \$34,451,872 includes monetization proceeds, 202(e) and ITSH. This is exclusive of the GoB contribution of Taka 112,989,130 to the program pursuant to the Host Country Agreement (HCA) between the GoB and ACDI/VOCA. The expenditure of the USAID resources as of September 2012 is 25.6% of the LOA budget. By September 2012, the PNGOs have spent 32% of the total budget of \$5,315,000 for the NGO partners over the LOA. The expenditure in the first and second implementation years was low because of the delay in selecting PNGO partners. The overall burn rate has reportedly geared up in the October –December 2012 quarter. Status of Overall Program Expenditures as of September, 2012 is provided at Table 7 of Annex – h.

#### **B. Observations**

1. **Staffing:** ACDI/VOCA financial management is headed by the Director Finance and Grants who is supported by a finance manager, a finance officer and a finance and grants officer at Dhaka and a finance manager, two grants specialists and an administrative clerk accountants at Khulna. The Director Finance and Grants reports to the Senior Director Operations. PCI has a General Manager – Finance at Khulna supervised by the PCI Administrator and Director Program. The General Manager is supported by an accountant. Two grants specialists assigned at the Khulna office monitor the financing and follow-up audit findings at the PNGOs and PROSHAR Khulna and Upazila offices. A finance-cum-administration officer in each of the PNGOs under the supervision of the Program Manager is responsible for financial accounting and reporting at the Upazila office. The final signatory

authority of the PNGOs lies with the finance focal person, the head of the finance, at the headquarters.

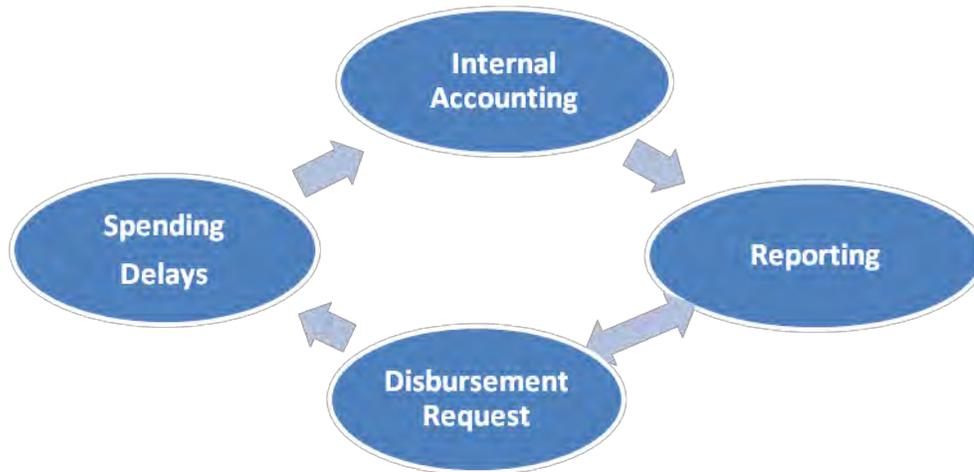
**2. Cash Flow:** PNGOs reported improvements in the cash flow from ACIDI/VOCA to PNGOs as compared to the initial period of agreement with ACIDI/VOCA due primarily submission of incorrect reports. Program's internal audits conducted annually help improve in financial management.

**3. Internal Audit:** Internal audits by outsourcing of local audit firms are conducted covering the ACIDI/VOCA and PNGOs. PCI is not covered by the ACIDI/VOCA contracted audit. Besides the global audit by the PCI home office, the internal audits are carried out by outsourcing of local audit firms in fulfillment of the NGO Bureau requirements. Both ACIDI/VOCA and PCI are covered by A-133 audits.

**4. GoB Contribution Utilization:** A total of Tk.112,989,130 has been agreed by the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MDMR) as the GoB contribution to PROSHAR under the Host Country Agreement signed in August 2010 between the MDMR and ACIDI/VOCA. To-date the expenditure under the HCA is zero as the MDMR and ACIDI/VOCA have agreed to utilize the fund for construction of infrastructure and direct program delivery instead of training, travel, etc. planned originally in the agreement. An amendment of the agreement is underway to effect the proposed budget realignment.

**5. Value Added Tax (VAT) Payment:** USAID funding is not authorized for VAT payment. Use of the VAT coupon in lieu of payment is mandated by the USAID policy. Organizations and firms having VAT registration with the National Board of Revenue (NBR) are authorized to use VAT coupons. The office building owners of PROSHAR offices do not have VAT registration with the NBR. The agreement between ACIDI/VOCA and office-building owner calls for payment of income tax but VAT by the owner. ACIDI/VOCA deducts the income tax from the rent (deduction at source) and deposits into government account. Payments of VAT on the office rent remain unresolved. The MYAP awardees at the VAT Workshop held by USAID were advised that the awardees would not required to collect taxes on behalf of the government.

**C. Lessons Learned:** The low expenditure is impacted by spending delayed due to late approvals, internal accounting, reporting and disbursement request – all these are interdependent and interlinked as portrayed in the diagram below.



#### **d. Environmental Compliance and Monitoring**

##### **A. Overview**

Pursuant to the Regulation 216 Environmental Compliance the Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) of PROSHAR reviewed 15 set of program interventions, 9 activities were determined as Categorical Exclusion and 6 activities were determined as Negative with Condition. The potential environmental impacts cut across all strategic objectives of PROSHAR.

##### **B. Compliance to IEE Recommended Mitigation Measures**

Activities implemented in FY 2012 in compliance with the IEE recommended mitigation measures are reported in the Environmental Status Report (ESR) for FY 2012 submitted along with the FY 2013 PREP include:

- **Promoting Environmentally Sound Practices:** Program conducted training and workshop in agricultural technologies, indigenous poultry and goat rearing, basic aquaculture, post-harvest handling and processing, improved pit preparation, introduction of climate adaptable varieties (saline tolerant rice) and natural resources management.
- **Seed Preservation:** PROSHAR motivated farmers to follow indigenous method of seed preservation (rice and vegetable) and controlling pest attack that included use of herbs such as *Nim* leaf, *Bishkhali* leaf, *Mehogoni* fruit powder. In addition, the program provided containers for seed storage.
- **Integrated Pest Management (IPM):** As part of IPM farmers use organic manure to their homestead gardens to improve soil fertility, practice botanical pest control measures (plant based local products – ash, homemade fungicide). Farmers also use mechanical methods for pest control such as hand picking of insects, light trapping, etc.

- **Warehouse Fumigation:** Pesticides used for fumigation of commodities stored at the warehouses include Aluminum Phosphide, one of pesticides approved in the PERSUAP.
- **Safe Drinking Water and Hygienic Sanitation Facilities:** Based on environmental suitability and compliance of the community need for safe drinking water, program constructed pond sand filter (PSF). As part of the disaster preparedness, the program constructed environmental-friendly toilets addressing the need and the hygiene issue in the cyclone shelters.

## C. Findings/Observations

### C.1. USAID DCHA BEO Review of ESR

Amendment of the PROSHAR PERSUAP incorporating all the pesticides in use by the program, one of the four conditions<sup>25</sup> placed by the BEO on the approval of the FY 2012 ESR, is currently underway. The other three conditions include: measure for safe management of medical waste; provide information on water testing, sand filter management and effectiveness of arsenic mitigation techniques; and incorporation of indirect impacts of food distribution activities into Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP). Responses to these BEO conditions are led by the Environmental Specialist in coordination with the concerned program technical coordinators and team leaders.

**C.2. Environmental Checklists:** PROSHAR has developed the environmental checklists referred to in the IEE Monitoring and Evaluation discussion<sup>26</sup>. Finding #C.11 has detailed information on the use of the checklists. The checklists should contain specific questions to be answered by monitoring and appropriate indicators and require USAID Mission Environmental Officer review

**C.3. ACDI/VOCA Headquarters Support:** The Environmental Specialist from ACDI/VOCA headquarters has been scheduled to arrive Bangladesh in April 2013 for months to support PROSHAR environmental compliance efforts.

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<sup>25</sup> **Condition 1:** The PROSHAR PERSUAP approved by the BEO on August 23, 2011 must be amended to include all pesticides in use by the program that are not currently considered (i.e., Bordeaux mixture, neem, other botanicals, and rotenone). All activities using or promoting these pesticides must cease until the amended PERSUAP is approved by the USAID/Bangladesh MEO and DCHA BEO.

**Condition 2:** ACDI-VOCA must take reasonable measure to advocate for the safe management of medical wastes at the upzalia health complex.

**Condition 3:** As this is a priority issue for many areas of Bangladesh where FFP program operates the BEO kindly requests additional information on water testing carried out by PROSHAR, community sand filter management and the effectiveness of the arsenic mitigation techniques promoted by PROSHAR.

**Condition 4:** ACDI must consider potential indirect impacts of PROSHAR food distribution activities and incorporate feasible mitigation measures into the Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP) for these activities.

<sup>26</sup> **Ref. PROSHAR IEE:** "PROSHAR will use an environmental checklist for mitigation and monitoring measures that will be submitted for review by the MEO. The checklist will be provided to the project engineer to assess the situation." (Page 19) "To ensure effective monitoring and evaluation, the project's specialist will finalize environmental checklists and review procedures. The checklists will contain specific questions to be answered by monitoring and appropriate indicators." ( Page 20)

**C.4. Environmental Mitigation Plans:** New crops such as saline tolerant rice and FFW schemes such as multi-purpose community centers and schools, reinforcing embankments, raising homes and plinth levels, pond sand filters require Environmental Management Plans (EMPs). The EMPs are activity specific and useful to monitor both the implementation and effectiveness of the mitigation measures.

**C.5. Saline Tolerant Crops:** The physical (soil, air, water and vegetation) and social environments in and around the PROSHAR target Upazilas severely affected by saline climate caused by saline water intrusion and invitation. Promotion of saline tolerant crops, fruits and vegetable under the program aims at climate change adaptation. Most targeted famers reported cultivation of saline tolerant rice with seeds developed by the Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI).

**C.6. Raw Material Input for Handicrafts:** Non agricultural income earning activities in the three PROSHAR Upazilas cover tailoring, handicrafts, largely from bamboo, and the production of a local product, "karchupi" (specialized hand embroidery). Connected with the USAID study<sup>27</sup> finding the environmentalists raise issues on overharvesting of bamboo or depleting the bamboo stocks if used widely for handicrafts.

**C.7. Staffing:** Only one core staff, the Environmental Specialist position which is an upgrade of the Environmental Coordinator, is responsible for overall program environmental compliance activities. The Environmental Specialist is supported by the Disaster Risk Management (DRM) engineers overseeing the structural construction activities and the M&E Specialists monitoring the program performance and reporting. Yet the engineers provide routine technical backstopping for the DRM structural activities, there are no specialists available to assist in the biodiversity and endangered species protection. PROSHAR seeks assistance from external consultants and ACDI/VOCA home office when needed. It envisions hiring of engineers for overseeing the FFW<sup>28</sup> schemes scheduled in June 2013.

**C.8. Environmental Compliance Training and Manual:** The environmental review and compliance training provided to the technical coordinators and field staff of ACDI/VOCA, PCI and PNGO is found to be a basic grounding in mitigation, monitoring and reporting. There is no written manual containing the environmental compliance procedures, rules and regulations, and staff responsibilities in environmental compliance.

**C.9. Environmental Screening:** Interventions aimed at improving the health and hygiene conditions of targeted low-income and high disaster risk community are based on community priorities, engineering feasibility and environmental compliance. Initial screening of PSF sites under PROSHAR are based on community demand driven by the lack

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<sup>27</sup> While often referred to as one of the first items for development in off market production support, it is important to note that a Dec 2011 study found bamboo the least attractive among all value chain based assessments for potential development. This is apart from questions of supply that has also been raised. See Bangladesh Value Chain Selection and Rapid Analysis – A Road Map for Inclusive Growth for Non Food Value Chains, Study for Feed the Future, Washington USA

<sup>28</sup> FFW interventions include: Repairing and constructing multi-purpose community centers and schools that serve as flood and cyclone shelters; reinforcing embankments; raising homes and plinth levels; and construction of latrines, hand pumps, and pond sand filters above flood stage.

of suitable safe drinking water facilities and toilets sites are based on the need for environmental-friendly toilets in the existing disaster-cum-school shelters. Subsequent selection considerations included are the design specifications and environmental guidelines.

