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Establishing Vulnerable  
**Peoples' Rights and**  
Access to Social Safety Net  
Programmes (EVPRA) Project

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MIDTERM EVALUATION



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# MIDTERM EVALUATION REPORT

## Establishing Vulnerable Peoples' Rights and Access to Social Safety Net Programmes (EVPRA) Project

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# CONTENTS

*LIST OF ACRONYMS*

*GLOSSARY AND DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS*

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	i
<b>2. BACKGROUND OF SSNPS IN THE DISTRICTS DINAJPUR AND JOYPUKHAT IN BANGLADESH AND IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC ANALYSIS.....</b>	<b>1</b>
2.1 Introduction.....	1
2.2 Socio-Economic Condition and Analysis of the Target Districts .....	2
2.3 Governance and Legislative Framework for SSNPs.....	3
<b>2.3.1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2.3.2 An Introduction to EVPRA SSNPs .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.3.3 The Legislative Framework Governing the 9 Focus SSNPs.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2.3.4 The Governance Structure and Mechanisms for SSNP Implementation .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>2.3.5 Challenges and Issues in SSNP Delivery .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>3. STUDY METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>10</b>
3.1 Background.....	10
<b>3.1.1 EVPRA Project .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>3.1.2 Rationale for Mid-term Evaluation.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>3.1.3 Objectives.....</b>	<b>11</b>
3.2 Introduction.....	11
3.3 Methodology .....	12
<b>3.3.1 Desk Review .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>3.3.2 Sampling: Strategies and Design .....</b>	<b>13</b>
3.4 Data Analysis Plan.....	15
3.5 Limitations of the Study.....	16
<b>4. MID-TERM EVALUATION FINDINGS .....</b>	<b>16</b>
4.1 Profile of Sampled Households .....	16
4.2 Awareness of, Access to and Governance of SSNPs.....	24
<b>5. RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>6. CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>7. LIST OF REFERENCE .....</b>	<b>70</b>

## *List of Tables*

Table 2.1:	Demography, poverty and education in Dinajpur and Joypurhat .....	3
Table 2.2:	SSNPs schemes' coverage and outlay .....	6
Table 2.3:	Implementation structure and duties of officials' .....	8
Table 3.1:	Sample summary of Quantitative survey .....	14
Table 3.2:	Sample summary of qualitative survey.....	14
Table 4.1:	Demography of sampled households (HHs) .....	16
Table 4.2:	Educational attainments in sampled HHs .....	17
Table 4.3:	Socio-economic profile of HHs .....	18
Table 4.4:	Proportion of HHs above/below averages .....	19
Table 4.5:	Landholding Pattern disaggregated .....	20
Table 4.6:	Demographic details of households – upazila wise .....	21
Table 4.7:	Members in HHs - Upazila wise.....	21
Table 4.8:	Knowledge on SSNP segregated by sex and ethnicity .....	25
Table 4.9:	Scheme wise Awareness of SSNPs (% of total respondents) – rounded off .....	25
Table 4.10:	Source of Information on SSNPs (% of respondents) .....	26
Table 4.11:	Availing SSNPs (% of respondents) – rounded off .....	27
Table 4.12:	Awareness of eligibility criteria for SSNPs .....	30
Table 4.13:	Awareness of public complaint/grievance redress mechanism .....	32
Table 4.14:	Approach local government representatives directly for either help or information .....	33
Table 4.15:	Outcome of approaching local government officials.....	34
Table 4.16:	Governance of SSNP delivery and satisfaction of beneficiaries.....	35
Table 4.17:	Reason/s for dissatisfaction on SSNP delivery.....	26
Table 4.18:	Targeting & Beneficiary Selection .....	37
Table 4.19:	Whether inducements / favours have led to access to SSNP in the community .....	38
Table 4.20:	Receiving end of inducements.....	39
Table 4.21:	Factors affecting access to SSNPs apart from eligibility.....	40
Table 4.22:	Whether discriminated against in providing SSNPs .....	41
Table 4.23:	Discrimination ethnic minority/non-ethnic minority .....	41
Table 4.24:	Respondents' satisfaction level on various parameters of SSNPs across upazila (Mid-term value) .....	43
Table 4.25:	Awareness Building Target for Beneficiaries.....	46
Table 4.26:	Whether respondent is a part of CSO/CBO/SHG .....	47
Table 4.27:	Outcome of CSO participation .....	49
Table 4.28:	Whether received any training from CSOs.....	51
Table 4.29:	Assessment of capacity challenges on a scale (1: Very good – 5: Very bad).....	53
Table 4.30:	Description of parameters and scales deployed.....	53
Table 5.1:	The midterm values have been presented against the selected indicators .....	58

