



# Impact of M4C Interventions on the Livelihoods of Char Dwellers

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Making Markets Work for Chars (M4C) Project aims to improve the market system for the 2.5 million poor people living in the char islands of river Jamuna, Padma and Teesta of 10 districts in North and North-western region of Bangladesh. The M4C project increased the household income of 92 thousands households where the targeted was 60 thousands. In second phase additional 32 thousands households were reached in the existing list against the target of 25 thousand households. The geographic isolation of the chars results in poor access to markets and services, leading to fewer economic activities and lower output, the char populations are deprived of the market opportunities and have higher cost of transportation with the mainland. The situation is further worsened by contextual vulnerabilities posed by uncertainties and damages caused by flood, river erosion, drought, etc. Apart from that, they are facing multifarious problems like health and sanitation, mobility from char to mainland, establish contact with their mainland relatives and many others. The present study has been undertaken to assess the impact of the interventions imposed through M4C project on the livelihoods of the char dwellers as well as present scenario of VSLA towards upscaling the living standards of char dwellers introduced in CLP (Char Livelihood Program).

A total of 550 people were selected at random taking 50 from each of 11 upazila under Gaibandha, Kurigram and Sirajganj districts where 290 were male and the rest 260 were female. Face to face interview and 06 FGDs were conducted to determine the present status of the livelihoods of char dwellers. However, the VSLA study was conducted in char islands in 47 unions of 16 upazila under four districts, namely Bogura, Gaibandha, Kurigram and Sirajganj. A total number of 32 FGDs were conducted having 8 FGDs from each of above 04 districts on random basis.

Majority (88.4%) of the respondents were young to middle aged and can sign their names only (39.5%) with small to medium family size (86.3%) having marginal farm size (48.7%). Majority (62.0%) of them had an income level upto 100,000 BDT per annum. As far as their housing status is concerned majority (403 person) of them are having tin roof with tin enclosure against 78 person had the same kind of housing structure before coming M4C. Majority (59.8%) of them had hanging toilet before