**C.10. Local Community Orientation, Ownership and Participation:** An intervention's success is measured by the impacts of mitigation, sound engineering design and quality construction while its sustainability is heavily dependent on the community ownership including maintenance. Community participation in selection of environmentally sound interventions is therefore key to the successful and sustainable mitigation measures that the program has invested in safe drinking water and hygienic sanitation facilities. There is a need for continued efforts to build capacity of community level implementing agents to understand the activity specific EMPs and how to monitoring implementation of the same.

**C.11. PROSHAR Partners' Institutional Development:** At the Upazila level PROSHAR and PNGO staff are jointly working in the environmental compliance assessments including implementation of mitigation measures suggested in the IEE. PNGO staff receive the environmental review and compliance training conducted by PROSHAR. All these provide opportunities in institutional development of the NGO partners.

**C.12. Mitigation and Monitoring:** Use of the checklist of mitigation measures against any identified environmental concerns in the structure construction activities by the Environmental Specialist with the help of the program engineers is found to be an effective tool. Regular and spot visits of the Environmental Specialist and Program M&E staff are found adequate in compliance monitoring to determine the effectiveness of mitigation measures but not effective in monitoring of the longer term environmental impact of PROSHAR interventions.

**C.13. Revised Livelihood Strategy:** The farmers field school in lieu of demonstration plots under the improved livelihoods (SO1) is a change in the approach while the technical aspect of interventions remain unchanged without affecting the potential impact issues, mitigation and monitoring referred to in the IEE.

## **IX Lessons Learned**

The MTR has identified a number of important lessons which are recorded below and can be fed back into the project formulation loop as well as an approach to project management:

**Project Implementation Delays:** While some valid explanations for the delayed start of the project have been provided (such as time taken to select PNGOs, time taken to complete baseline survey), it is also a reflection of the inexperience of both the lead organizations in functioning in the Bangladesh milieu that could be ascribed as a factor in those delays. Undertaking the task of project implementation faces issues that are characteristic to each country and the fact that neither ACIDI-VOCA nor PCI had had any operational role in the country prior to this project inevitably required a period of learning to operate in the country.

**Weak strategies defining project interventions:** Notwithstanding the project's classification of beneficiaries on sound well being analysis, the strategies propounded to address the issues were not well grounded and appeared to lapse into a classificatory and target approach of support to be provided to beneficiaries. Strategies need to take a slightly broader perspective before the specifics of the interventions are defined. Thus, for instance, the weight and importance of the fisheries and/or small ruminants subsector in the productive environment of the area and the farm population needed to be assessed before specific targets for support were established. This resulted in specifying support modules and targets to be achieved under the project that had a weak basis on reality and consequently require revisions.

**Flexibility:** Flexibility has been a positive factor in project design and implementation. However, the project has displayed both an element of flexibility and that of rigidity at the same time. The positive impact of flexibility was reflected when the project adopted lactating women with children under the age of 6 months to enlist in the program allowing it to expand coverage substantially. It was also reflected in the revision of the livelihood strategy as well as that of the disaster risk reduction strategy making the implementation of the components far more relevant and focused including revisions to the IPTTs. At the same time, the project has displayed an element of too much rigidity by specifying modules of activities for the very poor, the poor and the marginal farmer, making implementation difficult. Thus while land size holding and location (most vulnerable as opposed to less vulnerable) was used to classifying farmers into the ultra poor and the poor categories, the specific activity support modules were too rigidly fixed (as in the case of the fish ponds for the ultra poor).

**"Keeping it Simple":** The project is a three component intervention- two of which are target oriented and one that impacted on the community as a whole. However, detailed project interventions indicate that each component is composed of a number of different sub-components with different objectives and are in turn linked to a large number of discrete activities. The IPTT, as a consequence, is long and difficult to keep track of, consisting of indicators that are either difficult to measure or repetitive of other measures. This has led to multiple revisions of the IPTT with adjustments to the list of indicators from one version to the next making the tracking of project achievements difficult.

**Behavior change requires time and sustained support:** Changing entrenched social and cultural behavior in traditional societies does not fall easily into the time frame of project implementation. While some aspects, particularly those that can be directly linked to financial returns do change, such as adoption of specific practices in agriculture, others such as hygiene and maternity practices are far more resistant to change. Sustaining project achievements may require organizational arrangements that sustain well beyond project life.

**Institutional structures and the sustainable management of public goods.** Disaster risk reduction strategies require the creation of a public good whose management and maintenance is contingent on the development of institutional arrangements whose

importance such as community clinic management committees, cyclone shelter committees cannot be minimized. The association of ownership of the structures by society is the key to the success and impact of the public good and the eventual sustainability of the structures after the project.. Projects often pay lip service to the sustainability of the structures as evidenced from past involvement in the formation of hundreds of LADC/LADPs (Local Area Development Committee/Plan) developed in late 1990s/early 2000s through the erstwhile DMB (Disaster Management Bureau) which became dysfunctional due to lack of resources and disuse. Where the impact is collective there is no alternative but to undertake efforts in ensuring that the structures are well entrenched in the administrative framework so that there is an inflow of financial resources that is likely to keep it alive.

**Teamwork makes a difference:** The 2012 commodity call forward and shipment were challenged as the Title II Awardees had great difficulty securing from USDA a certificate of "fit for human consumption". **In the absence of USDA certification,** ACDI/VOCA along with CARE and SC, with the assistance of USAID, has been successful in negotiating for an alternative arrangement with the GoB for the Title II commodity imports. The GoB has relaxed its import policy because of the benefits Bangladesh enjoys from the Title II food aid. Collaborative effort that can lead to successes in the end although not easy should be encouraged.

## VIII. Recommendations

This section provides the recommendations of the findings of the Mid-Term Review of the PROSHAR project. They are organized in line with the Strategic Objectives that define the project including those related to program processes.

Given the circumstances in which the project is currently placed, the recommendations do not visualize any drastic change of approach. In fact, given that group formation is likely to come to a close by February 2014, the recommendations aim to ensure that the project is able to reach its established targets and to deepen the results achieved and is unlikely to require any modifications to the budgetary allocations

**Continuation of project direction.** Despite a troubled beginning that delayed field implementation by nearly 9 months, PROSHAR has made rapid progress<sup>29</sup>. Yet a lot needs to be done if it is to achieve its targets and create the impact that is anticipated. With project implementation time line at the halfway mark, a closer look at the options indicates that no major changes in strategy or direction is justifiable or warranted. A project that focuses so much on behavioral change to address the specific problem of nutrition of pregnant women and children and is complemented by measures that address the dual onslaught of extreme poverty and the effect of recurring disasters is likely to require a longer time horizon than the actual effective support of the components for two to three years over a five year horizon. Small adjustments in program implementation have been outlined below that would deepen the gains and not lose the successes achieved.

The recommendations propose a number of studies that provide a better justification and scope of the interventions and changes in operational modality that will improve the efficiency of project interventions. The essential objective would be to ensure the sustainable impact of the interventions.

### **S.O. 1 Income and access to food of poor and ultra poor households improved.**

#### **Priority Recommendations**

- **Change parameters of off farm non agricultural support.** Geographical limits of operation to only highly vulnerable areas and size of groups to 25/group for support for off farm production have become a constraint for expansion of the subsector. To facilitate support for the sector in general and reach targets in particular, support for off farm production should be permitted in both the highly vulnerable and less vulnerable areas. At the same time, the requirements for group formation support should be changed from 20 beneficiaries/group to 10/group to allow the number of targeted groups to be formed. This would overcome the restrictive constraint of area based operation restrictions limiting project impact while preserving its other objectives of support to the poor and ultra poor.

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<sup>29</sup> Part of the reason for the delay was that the project could not start until the base line survey was completed.

- **Action:** Operational decision to permit support in both highly vulnerable and less vulnerable areas and reorganizing SO 1 field personnel for appropriate coverage (if needed).
- **Responsibility:** ACDI-VOCA/PROSHAR Management for decision and Livelihood Coordinator of each partner NGOs (CODEC, Shushilan and Muslim Aid for implementation).
- **Time Line:** Decision- immediate; operation- remaining period of project life. Since the activity is not seasonal as in agriculture, changing the operational modality implies immediate implementation.
- **Cost:** No additional costs are foreseen. All three partner NGO have the same administrative structure with the subsectoral Technical Officers under the coordination of the Livelihood Coordinator.
- **Support for fish ponds should be provided to the ultra poor irrespective of the size of their ponds (but within their classification).** The current restriction for homestead fishery by the ultra poor in ponds is below 5 decimals. As long as the beneficiary meets the category of being in the ultra poor, that restriction should be lifted.
  - **Action:** Operational decision to support pond fish cultivation within the 10 decimal category of very poor beneficiaries.
  - **Responsibility:** ACDI-VOCA and PROSHAR management for decision and three partner NGOs for implementation.
  - **Time Line:** Decision: Immediate; Operation: remaining period of project life.
  - **Cost:** No additional costs are foreseen. All three partner NGOs have the same administrative structure with the subsectoral Technical Officers responsible for implementation under the coordination of the Livelihood Coordinator.
- **Study to identify the constraints and advise on measures for greater gender balance in livelihood activities.** A study to investigate the constraints to achieving greater gender balance in livelihood activities is required. It should investigate all the livelihood activities particularly in the area of crop agriculture.
  - **Action:** Develop TOR and recruit consultant to suggest specific measures to ensure greater gender balance in interventions including identifying IPTT parameters for measurement.
  - **Responsibility:** ACDI-VOCA and PROSHAR management with participation of livelihood coordinator of partner NGOs.

- **Time Line:** *The study should commence over the next two months and is likely to require a period of one month.*
- **Cost:** *Costs of the study are likely to be approximately USD 20,000*
- **Other Recommendations**
- *The existing classification between the ultra poor (below 10 decimals) and the poor (10-50 decimals) in terms of land holding is too broad. The economic status of a farmer holding 10 decimals is unlikely to be drastically different from one holding 15-20 decimals. However, with a holding of 15-20 decimals, a farmer has the potential not only to attain his own food security but also generate a surplus. A study based on the size distribution of holdings to arrive at a judicious decision on the cut off between the ultra poor and the poor would facilitate a greater participation from beneficiaries.*
  - **Action:** *Preparation of TOR and recruitment of consultant to propose a revised classification of beneficiaries in the specific context of the situation in the three Upazilas.*
  - **Responsibility:** *PROSHAR/ACDI-VOCA management with cooperation of Livelihood Coordinator of all three implementing partner NGOs.*
  - **Time Line:** *The study would require a period of one month and should be completed by end May of 2013 so that it would still allow time for supporting the activities over a two year period.*
  - **Cost:** *Costs of the study are likely to be approximately USD 20,000*

## **SO 2: Health of pregnant and lactating women and children under 5 (with particular attention to children under 2) improved.**

### **Primary Recommendations**

- **Continue to emphasize the communication strategy by adopting additional channels covering the whole community.** The objective would be to stimulate demand for services for example, the information of the availability of health services at the community clinics helps to generate a demand on the community clinics or for a pregnant woman on the importance of ANC services for her unborn son increases the demand for those services might be useful to solicit supports from the community as a whole.
  - **Action:** Use additional channels of communications with a wider dispersion, such as wall painting, bill boards containing PROSHAR program messages and organizing folk songs and theatre involving local folk groups.

- **Responsibility:** PCI and PNGOs
- **Time Line:** Start immediately and should continue for the remaining project period.
- **Cost:** *No cost implication.* These activities are already included in PROSHAR action plan.
- **Create positive competition among beneficiaries for healthy behavior for sustainable change at household and community level.**
  - **Action:** Review and improve the existing action plan to include recognizing and celebrating 180+ days of participation at mothers group level on a monthly basis, recognizing care groups trios and change makers excellence in performance and ratifying family adoption of optimal IYCF practices
  - **Responsibility:** PCI and PNGOs
  - **Time Line:** Start immediately and should continue for the remaining project period
  - **Costs:** No cost implications. Adjustments within existing allocations.
- **Establish and promote a club of mothers group graduates.**
  - **Action:** Holding mothers alumni meeting every few months or holding mothers corner in the annual breastfeeding day or other similar day celebrations where the role model mothers would be awarded and are allowed to speak on what they have done to improve the health and nutritional status of their children.
  - **Responsibility:** PCI and PNGOs
  - **Time Line:** Start immediately and should continue for the remaining project period
  - **Costs:** No cost implications. Adjustments within existing allocations
- **Use SO platform for greater dissemination of messages.** In addition to the provision of messages in FFS, utilize the farmer field days as another forum for delivering messages.