## **List of Figure**

Figure 3.1:	Overall research approach and methodology of the study.....	12
Figure 3.2:	Triangulation of data and information .....	15
Figure 4.1:	Contribution of SSNP allowances at midterm evaluation .....	19
Figure 4.2:	Contribution of SSNP allowances at baseline survey.....	19
Figure 4.3:	Homestead land Pattern in terms of ownership .....	20
Figure 4.4:	Occupation of sampled HHs .....	22
Figure 4.5:	Incident of Natural Disaster within the last five years.....	23
Figure 4.6:	Effects of natural disaster.....	23
Figure 4.7:	Access to Communication Assets (All households) .....	24
Figure 4.8:	Respondents' sense of right to social safety – choices.....	28
Figure 4.9:	Reason for not availing SSNPs.....	29
Figure 4.10:	Hurdles in accessing SSNPs .....	30
Figure 4.11:	Whether awareness programmes conducted in community.....	32
Figure 4.12:	Faced gender wise vulnerabilities.....	44
Figure 4.13:	Participation in CSO/CBO/SHG gender wise.....	50
Figure 4.14:	Whether Representative in Local Govt. Committee .....	52

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

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

PIO	Programme Implementation Officer
PMIU	Project Management Implementation Unit
PSEP	Primary Education Stipend Project
PUMDO	Peoples Union of the Marginalized Development Organization
SHG	Self-help Group
SSNP	Social Safety Net programme
UNDP	United Nation Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNO	Upazila Nirabhi Officer
UP	Union Parishad
UPEO	Upazila Primary Educational Officer
UPZ	Upazila Parishads
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VGD	Vulnerable Group Development Programme
VGF	Vulnerable Group Feeding
WFP	World Food Programme
WV	World Vision

## GLOSSARY AND DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

**Ethnic Minority:** A group of people who, because of their physical or cultural characteristics, are singled out from the others in the society in which they live for differential and unequal treatment, and who therefore regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination. Further it can be defined as a group within a community which has different national or cultural traditions from the main population (The community who has distinct livelihood system, socio-economic system and distinctive identity than main stream people of a country).

**Religious Minority:** People belonging to religious minorities have a faith which is different from that held by the majority. Most countries of the world have religious minorities.

**Vulnerable Group:** The term ‘vulnerable groups’ is often used interchangeably with the term ‘disadvantaged groups’. Vulnerable groups generally include children, ethnic groups/minorities, and persons with a limited lifespan, persons suffering from dementia, persons with mental disorders, abusers of drugs and alcohol and persons with disabilities. Further, here in midterm, vulnerable groups include those group who are in danger or at risk or being neglected because of their religious identity, sex, ethnic minority, disability to support themselves and they should be taken under the various support provided by the government.

**Beneficiary and Non-Beneficiary:** A beneficiary in the broadest sense is a natural person or other legal entity who receives money or other benefits from a benefactor. In this analysis, beneficiary has been meant those who are availing one of the SSNPs scheme. On the other hand, non-beneficiary group is those who do not avail any of SSNPs Schemes.

**Awareness:** Knowledge that something exists, or understanding of a situation or subject at the present time based on information or experience. Here awareness about SSNPs is considered as having the knowledge about the schemes, selection criteria, 9 schemes of SSNP, eligibility criteria including right to access of SSNPs as a citizen of a country.

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

**Access:** In general terms, access to anything means the entrance to any services or anything that might be easy or difficult as a part of human rights of a country. Here, specifically in this midterm study, access to SSNPs include the entrance of the eligible persons to any of the 9 schemes of SSNP through applying in a legal way for availing any of SSNP schemes.

**Satisfaction level:** Satisfaction level includes that a level of pleasant feeling that someone gets when he receives something he wanted, or when he has done something he wanted to do. In addition, here in midterm satisfaction level describes the level of expression of pleasant feeling to receive, access and delivery of SSNPs by the state. Generally refers to the degree of happiness regarding a service/product benchmarked against the expectation of the user. Satisfaction is a qualitative term and is generally mapped on degree or extent (i.e. on a scale).