**Action:** In addition to the provision of messages in FFS, utilize the farmer field days as another forum for delivering messages.

**Responsibility:** ACIDI/VOCA, PCI and PNGOs

**Time Line:** Should start during the SO1 and SO2 beneficiary integration process

**Costs:** No additional costs involved.

## Other Recommendations

- **Facilitate the refresher training for MoHFW basic health staff for quality service delivery.** Also, facilitate organizing training for doctors and paramedics of MoHFW, NGOs and other providers
  - **Action:** (i) Facilitate developing a joint action plan among PROSHAR, MoHFW, NGOs and other health care providers to organize refresher course at certain interval, may be half yearly.
  - Facilitate joint planning and coordination between public and private sector stakeholders to maximize health service coverage in limited resource conditions. For example, coordinating with local NGOs providing ANC services helps to improve coverage significantly without additional human resources.
  - **Responsibility:** ACDI/VOCA, PCI
  - **Time Line:** PROSHAR should build on their already established relations with MoHFW from now.
  - **Costs:** Explore prospects of securing MoHFW resources may be mobilized.

## SO 3: Institutions & Households prepared to respond effectively to shocks

- **Ensure effectiveness of training**
  - **Action:** Given the significantly large amount of training still to be provided during the remaining period of the project, ensure that the quality of trainings is not compromised in the desire to meet training targets.
  - **Responsibility:** PCI and partner NGOs
  - **Time Line:** Over the remaining project period
  - **Costs:** No additional costs. Budgetary allocations exist to cover training costs.
- **Mechanism to provide sustainability to ward level CBDMVG**
  - **Action:** Explore with Government possible alternatives of converting the ward level volunteer group into a community based organization after PROSHAR with the possibility of its integration if and when the Government's plan to establish a national corps of volunteers at the ward level is formed.
  - **Responsibility:** PCI with support from partner NGOs.
  - **Time Line:** Remaining period of project life.

- **Costs:** No additional costs foreseen.

## Process Management

### • Commodity management:

- **Actions:** Expedite the distribution of the present stock of RUTF so that the commodity is fully utilized within the shelf life. Otherwise explore alternative sources for use of the stock.
- Undertake drills or simulations in order to test the effectiveness of the preparedness and distribution systems and have staff ready to respond in real emergency situations.
- **Responsibility:** PROSHAR Management coordinate with PCI and partner NGOs on scheduling the utilization of remaining RUTF stock within the period of shelf life.
- PROSHAR management coordinates with PNGOs and transporters for simulation exercise.

### • Knowledge Management

- **Action:** PROSHAR should define its knowledge management strategy indicating the internal learning, cross-organization and cross-program learning and incentive provision and assigning a focal point person for knowledge management.
- **Responsibility:** PROSHAR management.

### • Human Resource Management

- **Actions:**
  - **Staff Recruitment and Retention:** All agencies involved should include "Back-up Plan" to meet the need during the transition from staff turnover to recruitment, such as, local internship program to capture potential staff to cover the workload in a cheaper way.
  - **Staff Reorganization:** PROSHAR shall review the effectiveness of reorganization and make adjustments to address gaps in human resources if deemed necessary.
  - **PROSHAR Team Retreat:** PROSHAR should follow up retreat recommendations<sup>30</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> List of Retreat Recommendations: 1) Support and track Task Force Teams; 2) With respect to the Staff Development Initiative, explore alternative activities that have impact and low cost; 3) Incorporate

- **Holiday Schedule:** PROSHAR should review the holiday schedule issue and change the schedule to coincide with the GoB schedule if it is not against the USAID policy or the ACDI/VOCA Global policy.
- **Responsibility:** PROSHAR management
- **Environmental Compliance**
  - **Actions**
    - Prepare the **environmental checklists** and review procedures referred to in the IEE for effective monitoring and evaluation.
    - Develop **Environmental Management Plans (EMP)** for new crops such as saline tolerant rice and structural mitigation measures such as road rehabilitation activities through FFW to monitor both the implementation and effectiveness of the mitigation measures and train community level implementing agents to build their capacity to understand the activity specific EMPs and monitor implementation of these EMPs. Program shall conduct regular reviews of EMP implementation and engage the sector coordinator with support from the Environmental Specialist and the PNGO environmental point person.
    - Identify **potential direct and indirect environmental impacts of use of bamboo as raw materials for handicrafts** and incorporates feasible mitigation measures into the Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP).
    - Create a **pool of experienced staff** to effectively manage the environmental compliance and monitoring activities. PROSHAR shall consider hiring of staff experienced in biodiversity and conservation<sup>31</sup>.
    - Develop an **Environmental Compliance Procedures and Training Manual** containing the environmental compliance procedures, rules and regulations, and staff responsibilities for quick access and perform well in environmental compliance and monitoring. For example, the Environmental Training Facilitator's Manual which is found to very useful resource in environmental compliance and monitoring.
    - Orient and motivate the **local community capacity building, participation and ownership** in the selection of environmentally sound schemes and their maintenance upon completion. Training shall cover the capacity building of

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the new team values in performance expectations; 4) Ensure effective and regular team meetings that include ongoing attention to team building; and 5) Creating a positive team culture.

<sup>31</sup> **List of Retreat Recommendations:** 1) Support and track Task Force Teams; 2) With respect to the Staff Development Initiative, explore alternative activities that have impact and low cost; 3) Incorporate the new team values in performance expectations; 4) Ensure effective and regular team meetings that include ongoing attention to team building; and 5) Creating a positive team culture.

the community level implementing agents to understand the activity specific EMPs and how to monitor implementation of the same.

- Develop a **formal mechanism for institutional development of PROSHAR NGO partners** in environmental compliance and monitoring through capacity building and continued use of the knowledge and skills gained in PROSHAR IEE implementation.
- **Responsibility:** PROSHAR management in partnership with PNGOs.

# Annexes

## **Annex a. Review Scope of Work (SOW)\***

\*please note page numbers in the SOW are those of the original SOW copy.

## Annex b. Review Plan and Schedule

FIELD SCHEDULE			
Team Splits	Team 1	Team 2	Team leader
Jan 10 (10.30 am- 1.00 pm)	KII with Upazilla Agricultural Officer	KII with RMO (In absence of UHFPO)	KII with UNO, Batiaghata
	KII with Upazilla Livestock Officer	KII with Upazilla Fisheries Officer	KII with PIO, Batiaghata
	Batiaghata	Batiaghata	
Jan 10 (1.00 – 2.00 pm)	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
Jan 10 (2.00 – 3.30 pm)	<b>Village-2:</b> FGD with female beneficiaries – on-farm at Katianangla, Gangarampur Union	<b>Village-2:</b> FGD with male beneficiaries – on-farm at Katianangla, Gangarampur Union	KII with PM- Shushilan;
			KII with Upazilla Livelihood Coordinator- Shushilan;
			KII with Upazilla Health & Nutrition Coordinator- Shushilan;
Jan 10 (3.30- 5.00 pm)	<b>Village-2:</b> FGD with female beneficiaries – off-farm at Katianangla, Gangarampur Union		KII wit Upazilla DRM Coordinator-Shushilan
Jan-11	Meet with PROSHAR staffs, review records; Visit Khulna warehouse		
Jan 12 (9.30- 11.00 am)	<b>Village-1:</b> FGD with husband of vulnerable Pregnant & Lactating mothers at Gaoghara, Surkhali Union	<b>Village-3:</b> FGD with female representatives of households who are engaged with CBDMVG at Katianangla, Gangarampur Union	KII with UP chairman of Gangarampur Union; KII with Chairperson of Community Clinic Management Committee at Gangarampur Union
Jan 12 (11.00 am - 1.00 pm)	<b>Village-1:</b> FGD with vulnerable Pregnant & Lactating mothers at Gaoghara, Surkhali Union	<b>Village-3:</b> FGD with male representatives of households who are engaged with CBDMVG at Katianangla, Gangarampur Union	KII with CSS staff(RHC-Manager), Amirpur

Jan 12 (1.00- 2.00 pm)	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
Jan 12 (2.00- 3.30 pm)	<b>Village-1:</b> FGD with non-vulnerable Pregnant & Lactating mothers at Gaoghara, Surkhali Union	<b>Village-3:</b> FGD with cyclone shelter management committee at Katianangla, Gongarampur Union	Review relevant records/documents at Shushilan-PROSHAR office
Jan 12 (3.30- 5.00 pm)	<b>Village-1:</b> FGD with Trios (Father leaders / mother leaders /Grandmother leaders) at Gaoghara, Surkhali Union	Travel to Shushilan-PROSHAR office, Batiaghata and review records & documents	

### Muslim Aid - PROSHAR, Lohagara, Narial

Date	Team 1	Team 2	Team leader
13.01.13 - 10:30am- 5pm	<b>KII with:</b>	<b>KII with:</b>	<b>KII with:</b>
	a. Dr. Md. Shahidul Islam, Upazilla Health and Family planning officer (UH&FPO).	a. Begum Rebeka Khan, Upazilla Nibahi Officer (UNO).	a. Md.Asaduzzaman, PM
	b. Mr. Raghu Nath Kor, Upazilla Agriculture Officer.	b. Syed Md. Azim Uddin, PIO	b. Md. Inayetullah UC-Livelihood.
	c. Md. Alomgir Rashid, Field monitoring officer, IFDC	c. Dr. Md. Mostain Billah, Upazilla Livestock Officer	c. Mollik Zaman, UC-Livelihood.
	d. Hosnera Happy, Upazilla Fishery officer.	Ware house review	d. Md. Moktarul Alam, UC- Health and nutrition.
	e. Hamimur Rahman, Clinic manager, Jatio Tarun Shangha (JTS)		e. Mukul Kumar Kundu, UC- Health and nutrition.
		f. Md. Shariful islam, UC- DRM	
		Review records	

<b>A Community Development Centre (CODEC), PROSHAR Project, Sarankhola, Bagerhat</b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Team 1</b>	<b>Team 2</b>	<b>Team leader</b>
15/01/2013	Arrive at Sarankhola at 5.00 PM		
	Team meeting at 5.00-6.00 PM with Project Manager, Livelihoods Coordinator, Health & Nutrition Coordinator and DRR coordinator		
16/01/2013	<b>Village-1: Rajoir, Union: Khontakata</b>	<b>Village-2: Khada, Union: Rayenda</b>	<b>KII interview</b> at union level:
	FGD-1 (Moddya Rajoir)	FGD-1 (Khada, house of Abu Jamader).	Md. Shahjahan Dulal, Chairman Dhansagor Union parishad-10.00-11.00AM
	Time: 10.00 AM-11.30 AM	Time: 10.00AM-11.30 AM	Md. Sagir Hossain, Chairman Choumohona Community Clinic,
	FGD-2 (Moddya Rajoir)	FGD-2 (Purbo Khada house of Sobahan Gazi)	Khontakata
	Time: 11.40 AM-1.10 PM	Time: 11.45 AM-1.15 PM)	Time: (11.45-12.30 PM)
	FGD-3 (Rajoir Govt. Primary School)	FGD-3 (Shudhir Golder house)	<b>KII interview</b> at upazila level:
	Time: 2.00 PM-3.30 PM	Time: 2.15 PM-3.15 PM	Shahidul Islam, Upazila Fisheries Officer (01.00-01.30 PM)
			Lunch-
			Shumitro Sarker, Upazila Agriculture Officer (2.30-3.45 PM)
FGD-4 (Paschim Rajoir)	FGD-4 (Purbo Khda, house of Parimal Mistry)	Pronob K Raha, Representative of CPP (4.00-4.45 PM)	
Time: 3.45 PM-5.15 PM	Time: 3.30 PM-4.30 PM		

17/01/2013	<b>Village-3: Dhansagor union</b>	<b>KII interview at upazila level:</b>	<b>KII with union level</b>
	<b>FGD-1</b> -Dhansagor union Parishad	Nasiruddin, Project Implementation Officer (10.00-10.45 AM)	Ahammad Hossain, Member, Dhansagor union parishad (10.00-11.00)
	Time: 10-11.00AM	Bokhtiare Hossain, Upazila Livestock Officer (11.00-11.45 AM)	Abdul Haque, President Khontakata Community Clinic (11.00-12.00)
	FGD-2-Dhansagor Union Parishad	K M Mamun Uzzaman, Upazila Nirbahi Officer (12.00-1.00)	Dr. Binoy K Biswas, UHFPO, Sarankhola (12.00-01.00)
	Time: 11.15-12.15PM	<b>Village-3: Dhansagor union</b>	
	<b>KII with:</b>	FGD-3 (Dhansagor Ward-5, Amragachia house of Abdul Mazid).	
	Rafiqul Islam, Field Coordinator, World Fish Centre, Feed the Future partner of USAID (2.00-3.00)	Time: 2.30-4.30 PM	
KII with CODEC staff (3.00-5.00)			
Jan 18 (Friday) – <b>Team Reunited</b>	Return to Khulna (5 hours) (Teams 1 and 2)		
Jan-19	AM: Debrief presentation by 10.00 AM- 12 Noon. PM Travel to Khulna for return to Dhaka.		

## Annex c. Composition of the Team

### Summary Profiles

**Iqbal Sobhan** is an ex-World Bank and ex-FAO Investment Centre economist, currently based in Rome, with over 30 years of experience in a wide range of nationally and externally funded development activities covering over 35 countries in Africa, Asia (**including Bangladesh**) and Central Asia, and the Caribbean. His work has catered to the requirements of a wide range of agencies including FAO, World Bank, IFAD, WFP, UNDP, African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, Commodity Development Fund, EU, USAID and the Italian Aid agency. He is a very experienced project analyst, formulator, monitor and appraisal expert and has led many missions in the field. His specific expertise has been in the design, appraisal, monitoring and evaluation of poverty alleviation, food security and rural development specifically in South Asia (India, Pakistan, **Bangladesh**, Nepal). In addition to the formulation of such programs, his involvement in WFP programs has provided him with the perspective of bringing together elements covering the promotion of sustainable livelihood strategies, improved health and nutrition using the Preventing Malnutrition in Children under 2 years of age (PM2A) approach and enhanced community ability to respond to vulnerabilities and shocks. His expertise also covers institutional strengthening, change and review. Iqbal is a founding Director of **MONEVAL SOLUTIONS**.

Iqbal holds a Masters Degree in Econometrics (with Distinction), a Masters Degree Economics and an Honours Degree in Economics (with Distinction).

**Rezaul Karim** has spent a major a major part of his professional life with the Institute of Nutrition and Food Sciences at the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh, from which he finally retired as Professor of Nutrition Planning and Director of the Institute. Though trained as an agricultural economist, Rezaul branched off into nutrition planning and nutrition monitoring and evaluation providing a mixture of both teaching and practical planning of nutrition projects. His practical experience as a consultant covers a range of organizations including World Bank, Asian Development Bank, UNDP, UNICEF, FAO, IFPRI, USAID, USDA, DANIDA and BBS. He has served as consultant in numerous assignments including Project Preparation Mission, Integrated Nutrition Project for Plan Bangladesh, Plan Bangladesh and Plan Netherlands, 2003; Member, Review Mission, Bangladesh Integrated Nutrition Project (BINP) and Bangladesh National Nutrition Project (NNP), Government of Bangladesh and World Bank, 2001; Visiting Faculty, Regional Training Program on Food and Nutrition Planning and Management, College of Human Ecology, University of Philippines and Bangladesh Institute of Research and Training on Applied Nutrition, 2001; Team Leader, Project Preparation Team, Bangladesh National Nutrition Project (NNP), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Bangladesh and World Bank, 1999-2000; Visiting Faculty, International Training Program on Nutrition Project Monitoring and Evaluation, International Food and Nutrition Centre, School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University, Massachusetts, USA, 1999; Task Manager, Project Preparation Team, Reducing Child Malnutrition in Eight Asian Countries, Bangladesh Chapter, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Bangladesh, Asian Development Bank and UNICEF, 1997-98.

Rezaul is currently working on a short term assignment as Team Leader for the annual PROSHAR survey for ACIDI/VOCA. His involvement in the mid-term review would therefore provide a positive value added and continuity to the whole exercise.

**Muhammad Taher**, a Bangladeshi national studied English literature at Dhaka University (M.A.), before starting his career in a rural development program in the early 1980s. In 1985-86, he went to the Netherlands to do his MA in Development Studies at the Institute of Social Studies (ISS, now under Rotterdam University). Taher became the Country Director of an international NGO, Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG, now renamed Practical Action). An independent research and evaluation consultant, Muhammad Taher specializes mainly in design and appraisal of programs and policies on livelihoods development, food security, Climate Change Adaptation and reduction of Disaster risks among others. Besides participatory project reviews and evaluations, he undertakes assessment of organizational capacity of different public and private sector institutions and advises on successful implementation of program and projects. Taher has worked for WFP, EU/ECHO and DFID on large Disaster Management, food security and livelihood development programs with specific socio-economic and policy perspectives. The areas of his special interest include: Agricultural and rural development, Institutional development, NGOs, social exclusion, and gender equality; His most recent specific involvement in assessing disaster management has been in the Evaluation of humanitarian response by the **EU's DG-ECHO**. In addition, he has been involved in the evaluation of the major disaster management program in the country CDMP as well as with other more focused disaster risk management for WFP, DFID and CARE.

**Dr. Golam Kabir**, Program Design and Evaluation Specialist has over 37 years of experience in program design, management, evaluation and research on food security improvement and disaster management programs in and outside of Bangladesh. Mr. Kabir served as the Senior Food Aid Manager and Principal Advisor to the USAID-Bangladesh program for about 29 years in different positions as Food Aid Project Development Specialist, USAID Mission Disaster Management Specialist, and U.S Mission Alternate Disaster Relief Officer. Mr. Kabir has also served under short- and long-term contracts as: Evaluation Consultant with USAID/Bangladesh, CARE/Bangladesh, Fintrac Inc., and Catholic Relief Services, Malawi; Grants and Contracts Management Trainer with CARE and Save the Children; Program Design Consultant with Save the Children, International Relief and **Development, and Land O'Lakes; Program Advisor to Save the Children and ACIDI/VOCA.** Mr. Kabir's thematic expertise includes livelihoods development, gender equity and empowerment, coalition building, microfinance creation, and disaster preparedness and mitigation. Mr. Kabir has a BSc-Honors and a MSc in Statistics from the University of Dhaka.

**Dr. S M Younus Ali**, a Bangladeshi Educated and trained as a Medical Doctor (MD) with Masters in Primary Health Care Management (MPHM). Have over twenty five years of practical experience in planning, managing and implementing health, food security and nutrition, water and sanitation sector programs in Bangladesh and abroad. Area of expertise includes Primary Health Care, Child Health including Newborn Health and IMCI,

Community-based IMCI including Community Case Management (CCM) for ARI, Diarrhea & Malnutrition, Maternal and Reproductive Health including Adolescent Health, Family Planning, Nutrition including IYCN and Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) in light with CTC protocol, RTI/STD and HIV/AIDS, Mycobacterial Disease (TB & Leprosy) Control and other components of Essential Services Package (ESP) working with national and international NGOs, UN organizations and donor organization, such as BRAC, Save the Children – USA, WaterAid and USAID. Also, managed and implemented integrated programs which included livelihood, disaster preparedness and response and health components. Having long experience in coordinating and collaborating with the GOB, donors, national and international organizations for implementing health, population and nutrition programs in rural and urban communities. Experienced in Grants Management through working as a Project Management Specialist of United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Worked as short and medium term consultants for the Government, UN, International and National NGOs in Bangladesh and abroad. Experienced in providing Technical Assistance (TA) supports to outside country programs, particularly in the area of community-based maternal, child health and nutrition components.

**Ms Laila Arzu Mand Banu**, a Bangladeshi national, specializes in Gender and Development issues encompassing social audit, training, policy development and evaluation services. She has a M.A. in Sociology following a B.A. Honors also in Sociology. Her work has included women in development, policy lobbying on women and gender issues, networking at local, national and international levels, community development and organizational development and research monitoring and evaluation. After a period of long term employment between as Gender specialist with Winrock and PRIP, she worked for a number of UN agencies, bilateral donors, and consulting firms. These included the ILO (WEDE project), UNICEF (BRAC), CODEC (Gender equity through awareness raising of women), DFID, Helen Keller (Gender Evaluation of Homestead food production supported by OXFAM) Maxwell Stamp (Gender and PRA Specialist for project design in Northern areas of the country).

### **Home Office – Backstopping**

**Paul Schoen** – Paul is an economist with over 22 years of international experience in development projects (Africa, Asia (including missions for USAID), Pacific (PNG), Eastern Europe and the Balkans and Latin America and Indian Ocean). He is a highly experienced monitoring and evaluation specialist and combines this with socio-economic analysis, project identification, project-preparation and appraisal. Missions, studies and other economic advisory work have been undertaken for the EC, Tacis, Phare, UNDP, DFID (British Government), IFC (World Bank) and Dutch Aid-Senter. Sectorial areas have included small island state economics and vulnerability analysis, financing coastal zone strategies, livelihood development reviews, gender and empowerment and agricultural and livelihoods development, but also increasingly in other sectors such as health, education and financial systems analysis and institutions.

## Annex d. Review Methods and tools

The review was undertaken across two principal dimensions. The first was on the effort that nutrition and health interventions have had on a targeted category of beneficiaries: pregnant and lactating women and children under 2 years of age. The second and equally important aspect was to assess the effort to improve and increase incomes as a means towards improving food security. While efficiency, effectiveness and impact etc remained foremost in the evaluation, the effect or impact that grouping or packaging the instruments had was also explored. An additional focus was the extent to which the project has succeeded in bolstering the capacities and abilities of institutions and households to respond effectively to shocks and emergencies. The evaluation addressed the questions identified in the TOR reflecting the different categories listed above.

The starting point for the evaluation was the results of **quantitative annual survey** which had just been completed. The focus of this mid-term review was the **application of qualitative assessments to the quantitative data** to deepen the knowledge acquired through the annual survey. The annual survey tool was developed to capture the information required to produce measurable results for those outcome indicators identified in the Indicator Performance Tracking Table (IPTT) and Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) that is not available through project records.

The methodology adopted for the evaluation used three complementary methods: (i) analysis of available documentation; (ii) interviewing of stakeholders, and (iii) undertaking visits to areas where the projects are being implemented. These three methods served to triangulate information gathered.

A most critical part of the method was the focus group discussion meetings with a range of beneficiaries covering all possible participating categories. A total of 31 such FGD meetings were held covering both the highly vulnerable and less vulnerable areas. The participants were purposefully chosen to provide a picture of the actions being implemented to provide a form of validation of the quantitative survey. No quantitative effort was made to tabulate results by topical questions given the purposeful nature of the respondents and the very small size of sample ranging from 8 to 12 members per FGD. However, depending on the nature of the activity of the group questions attempted to answer the whys of their actions. The list of sites visited for the FGDs are given in Annex e and FGD guideline and questions are attached.

**Documents Analysis.** An extensive analysis of documents was complemented by a participatory approach of discussions with all stake holders, experts, implementors, community leaders, beneficiaries and partners with the goal of answering the questions that have been outlined in the TOR. This included project documents, specific strategy documents, annual project reports, reports on project activities, and relevant national policy documents. The documents analysis was complemented by reviewing relevant documents produced by partners, such as CARE SHOUHARDO program and others where possible. The documentation study was undertaken on the basis of responses to the evaluation questions.

**Interviewing stakeholders:** Interviews with stakeholders covered four different groups of stakeholders:

- **The project final beneficiaries** which composed of three categories (representatives from the ultra poor and most vulnerable, the poor and vulnerable and small holder or marginal farmer on the edge of survival) for obtaining information on effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.
- **Decision makers** including ACDI/VOCA and USAID/Bangladesh, local government officials and elected representatives and officials of the Government of Bangladesh for gathering opinions on the relevance and the coherence of the project.
- **Implementing** (PCI, CODEC, Shushilan, and Muslim Aid) **and technical partners** (CPP, Centre for Environmental and Geographic Information Services, CEGIS, Department of Community Integrated Management of Childhood Illness, C-IMCI, Ministry of Health) for assembling information on connectedness effectiveness & sustainability issues,
- **Project managers and staff** for getting opinions on operational issues (efficiency and coverage).

**Field Visits to Project Areas.** Field visits constituted a critical part of the evaluation. They provided crucial 'grass roots' evidence of the impact achieved thus far by the PROSHAR project and included discussions with the field implementers of the projects and the beneficiaries. This provided an important dimension to assess how appropriate and relevant the projects have been. Field visits focused on visiting all three vulnerable categories of beneficiaries: ultra poor, poor and marginal farmers in both the very vulnerable and less vulnerable areas. The evaluation tried to assess whether project strategies are equally relevant or dependent on the overall vulnerability of the community. It also tried to assess whether grouping the interventions had a bearing on the efficiency and impact of the interventions.

**Multi Criteria and Cross Checking Analysis.** Data collection tools included document study, interviews and visual examination through field visits. It included crosschecking It used the process of triangulating, matching and comparing information collected from different sources (from documents, from interviews and/or from stakeholders) in order to confirm its validity. The main object of crosschecking was to spot contradictions between information sources. A further analysis of the degree of reliability of these information sources was to validate the most objective conclusion. In this context, the MTR used baseline data of PROSHAR and where possible from any other source.

## **PROSHAR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDELINES**

**FGD GROUP:** Focus Group discussions aim to complement the quantitative findings and answer the whys and hows of project performance and document the lessons learned. Subjectively they are likely to cover more or less the same grounds as the quantitative survey, however the objective is to get a qualitative essence that provide a greater foundation and a validation to the quantitative assessment undertaken through a survey. The focus group will be a small group of 8-12 people who will be nurtured through discussions in an open, spontaneous yet structured format. The objective is to generate as many different ideas and opinions in the time allotted and to gather more in depth information on certain issues. The ideal amount of time set aside for a focus group varies from 90 to 120 minutes and the questions are aimed at both Proshar/partner NGO staff beneficiaries.

**Participant Selection:** Selection of participants will be undertaken by project implementation partners on the basis of:

- **Gender** – women and men in separate groups including fathers and grandmothers in case of SO2 activities;
- **Activities** (and Areas) - (i) separated by those related to SO 1, SO 2, and SO 3, and (ii) joint activities covering the implementation of more than one strategic objectives

### **Discussion Format:**

- Introduction explaining purpose of discussion
- Discussion to follow a structured pattern of questions focusing on the:
  - appropriateness of the intervention
  - relevance of the intervention
  - provisional effects of the intervention

### Begin with an Engagement Question:

What is the most serious problem faced by you? Can you rank the problems from the severest to the mildest?

Subsequent questions need to be formulated in a direct manner that is easily understandable by the farming population with responses that require an explanation and can generate a discussion among participants.

Provisional list of subsequent questions will follow the pattern of interventions. They will be supplemented by questions enlisted under the section of key evaluation questions listed in

Annex 1- Study Methodology.

**Questions on: SO 1 - Income and access to food of poor and ultra poor households improved**

**Agricultural productivity increase and diversification**

- what are the most critical constraints faced by farmers;
- do farmers feel that they have they been addressed by the project;
- what main agriculture and natural resources constraints were not addressed by the project?
- what are the main opportunities addressed by the project e.g. increasing volume of production , increasing volume of sales, improving the quality of produce, building business expertise, etc.?
- have there been any improved agricultural technologies promoted by the project to address those constraints or that have considered those constraints (e.g. – climate resilient technologies, seeds, etc.)
- have they been widely adopted by project participants;
- what technology has worked really well, improved their income directly and should be continued for target households?
- What technologies have not improved incomes and should be discontinued?
- what technologies require adaptation to improve adoption and outcome?
- will farmers be able to continue project promoted technologies after their participation with PROSHAR ends?
- if not what could improve their sustainability;

**Market Access and Linkages**

- Is there a market for the products or services produced by the project? Is it easily accessible ?
- Did the project support improving market access? In what way? How successful have these activities been (in terms of increasing income/profits)? How likely are they to remain after the end of the project? What suggestions would you give to improve it further?
- What forms of market linkages were established?
- If farmer groups have been established, have they been able to develop relationships with the private sector (producer, buyers, suppliers, retailers etc.)? What kind of relationship?
- How can they be made more sustainable;
- what has been the major effects of the rehabilitation of rural roads;

**Non agricultural opportunities**

- has there been an increase in non-agricultural opportunities in the community over the past few years that are not attributable to the project;

- has the project promoted any non agricultural income generating activities? Has there been a demand for and uptake of those activities?
- have the promoted income generating activities been appropriate for the geographic area and vulnerability of households (both producers and buyers)?
- what could improve the income earning capacities of the new activities;

### **Questions on SO 2: Health of PLW and Children**

- What does the beneficiary population perceive are problems faced by PLW2A ?
- Are the different activities promoted under PM2A relevant to their needs?
- Do beneficiaries see some activities as being more effective and why? What new knowledge have been translated into new practices and changed behavior?
- How has the different care groups performed? Is there a need to modify the some of them? How?
- Are the program eligibility and graduation criteria appropriate to the objectives of the program? If there is need for modification, how should they be modified?
- Has new knowledge translated into new practices and recommended behavior?
- Are there clear linkages and coordination with public and private health, nutrition and social services in the community?
- Does the community understand clearly the range of services offered by the project and their eligibility requirement?
- How successful has the activity been in increasing access to government preventative and curative health and related social services?

### **Questions on SO 3: Institutions and households prepared to respond effectively to shocks**

- Has this community been affected by any rapid on-set natural disaster in the last 30 years?
- If so, what was the impact of this disaster on poor and ultrapoor households?
- Has anything been done by the government or any other institution since this disaster to reduce the impact of future disasters? If so, could you describe?
- Is the community affected by recurring disasters? If so, what are the key recurring disasters that community members face?
- Are informants aware whether PROSHAR has implemented any project activities to improve disaster preparedness and risk reduction in the community? If so, what are they?

- Have any of these activities improved knowledge of disaster preparedness and response? If so, in what way (who has become more knowledgeable; what skills have been learned; what participants are doing with this knowledge and skill)
- Is there any evidence to indicate improved community preparedness for response to and recovery from disasters as a result of PROSHAR activities?
- Has the community adopted any specific measures that further the cause of disaster preparedness?
- How are plans, training, activities, being undertaken under PROSHAR in support of disaster preparedness and risk reduction, linked to any government activities in Disaster Management?

### **Presentation of Results from FGD**

The responses from the FGD discussions was used so that a commonality can be drawn within each group.

## **Annex e. List of Sites Visited**

### **Batiaghata Upazila, Khulna**

- Gangarampur Union Parishad Complex
- Community Clinics at Gangarampur & Devitala
- CSS staff (RHC-Manager), Amirpur
- Village Katianangla, Gangarampur Union,
- Village Gaoghara, Surkhali Union
- Village Sachibunia, Jalma Union
- Village Tolapara, Amirpur Union
- Katianangla, Gangarampur Union
- Khulna Warehouse

### **Lohagarah Upazila, Narail**

- Lohagarah Upazila Complex
- Upazila Health and Family Planning Office
- Clinic of Jatio Tarun Shangha (JTS)
- Upazilla Livestock Office
- Community Clinic, Digholia
- Digholia Union Parishad
- Village Chacoi in Joypur Union
- Village Kumardanga, Itna Union
- Food Distribution Site at Lohagara
- Warehouse at Lohagara

### **Sarankhola Upazila**

- Sarankhola Upzila Complex
- Dhansagor Union parishad
- Community Clinic at Khontakata
- Village Moddya & Pashchim Rajoir, Khontakata Union
- Rajoir Govt. Primary School,
- Rayenda Union
- Village Khada & Purbo Khada, Rayenda Union
- Dhansagor Union
- Village Amragachia, Dhansagor (Ward-5),
- Dhansagor Union Parishad Food Distribution program

## Annex f. List of Key Informants and Communities Visited

### A. List of Key Informants Visited

DATE	Agency	Name of Person	Position, Place
<b>MEETINGS IN DHAKA</b>			
06 January	PROSHAR	Marie Anne Cadrin	Chief of Party
07 January	PROSHAR	Dr. Md. Sohel Rana	Director, Program (H&N and DRR)
07 January	PROSHAR	Nazbul H Khan	Director, Economic Growth
07 January	PROSHAR	SM Mainul Islam	Coordinator, Economic Growth
07 January	PROSHAR	SK Mamun Ur Rashid	Program Specialist
07 January	PROSHAR	Md. Mahbubur Rahman	Director, Food & Logistics
07 January	CPP	Abdul Ahad	Director, Cyclone Preparedness Program (CPP)
07 January	PROSHAR	CHOWDHURY SABBIR HASAN	Government Liaison & Resource Commodity Specialist
07 January	CPP	Bashir Ahmed	Deputy Director, CPP
07 January	CEGIS	Dr. Ahmadul Hassan	Director R&D and Training
07 January	GOB	Dr. Altaf Hossain	Program Manager, IMCI/MOH&FA
08 January	USAID	Ms. Shahnaz Zakaria	Deputy Director, Office of Food Disaster & Humanitarian Assistance & AOR
08 January	USAID	Mr. Tofayel Alam	Program Specialist, FDHA Office
08 January	USAID	Ms. Farheen Khurram	Senior M&E Specialist
08 January	USAID	Mr. Jeff DeGraffen, PhD	Program Officer
08 January	PROSHAR	Mr. Nesar Uddin Sayeed	Director Finance and Grants
08 January	PROSHAR	Ms. Angelina Das	Director Human Resources
08 January	CARE	Mr. Monzu Morshed	Deputy Chief of Party SHOUHARDO II Program

08 January	CARE	Mr. AKM Abdul Wadud	Coordinator-M&E SHOUHARDO II Program
09 January	USAID	Mr. David Yanggen	Deputy director Economic Growth Office
09 January	Save the Children	Nazmul Kalam (Discussions over phone)	Manager - Commodity & MIS, Nobo Jibon
09 January	GOB	Mohammad Tasharuf Hossain Farazi	Deputy Chief, MDMR
09 January	GOB	Ms. Naima Begum	Deputy Assistant Chief, MDMR
09 January	GOB	Md. Tofazzal Hossain	Director, Movement Storage & Silo, Directorate General of Food
<b>MEETINGS IN JESSORE</b>			
09 January	AAPI	Bimal Krishna Sikder,	Field Coordinator, Accelerating Agricultural Productivity Improvement
09 January	AAPI	Abu Jafar M. Nur Nabi	Field Coordinator, AAPI
<b>MEETINGS IN KHULNA DIVISION</b>			
BATIAGHATA			
10 January	GOB	Shanti Moni Chakma	UNO, Batiaghata, Khulna
10 January	Union Parishad	Abdul Ghani Bain	Chairman, Gangarampur Union Parishad
10 January	Upazila Parishad	Nitai Ghai	Vice Chairman, Upazila Parishad
10 January	GOB	Bashona Akhtar	Upazila Livestock Officer, Batiaghata
10 January	GOB	Md. Moshir Rahman	Upazila Fisheries Officer, Batiaghata
10 January	GOB	Mr. Buddhadev Sen	Upazila Agriculture Officer
10 January	GOB	Mr. S.M. Mizan Mahmud	Upazila Agr. Exten Officer
11 January	PROSHAR	Md. Firoz Akhter Azad	M&E Specialist
12 January	Union	Abdul Ghani Biswas	Chairman, Gangarampur Union
12 January	Union	Samaresh Chandra	Member, Ward No. 2

12 January	Union Parishad	Kakul Krishna Shaha	Union Secretary
12 January	Shushilon	Benzair Shah	M&E Officer
12 January	CHSC	Moinmoy Malik	Ward Member, Debitala Community Clinic
13 January	GOB	(Ms.) Rebeke Khan	UNO, Lohagarah Upazila, Narial
13 January	GOB	Dr. Md. Shahidul Islam	UH & FPO
13 January	GOB	Md. Alamgir Rashid	Field Monitoring Office, IFDC
13 January	GOB	Mr. Raghunath Kar	Agriculture Officer, Lohagarah Upazila
13 January	GOB	Syed Md. Asimuddin	PIO, Lohagorah Upazila, Narail
13 January	GOB	Ms. Hosneara Happy	Upazila Fisheries Officer
13 January		Md. Hamimur Rahman	Jatiya Tarun Sangstha, Lohagarah
13 January	GOB	Dr. Md. Mostain Billah	Upazila Livestock Officer
13 January	Muslim Aid	Mahedur Rahman	Program Manager, Dhaka
13 January	Muslim Aid	Md. Asaduzzaman	Program Manager
13 January	Muslim Aid	Md. Enayetullah	Upazila Coordinator, Livelihood
13 January	Muslim Aid	Mollik Zaman	Upazila Coordinator, Livelihood
13 January	Muslim Aid	Md. Mokraul Alam	Upazila Coordinator, Health & Nutrition
13 January	Muslim Aid	Mukul Kumar Kundu	Upazila Coordinator, Health & Nutrition
13 January	Muslim Aid	Md. Shariful Islam	Upazila DRM Coordinator
13 January	Muslim Aid	Mainul Hoque Sarker	Finance Officer
13 January	Muslim Aid	Mohammed Jahangir Hossain	M&E Officer
13 January	Muslim Aid	Kafi Md. Abdur Rahman Al-Karim	Admin & Logistics Officer
14 January	GOB	S.M. Rahman	Luthia Community Clinic Liason Officer
14 January		Mahmuda Sultana	Com. Health Care Provider, Digholia
14 January	CCMC	Sheikh Firoz Alam	President, Luthia Community Clinic Committee
14 January	CCMC	Dr. Younus Ali	Vice President
14 January	PROSHAR	Md. Delwar Hossain	Food & Logistics Coordinator, Lohagara
15 January	UP	Md. Imtiaz Ahmed Masum	Chairman, Dighalia Union Parishad
15 January	UP	Amal Krishna Ghosh	Member, UDMC
15 January	UP	Chanchal Kumar Das	Union Secretary

15 January	UP	Amal Krishna Ghosh	Member, Dighalia UP
15 January	CODEC	Ahmed Hossain	PM
15 January	CODEC	Md. Yunus	Health & Nutrition Coordinator
15 January	CODEC	Md. Shahuzzaman	DRM Coordinator
15 January	CODEC	Abdul Quader	Livelihood Coordinator
15 January	CODEC	Jasimuddin Ahmed	M&E Coordinator
15 January	CODEC	F.M. Manzur Rahman	Finance Officer
15 January	CODEC	Ashok Kumar Das	Economic Growth Coordinator
15 January	CODEC	Md. Shamim Biswas	Admin & Logistics Officer
SARANKHOLA			
16 January	UP	Md. Shahjahan Dulal	Chairman Dhansagar Union Parishad
16 January	UP	Md. Sagir Hossain	Chairman, Shoumohona Community Clinic, Khontakata
16 January	GOB	Khandaker Shahidur Rahman	Upazila Fisheries Officer, Sarankhola
16 January	GOB	Shoumitra Sarker	Upazila Agriculture Officer
16 January	GOB	Pronab Kumar Raha	Representative, CPP
16 January	GOB	Sagir Hossain	Chairman, Management Committee, Choumohana Community Clinic
16 January	GOB	Musharraf Hossain Boyati	Community Clinic, Khontakata
16 January	GOB	Russel Mir	Community Health Worker
16 January	Union Parishad	Ali Ahmed	Member, Ward No. 9
17 January	GOB	KM Mamun Uzzaman	UNO, Sarankhola
17 January	UP	Ahammad Hossain	Member, UP, Dhansagar
17 January	GOB	Md. Nasiruddin	Project Implementation Officer
17 January	GOB	Bakhtiar Hossain	Upazila Livestock Officer
17 January	WFC	Rafiqul Islam	Field Coordinator, World Fish Centre
17 January		Abdul Hogue	President, Community Clinic
17 January	UHFPO	Binoy K. Biswas	UHFPO, Sarankhola
17 January	CODEC	S.M. Rafiqul Islam	Field Coordinator, Feed the Future Project, Bagerhat
17 January	GOB	Mr. Nasiruddin	Project Implementation Officer, Sarankhola Upazila
17 January	GOB	Mr. Jalil Ahmed	Veterinary Assistant, Sarankhola Upazila
23 January	PROSHAR	Abu Noor Elias (Discussions over phone)	Environmental Specialist, Khulna
18 February	PROSHAR	Ms. Treena L. Bishop	Senior Director, Operations

## B. List of FGDs Conducted

<b>D a t e</b>	<b>Name of Person</b>	<b>Position/Place</b>
10 January	2 FGDs female – on farm	Katianangala, Gangarampur Union
	2 FGDs male – on farm	Katianangala, Gangarampur Union
	2 FGD female – off farm	Katianangala, Gangarampur Union
	FGD female CBDMVG	Katianangala, Gangarampur Union
	FGD female PML	Gaoghara, Surkhali Union
	FGD male CBDMVG	Katianangala, Gangarampur Union
	FGD female PLM – less vulnerable	Gaoghara, Surkhali Union
	FGD – Cyclone shelter Management Committee	Katianangala, Gangarampur Union
	FGD – TRIOS Care Group together	Gaoghara, Surkhali Union
14 January	FGD – Less Vulnerable PLM	Chacoi, Joypur Union
	FGD – Vulnerable PLM	Chacoi, Joypur Union
	FGD = Fathers Care Group	Chacoi, Joypur Union
	FGD – TRIOS Grp together	Chacoi, Joypur Union
	FGD – male off farm group	Kumardanga, Itna Union
	FGD – Female off farm Group	Kumardanga, Itna Union
	FGD – Male on farm	Kumardanga, Itna Union
	FGD – Female on farm	Kumardanga, Itna Union
15 January	FGD – CBDMVG female	Itna Union
	FGD – CBDMVG male	Itna Union
16 January	FGD - off farm less vulnerable	Moddya Rajoir
	FGD – off farm vulnerable	Moddya Rajoir
	FGD – fathers group	Rajoir Govet Primary School
	FGD – TRIOS Grp	Paschim Rajoir
	FGD – on farm female	Khada
	FGD – on farm male	Purbo Khada
	FGD – off farm female	Khada
	FGD – on farm male	Purbo Khada
17 January	FGD - CBDMVG female	Dhansagor Union Parishad
	FGD - CBDMVG male	Dhansagor Union Parishad
	FGD – UDMC	Dhansagor Ward 5, Amragachia

## **Annex g. Updated IPTT**











## Annex h. Summary Tables on Finance, Commodities and Human Resources

### PROSHAR Food Aid Commodity Overview (Tables 1-5)

**Table 1: LOA Commodity Summary (MT)**

	<b>Direct Distribution</b>	<b>Monetization</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Comments</b>
MYAP Approval	14,860.000	97,370	112,230.00	
FY 2010 - FY 2012 Receipt	4,110.465	46,730	50,840.46	
<b>Percentage of MYAP approval received through FY 2012</b>	<b>27.66%</b>	<b>47.99%</b>	<b>45.30%</b>	

**Table 2: Year-wise Direct Distribution Commodity Received**

<b>FY</b>	<b>Wheat</b>	<b>Veg. Oil</b>	<b>Lentils</b>	<b>Total</b>
FY 10	560.046	19.973	127.800	707.819
FY 11	912.065	80.023	189.150	1,181.238
FY 12	1,500.000	115.008	606.400	2,221.408
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,972.111</b>	<b>215.004</b>	<b>923.350</b>	<b>4,110.465</b>

**Table 3: Year-wise Monetization Commodity Received (MT)**

<b>FY</b>	<b>Wheat (SWW)</b>	<b>Veg. Oil</b>	<b>Lentils</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>MT</b>	<b>MT</b>	<b>MT</b>	<b>MT</b>
FY 2010	18,560.000	-	-	18,560.000
FY 2011	13,220.000	-	-	13,220.000
FY 2012	14,950.000	-	-	14,950.000
<b>Total</b>	<b>46,730.000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>46,730.000</b>

**Table 4: Commodity Loss Summary (MT)**

	FY 2010		FY 2011		FY 2012		FY2010 – FY2012	
	DD	MTZ	DD	MTZ	DD	MTZ	DD	MTZ
Marine Loss	0.0010	0	3.7747	0	0.0575	0	3.8332	0
In country Loss	0.0000	0	0.1254	0	0.1074	0	0.2327	0
Total Loss	0.0010	0	3.9001	0	0.1649	0	4.0660	0
<b>Percent Lost</b>	<b>0.000001</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00033</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00001</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00010</b>	<b>0</b>

**Table 5: Monetization Cost Recovery (USD)**

FY	Monetized (MT)	Commodity	Cost & Freight (\$/MT)	Sale Price (\$/MT)	Cost Recovery (%)
FY-2010	18,560	SWW	299.05	\$248	82.87%
FY-2011	13,220	SWW	361.43	\$300	82.87%
FY-2012	14,950	SWW	389.36	\$323	82.88%
<b>Average (Weighted Average by Volume)</b>	<b>46,730</b>	-	<b>345.59</b>	<b>286.71</b>	<b>82.96%</b>

## HUMAN RESOURCES STATUS (PROSHAR & PARTNER NGOs)

### PROSHAR Number of Staff – As of December 31, 2012

Organizations	Total No of Staff Approved	Staff Filled-in			Vacant	Comment
		Male	Female	Total		
<b>ACDI/VOCA</b>	61	52	6	58	3	Vacant positions include M&E Director, Gender Specialist and Field Office Assistant
<b>PCI</b>	38	26 (70%)	11 (30%) <sup>32</sup>	37	1	Vacant position is Documentation Coordinator
<b>PNGOs</b>						
<b>CODEC</b>	59	37	22	59	0	
<b>Muslin Aid</b>	109	70	39	109	0	
<b>Shushilon</b>	70	44	26	70	0	
<b>Total: PNGOs<sup>33</sup></b>	238	151	87	238	0	
<b>Total- PROSHAR</b>	337	229	104	333	4	

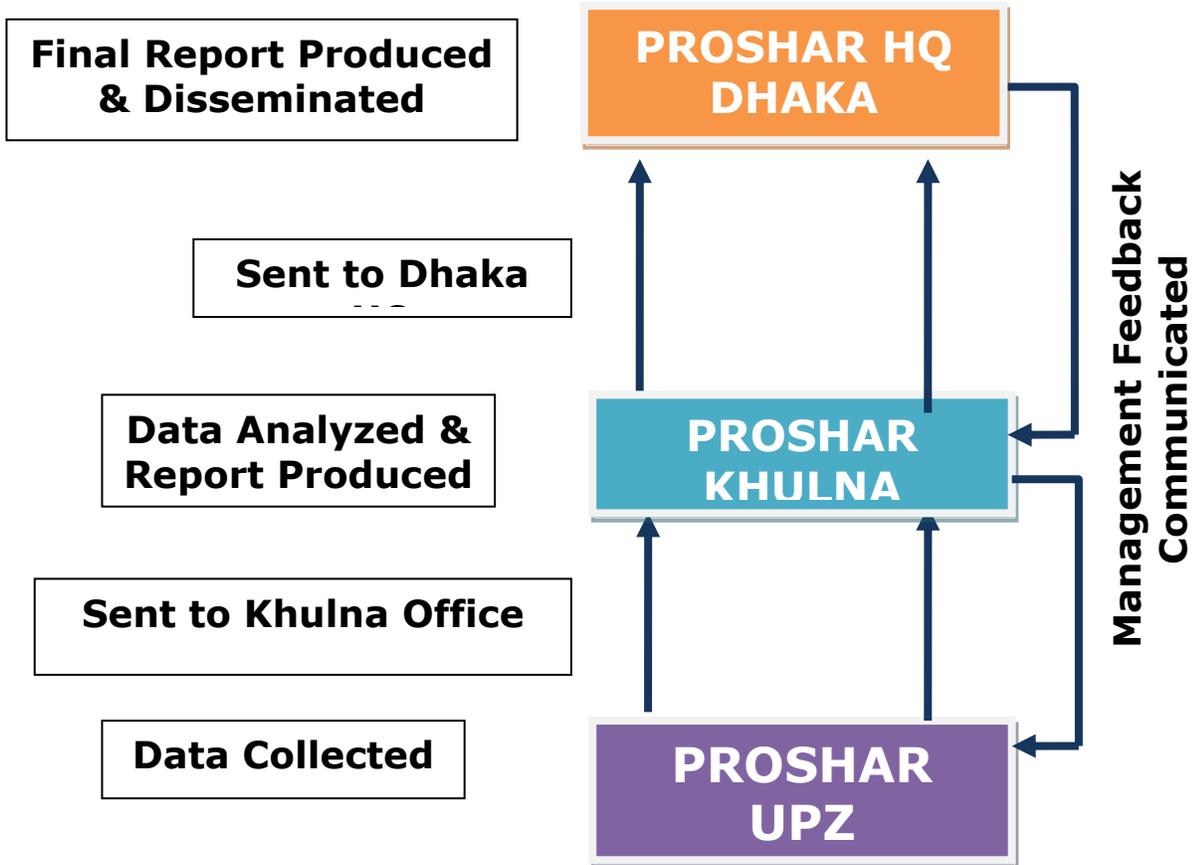
### Status of Overall Program Expenditures as of September 2012 (USD)

	Monetization Proceeds	202e	ITSH	Cost Share	Total
<b>Original LOA Approved (\$)</b>	23,632,025	6,850,000	2,807,840	-	33,289,865
<b>Revised LOA Approved (\$)</b>	24,904,099	7,824,302	2,995,545	-	35,723,946
<b>Budget Spent as of September 2012</b>	4,643,034	3,572,636	575,279	-	8,790,949
<b>% of Current LOA Budget Spent</b>	18.6%	45.7%	19.2%	-	24.6%
<b>Current PNGO Budget</b>	4,845,000	470,000	-	-	5,315,000
<b>Budget Spent as of September 2012</b>	1,697,883	-	-	-	1,697,883
<b>% of Exp. by PNGOs of PNGO Budget</b>	35.0%	-	-	-	32.0%

<sup>32</sup> PCI reported 30% of the staff are female.

<sup>33</sup> Number of direct staff only; There are 22 shared staff working for PROSHAR.

## OVERVIEW OF PROSHAR M&E DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS & REPORTING



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## **Annex j. Summary FGD Reports**

### **Male On-Farm Group 1 & 2 Agriculture and Fisheries**

#### **Katianangla Village, Gangarampur Union, Batiaghata, Khulna. 10 January 2013**

The 12 participants in the FGD were from two groups, Group No. 1 and 2 of Katianangla. The main problems of the area, according to them were, water crisis during the lean season (1); followed by lack of access to land (2), lack of income (3), low agricultural productivity (4), and lack of access to adequate food and nutrition.

Lack of access to good quality seed was considered as one of the critical constraints related to income and access to food, they said. The high price of fertiliser, problem of marketing and high input costs was the other problems that affected their livelihood.

They were grateful and happy that a number of these critical constraints were addressed by PROSHAR now. They explained this by narrating how they have learned to systematically cultivate land, sow seeds, use appropriate doses of fertiliser and process the crops etc. Only three out of 20 members of the group got Demo support and only those who had roadside lands. Many more of them wished to have similar demo support inside the village. They thought **it was possible to have 'demonstration effect' even if a demo plot was selected inside the village.**

Most members of the group (17) received training on agricultural technologies like seed preservation, modern paddy cultivation methods and fish culture etc. However, what they did not receive, but thought should have been included in the project assistance, was Irrigation support. Specific problems of the poorest of the poor were also not addressed by **the project, according to them. They were all 'poor' yet had some land besides homestead land. But there poorer people in the village and group who's problems were not truly addressed.**

Most of the opportunities addressed by the project, like increased production, increased volume of sales, quality of the produce and enhanced business expertise – were well taken by the group and they felt much more confident now than before. As a result, they said their income level had definitely increased, but so had the cost of inputs. The cost of hired labour had also increased phenomenally. The daily wage of an agricultural labour was reportedly as high as Tk.350 per day compared to Tk.200 a year before. The situation was exacerbated by a recent fall in the price of paddy in the local market which came down to as low as Tk. 600 a maund compared to Tk. 800-900 before.

The group was unanimous in saying that the learning they had received from the project on different technologies and methods of cultivation were going to stay long after the project had ended. However, they would request for refresher training to keep them up-to-date with different knowledge and opportunities. They requested the MTR team to make a

suggestion with regard to food and cash allowances. Instead of having special meals during the training days (which they thought cost Tk.350 per person/day), they would be happy to receive a cash allowance (of say, Tk.200 per day) and accept a standard meal costing less than Tk.100.

On government support to them, the members said that for a lone Deputy Assistant Agricultural Officer in a Union, it was not possible to help all the people of that area.

The marketing support received by the group was thought to be useful, but it was a difficult area of assistance. Although, they try to pull together (bulking) the produce in order to bargain a higher price, the brokers (*koyali*) and middlemen in the market always succeed in **cheating the farmers from receiving a fair price. They didn't know how to stop the "Koyali"s** from tricking them with weight of the produce. Yet, they thought training on marketing both for purchasing input and selling their produce was useful. They did not think that they received any assistance from Proshar so far to directly link them with the market. Apparently, there were a few attempts, but it did not work.

The group maintained a resolution book which recorded attendance in their monthly meetings and the topics of their discussion in those in a summary form. However, there was **no evidence of any "decisions" adopted in those meetings. The books mainly recorded the names of attendees and agenda for discussion**

When asked if they had any questions to the MTR, some of the members wished that PROSHAR had supported them with investment funds as well.

### **FGD REPORT – PROSHAR MTR**

#### **Women's Group No.3 – SO1: Off-Farm Non-Agricultural Opportunities**

##### **Katianangla village, Gangarampur Union, Batiaghata, Khulna. 10 January 2013**

This was a younger group with only about 4 months of their existence. The group was organized and supported by the partner NGO, Shushilan.

In terms of general problem in the area, the group listed them in the following order 1 being the most acute: 1) poverty, 2) lack of access to land, 3) lack of education of children, 4) **limited income of the household/husband, and 5) lack of women's power in the society.**

**"Before the project came in the area, we did not have any marketable or income earning skills".** PROSHAR training on tailoring was useful in showing them a new avenue of income. About 25 women were trained though, only 10 had sewing machines. Fifteen out 25 trained women had either borrowed or used machines of others - when those were sitting idle.

An organisation called Adorn/Adore? gave them a 5 days training on sewing and design which was very useful. They were all enthusiastically working to earn an income and have

been receiving orders from the garments shops in Khulna city. However, since many of them did not have machines of their own, not enough work/income could be generated.

**Meanwhile, Shushilan was reportedly trying to get them a “show room”** in the local market to enable them sell their products. They thought there was a lot of demand for dresses and embroidery work in Khulna and they could take advantage of that factor.

About the quality of training, the women were happy that those had covered many useful learning points on garment design and dress making. However, they thought the five days training to them was not sufficient. According to them, it should have been longer and covered block and batik as well. Because, those were in great demand in the local market, they were told.

When asked what other non-farm activities they could possibly engage themselves in, their reply was “Cit Kapor” (business of fabrics). Only due to lack of funds, they could not go into that business. “Can’t PROSHAR lend us some capital funds”, they asked. When the question was returned by asking why couldn’t they borrow funds from the micro-credit organisations working in their own areas? One woman said yes, but the interest rate charged for loans was far too high for them.

**FGD NOTES - OFF FARM, KUMARDANGA MEN’S GROUP: 14 Jan 2013**

**FGD with 12 members of 25 Kumardanga Utpadan Dal, Itna Union, Lohagora Upazila, Narail district.**

Produce mainly Bamboo products.

About 7/8 months old. They all know how they became members of the group. There was a survey to select extreme poor, poor and middle poor. This group belonged to the extreme poor who had upto 10 decimal of land and earned Tk. 5,000 or less per month. This very poor group belonging to Hindu Mohanti community had bamboo work as their traditional vocation. **Even when they have no work, they don’t go out to any other work like day labour** at construction site, rickshaw pulling etc. for a livelihood – not even agricultural labour (which was known to be in high demand in the area though - Tk.300 per day). The reason **for not going for those work (“we are not skilled in those work”), was unclear and did not sound very convincing!**

**PROSHAR gave them a 7 days training on “Bamboo work” at their house through a hired technical expert.** After receiving the training their skill was upgrading further. They have learned a few additional items to make. But still none of them were developed as a Master Trainer, they added.

Some of them have taken small sized loans from other NGOs like BRAC, ASHA etc. though (maximum allowed to them is Tk.10,000 a year each), they did not sound interested in those. Because, the interest rates were considered very high and their inability repay through regular instalments.

PROSHAR has taught them the skill of marketing their produce collectively. They have practised bulk selling of their commodities through the local whole-seller from the community. This had fetched a slightly better price for them compared to the past. But they did not sound like this had given them any significant mark-up in their profits. The wholesalers are interested in large bulk of produce. After the training the quality of their products had improved and thus demand has also increased. They were now contacting outside whole sellers who would come and collect their products. PROSHAR had helped develop linkages between producers and outside whole sellers.

They wanted to further add that their products had demand throughout the year though, in some seasons they could not produce enough due to lack of funds. For example after the harvest season, people's ability to buy products increase, but they often cannot meet the demands as their stock gets depleted.

***FGD NOTES – OFF FARM WOMEN GROUP, KUMARDANGA, ITNA UNION: 14 Jan 2013***

Formed in May 2010 with producers of Bamboo products

They said that after receiving the training by the Technical Trainer of PROSHAR (5 days + 3 days + 3 days) their skill was upgraded than before and in addition they had learned to produce a few more new items. Gender division of labour at household level seemed to be strong and worked in favour of men only. Women would be engaged in their production activities after finishing their house hold works, but husbands/brothers never helped their **wives/sisters in women's work**. Women had double burden as always – this was in their tradition, they said. The exception would be frowned upon, not appreciated in their community. The group was supported by male staff of Proshar. There was no female staff for SO1 component in this area. The group said that they appreciated training on gender awareness. But change in reality according to the expectations by training would take a long time to materialise.

The resolution books recorded decisions taken during the fortnightly meetings. This shows that women have been made aware of many other social and health issues, e.g., nutrition, mother and child health care, home-stead gardening, poultry rearing etc. These activities were happening because a woman staff had recently joined to supervise SO2 activities.

This group had also expressed their need for increased investment funds. They thought by increased level of funds they could scale up their business and make increased profit. Although, they have access to NGO micro-credit, they are reluctant to borrow much from them as they were unsure about their ability to repay the loans!! This seems to reflect their lack of confidence in the enhanced entrepreneurial ability that they claim to have attained.

***FGD NOTES – ON FARM WOMEN GROUP, KUMARDANGA, ITNA UNION: 14 Jan 2013***

***FGD with 10 members out of 25 Kumardanga Utpadan Dal-10, Itna Union, Lohagora Upazila, Norail district.***

As per their opinion membership criteria are:

Hardcore poor and Poor:

1. a. No homestead land
- 1. b. Lives in other's land**
1. c. Owner of below 10 decimal lands
2. Marginal farmer

The group was formed with poor and extreme poor. This was a flood prone area – they were affected three times by floods previous year. Most people lived in the area were share-croppers. Peasants cannot make much profit these days because, according to them, the costs of inputs had up significantly in recent times.

Proshar has trained the women in horticultural production (homestead gardening) for two days, one day livestock (both husband & wife) and two days fish rearing (both husband & wife). The training was conducted by Govt. Agriculture officer. There has been a gender division of agricultural vocation; women were engaged in poultry and livestock rearing together with homestead gardening (non-commercial), their male counterparts were engaged in the production of field crops (mainly paddy cultivation).

Although, women claimed a higher status now than before (a situation created by their active participation in production activities) – they did not seem to have much control over the household income. Decision making approach to income and expenditure did not seem to have been changed much. It was also not clear if the Proshar/Muslim Aid staff ever emphasised on this point at all. One would not be very surprised **if they didn't as there has** not been any female staff supporting awareness development of these groups.

They did not receive any business training at all. In this particular area women do not go to the market generally. They sell their products through their husband and son. Linkage with market and private sector agencies still seemed not so strong. After Proshar intervention they had acquired knowledge on seed preservation techniques. They heard and knew about the SO 2 and SO 3 activities. They have learned about how to preserve nutritional qualities of food by appropriately processing and cooking food. On the question of empowerment, women did not yet feel that their situation had been changed much. However, they agreed that their mobility had been gradually increasing after intervention of PROSHAR. The family now treated men and women more equally, they claimed.

**FGD NOTES – ON-FARM MEN GROUP NO.8, KUMARDANGA, ITNA UNION: 14 Jan 2013**

**FGD with 8 members out of 25 Kumardanga Utpadan Dal-8, Itna Union, Lohagora Upazila, Norail district.**

The modern agricultural practice that they have adopted has attracted lots of other people in the area, who came to them and learn the details. Many of them had also wished to become members of the group, but selection criteria and PROSHAR plans do not allow an expansion of groups.

It seemed incredible that the farmers had learned so much about HYV cultivation of paddy and vegetable by basically a one day's training. But it was later transpired that the regular hands on training and advice were given to the groups by the Muslim Aid/Proshar staff.

The group worked as informal club of poor people had not yet developed an institutional status to be recognised as an entity by the local authorities.

Although, some Upazila and union level government agencies knew about these groups as Proshar auxiliaries. Linkage with private sector organisations remained very weak, if not non-existent.

**FGD NOTES- COMMUNITY BASED DISASTER MANAGEMENT VOLUNTEERS GROUP (CBDMVG) WOMEN GROUP: 15 Jan 2013**

Noagram, Dighalia Union, Lohagarah, Narail

Formed in January 2012, the Volunteers group was still in its formative stage.

They meet once every 3 months to discuss various disaster preparedness issues. The objective of the group is to address disaster related problems of the Ward and to inform concerned people about specific problems of disasters

The role of the volunteers, as stated by the members of the group, is to raise awareness of the community through organising essay competition and quiz tests in the school on Disaster management, organize discussion meetings on disaster management at mosques and temples.

It seemed that people (men-women) are made aware of the basic needs to cope with sudden on-set and chronic disasters. To what extent did that make people attain an increased level of resilience was not very clear. The group claimed that they were better informed and better prepared for disasters now than before. The positive differences that **the programme made was, as they put it, "we did not have a chance to discuss DRM issues before, because we had limited knowledge on the subject. Now we get a chance to discuss the issues in detail in the meetings"**. It further transpired that the process of CRA and producing RRAPs had made an impression on them as well, by which they had prioritised

their problems and actions needed to be undertaken urgently. They had observed the International Day for Disaster mitigation on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2012 by participating in a rally and discussion meetings. These meetings held in mosques and temples for raising public awareness were very useful to the people.

**FGD NOTES- WOMEN'S ON-FARM, "BELI DAL", PURBA KHADA, RAYENDA UNION, SARANKHOLA, BAGERHAT 16 Jan 2013**

Besides poverty, lack of income and employment for the poor, the crisis of drinking water was highlighted as one of the key problems of the area. Over the past few years, the area has also suffered a number of natural calamities like cyclone Sidr in 2007 accompanied by a tidal surge. It devastated them completely as all their belongings were washed off within minutes including lives of many people and domestic animals.

They needed support to rebuild and rehabilitate. Currently they need access to irrigation facility, power-tillers, fertiliser and seeds to raise income. The high quality seed received from PROSHAR/CODEC was very useful. The 2 days training received on seed preservation techniques was very useful.

With support from PROSHAR, they have established linkages with the wholesalers and relevant government officers at Sarankhola Upazilla. But no mentionable private sector linkage seems to have been established yet.

After all, the small volume of agricultural products produced by these women have not been able to create a substantial influence on the market. Hence, market linkage with private sector actors is still to get a significant boost. As at the Union level, there has not been many responsible government staff available, some of the groups have tried to establish direct links with relevant officers at Upazilla, but did not meet with expected results. However, an Upazilla Agriculture Officer had come to give a class on disaster management during the training organized by Proshar.

Technologies related to new rice seed varieties, vegetable cultivation and new farming practices were very attractive to them. They were also happy to have received cattle-fattening technology. The participants of FGD were aware of the climate change issues and thought that they were learning to adapt with the change. Some of the above technologies were actually addressing the issue, they were told.

They thought although the market linkage issue was discussed with them by Proshar staff, it was still not a very real issue to them. Because, they thought that the little extra that they produced got sold without much problem.

In terms of linkage with the government authorities, they only got to see a couple of Upazila officers came down to give talks on Disaster Management training organized by Proshar. So, linkage between the government departments and the communities is still very limited.

Will the benefits received from the programme continue? The women thought the knowledge and experience that they had gained from the programme on agriculture and new technologies will last for a long time. But in order to make their learning useful, they would need investment capital to scale up their business. Could they not borrow from the MFIs? No, they were afraid of MFI funds: "how would we pay back the instalments?" This seems to raise the question on their level of profit and their lack of confidence on their business.

**FGD NOTES – OFF-FARM WOMEN’S HASNAHENA GROUP, PURBA KHADA,: 16 Jan 2013**

Formed in February/ March 2012, this group of women were engaged in tailoring work and in the production of bamboo made products for household and agricultural use. As key problems of the area, this group of women has also noted, lack of drinking water, lack of land, money and sanitary latrines. The women thought that although there are responsible government officers to address these problems, they do not assist those who need them most. NGOs apparently are more helpful in this respect.

What were you trained in? They said they had received five days training on tailoring and 3 days on business. Did they notice any change in the local business profile or change in the market pattern in the area over the past ten years? The women found it difficult to answer. When the issue was put to them again in simpler terms, the women appeared nonchalant. 3 of the members have also received training on Leadership, besides rearing of livestock. They could now vaccinate their own poultry birds and livestock animals. This had also influenced the neighbours who often came to learn from them the methods and techniques.

The training support the members of the group have received on different agricultural and livestock development has been helpful. However, they continue to need more support in these areas. "We want to learn more about new ideas and new techniques." They ask for more such trainings. When asked to specify, they said, "we need training on tailoring, bamboo work, livestock rearing etc."

On developing linkages with market, these women thought it was not so easy for them yet. Before selling a product they ask around about the current market price (use mobile phone for the purpose) and sell that at the best price possible.

**FGD WITH PURBA KHADA OFF FARM MALE GROUP, RAYENDA UNION, SARANKHOLA: 16 Jan 2013**

FGD conducted with 8 men who were part of a 25 member group that has 17 women in it. They were mainly agricultural labourers who do not get work or income on a regular basis. They are mainly engaged in the production of bamboo based agricultural and household products (e.g., fish traps, paddy husking trays, large sieves and so on). This gives them an income, but this cannot keep them employed throughout the year. PROSHAR has helped them with training on design and quality and in marketing their products.

Even this non-agricultural group highlighted the problem of water as number one problem of the area. There seem to be a severe crisis of drinking water as the hand tube-wells also give highly saline water that cannot be used for drinking.

Although Proshar gave them training on technologies, designs and marketing, the group did not look particularly enterprising and hopeful about their future. They think the prospect of changing their fate through bamboo work was rather slim as the cost of materials (bamboo mainly) keep going up. Was there a prospect of earning an income by other means (e.g., there was a shortage of daily labour in the area – daily wage rate was Tk.300-350)? The answer was in the negative as they thought they were not fit to do any other work.

However, they thought through the Proshar training, their level income has increased. They have also established links with the market and private orders were coming to them. So, the meeting ended with a positive note that with additional funding these artisan groups can scale up their business and make significantly more income.

Linkage with private sector companies has not been developed in a significant way.

**FGD WITH MEN ON-FARM GROUP, SHURJA MUKHI, BELY and PADMA DAL, PURBAKHADA UNION, SHARANKHOLA UPAZILA, BAGHERHAT: 16 Jan 2013**

This was about nine months old group with 25 members. Present in the FGD were ten men who had received on-farm support.

Started out with the major problem of area: they listed high salinity in the water, poor road communication, poverty, landlessness and flooding as the key ones.

**The Economics of Rice Farming**

“With high yielding variety of rice seed (BR 44 and 45) in a Bigha of land (one third of an acre), we get an yield of about 25 maunds. The cost of input needed is Tk.12,000. The sale proceeds from a good harvest will only fetch about Tk.15,000 @Tk.600 per maund; This would leave the farmers with a very small net profit. With the rising cost of inputs and cost of living, agricultural farming is unable to change our status as landless poor” - Shurjamukhi Group

PROSHAR was helping the group with improved agricultural technologies and practices to overcome some of these problems. The project offers improved variety of paddy and vegetable seeds, training on livestock rearing and leadership.

The result from PROSHAR support has reportedly increased their level of income (they were hopeful, the income level would soon be doubled)

Others in the area have also learned from the group members the new cultivation methods and have achieved success.

For further boost in their income, they thought that irrigation support during the lean season would more substantially improve their production and thus income. They needed government support, but at Union level there was not much support that they could ask for.

Sidr and floods in 2007 affected the area so badly – they were yet to overcome the shock fully.

**FGD WITH WOMEN CBDMVGs ON 17 Jan 2013 AT DHANSHAGOR UNION PARISHAD from Purbo Amragachiya and Kalibari villages, Sharankhola, Bagherhat**

The FGD conducted with 7 women. This women's CBDMVG was formed in February 2012 which had representatives from school/college teachers, adolescent girls, a UP member and a mother leader. According to them if listed, the major environmental problems of the area would stand in the following order: Sidr, Aila, water-logging, salinity, pest attack and lack of potable water. Among the professional groups, they thought the farmers and people from the middle income group suffered the most by the natural hazards. The reasons according to them were: the rich can rely on their savings, the poor can receive relief assistance – but the share-cropper and the middle poor do not receive any support and they have no savings to tap on.

They had hoped that the government would be serious to construct an embankment to control incursion of saline water, but it did not. They thought support these days came more from NGOs rather than from the government. They were appreciative of the Proshar assistance to build toilets in the cyclone shelters separately for women and men. This, they thought would encourage women to evacuate to cyclone shelters when a warning is issued. They said that they had lists of children, old women and men who needed to be evacuated on a priority basis.

The food ration given to lactating and pregnant mothers were also useful in reducing disaster risks, they said. This group had also informed us that each Ward had received some emergency preparedness materials like life jacket, megaphone, stretcher, helmet, radio and a first aid kit. Four days training on disaster management was given and an emergency rescue drill for one day was conducted. The group met once every 3 months

The CBDMVG volunteers said that they shared their learning from the training with the family members and neighbours. No CRA or CRRAP was yet done in their area. They also did not seem to know much about Union Disaster Management Committee (UDMC). As the last word, this group reiterated their hope that some authorities would build a dam along the Boleshwar River.

**FGD WITH MEN CBDMVGs OF Amragachi, Badhal, Hogopati, Sailabunia and Kalibari villages ON 17 Jan 2013 AT DHANOSHAGOR UNION PARISHAD, Sharankhola Upazila, Bagherhat**

The discussion meeting was attended by 12 members of 2 CBDMVGS from Dhansagor Union. Among the major problems of the area the participants almost unanimously listed salinity and water logging as the most pressing ones. They pointed out that the embankment on the Boleshwar and Vola rivers caused serious water-logging that caused damage to field crops. It was one of the areas severely hit by the cyclone Sidr that killed about 4,000 people in Sarankhola. The cyclone Aila in 2009 had also hit the area causing damage to crops and property, but not life. After Sidr in 2007, many cyclone shelters and pond-sand-filters have been built.

With assistance from Proshar, ward level CBDMVGs have been formed, provided them with training, emergency evacuation demonstration and drills have been conducted and derelict PSFs have been re-commissioned. Through the Proshar activities, people have learned many things about disaster management that they did not know before. For example, they now know how to systematically prioritise and ensure safety of old, infirm, children, and pregnant women during the time of an emergency. They now understood the meaning of different signals. The participants have been aware of the CRA process and the RRAP plan for the Union has been completed.

They said, their fear about disaster risks have been substantially reduced now as they always remained alert and because they now knew how to cope with the hazards. Since the local religious leaders have also been taken on board by the programme, the mosques and temples can now be used as shelters in times of need. Moreover, with the inclusion of women in the committees, an increased number of people have been able to participate in this community based initiative.

The area has a need to dig the canal and put an embankment to stop flood waters to come into the area. The participants know that PROSHAR works with the Union Parishad, but do not know how the programme is linked with the central government.

***FGD WITH PSF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE ON 17 JAN 2013 AMRAGACHIA, DHANSAGOR, WARD NO. 5***

This is the committee formed around the newly built Pond Sand Filter (PSF) with assistance from Proshar programme. The area has a chronic problem of drinking water crisis. High level of salinity in the river and ground water forced people to mostly use contaminated pond water for different household activities. The fifty two households who use this facility have elected a 5 member management committee including one woman. The recently formed committee (since October 2012) looked very upbeat about the technology and the system of management in place. The quality of water, tested as safe by NGO Forum for coli forms, foecal coli form and turbidity, is excellent and is used for drinking and cooking purposes by all in the area now. Mothers of new-born infants expressed satisfaction to the MTR team saying that they felt safe in washing their babies and cleaning their utensils with water from the PSF. According to the villagers, the incidence of diarrhoeal diseases had significantly reduced since people have started using the PSF water. Although, they drank

boiled water before, it was often through the other uses of water (e.g., washing of vegetable and rice, utensils etc.) that contamination would spread.

There was a CBDMVG in the village that were jointly responsible with the PSF management committee for the upkeep of the system. The 52 user households each pay Tk.50 to Tk.100 (depending on their ability) for its maintenance. The PSF has apparently helped the community for the first time to come together to undertake a practical social action for the benefit of all. The level of motivation among the people about the facility looked very high because each of them derived positive benefits from it. Everyone in the village was now watchful that the pond was kept as clean as possible and the PSF worked without a problem. This was a good example for social harmony, the initiative taken by men & women, Hindu & Muslim and young and old from the community. According to one member of the committee, similar solution for water in the area was also demanded by others as well.