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Establishing Vulnerable Peoples Rights and Access to social safety net programmes (EVPRA) project, a four year grant project funded by the European Union, has been being implemented in the Districts of Joypurhat and Dinajpur in Rajshahi and Rangpur Divisions respectively, in Northern Bangladesh from January 2016. EVPRA is being implemented by World Vision jointly with Pollisree and PUMDO (Peoples Union of the Marginalized Development Organization) in close collaboration with local civil society organisations (CSOs), communities and government.

The overall objective of EVPRA is to empower Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) working for the rights and development of ethnic minority groups, Local Authorities (LAs) and communities, to promote the most vulnerable peoples' social development through access to Social Safety Net Programmes (SSNPs) in the Districts of Joypurhat (Joypurhat Sadar and Panchbibi Sub-districts) in Rajshahi Division and (Dinajpur, Dinajpur Sadar, Fulbari and Birampur Sub-districts), Rangpur Division, Bangladesh. The expected outcomes of the intervention are the strengthen organisational capacity and sustainability of targeted local CSOs that are working for the rights and development of ethnic minority groups; promotion of the transparency and accountability of existing government SSNPs and an increase in the total number of vulnerable people accessing to SSNPs from the government.

The purpose of the midterm evaluation is to draw an achievement in comparison with the baseline study in order to measure whether the EVPRA project is being implemented towards its target identifying its limitations, lesson learnt and outcomes according to its logical framework in the context of the current socio-economic, political and government situation and position. In a word, this midterm study would be a direction to understand the effectiveness of existing monitoring and evaluation including situational effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the project. Further, this midterm study measured the progress of the project towards the overall objectives and three Specific Objective statements and indicators mentioned in the Logical Framework particularly overall objective, compare the mid-term evaluation findings with those of the baseline, CSOs capacity assessment report, as well as with national and district level data, where available, identify lessons learned and good practices and sustainability framework for each objective of the project and provide clear and actionable recommendations for the next two years that will support the project in the delivery of sustainable benefits to the target communities

### MIDTERM OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of this Mid-term evaluation were:

- a) To measure the progress of the project towards the overall objectives and three Specific Objective statements and indicators mentioned in the Logical Framework particularly overall objective (O1.1; Percentage of the target population with increased satisfaction regarding the delivery of SSNPs by the end of the project., O1.2; Number of policy, system, structure, practice or programmatic changes to improve access to SSNPs by the most vulnerable people, specifically including ethnic minority groups and women, contributed to by EVPRA by the end of the project), specific objectives (SO1.1; Increased percentage of targeted local CSOs, that are exhibiting improved organisational and management capacity by the end of the project , SO2.1; Percentage of vulnerable people (specifically including ethnic minority groups and women) with increased knowledge of target SSNPs, specifically eligibility criteria and/or grievance and redress mechanisms by the end of the project, SO2.2; Number of new mechanisms (e.g. inclusion of CSO representatives,

including ethnic minority groups and women, in local government committees, establishment of complaints and redress systems, transparency and accountability boards etc) introduced by local government to enable vulnerable communities to voice concerns on the delivery of SSNPs by the end of the project, SO3.1; Increased percentage of vulnerable people, including ethnic minority groups and women, who report accessing 1 or more of the 9 targeted SSNPs by the end of the project) and expected result indicator (R1.1.1; Percentage of targeted CSOs implementing new organisational leadership mechanisms (e.g. new board standards, periodic/annual elections, inclusion of women, operational structures and systems etc) for effective CSO governance, R1.1.2; Percentage of targeted CSOs with either women, or other vulnerable people, in a leadership position by the end of year 2 of the project, R1.2.1; Increased access to knowledge and information about human rights and SSNP entitlements by the most vulnerable, including ethnic minority groups and women, by the end of the project, R1.3.1; Increased effective engagement<sup>1</sup> between GO and NGOs on issues which promote vulnerable peoples' access to SSNPs, specifically including ethnic minority groups and women, R2.1.1; Percentage increase in the number of CSO representatives included in local government committees, specifically including CSO representatives from ethnic minorities, women and other most vulnerable groups, R2.2.1; Increased proportion of people in the target communities with satisfactory access to SSNP information by the end of the project and R3.1.1; Increased % of people (disaggregated by gender, ethnic minority and other vulnerable groups) in the target communities with access to SSNPs by the end of the project. ) were measured.

- b) To compare the mid-term evaluation findings with those of the baseline, CSOs capacity assessment report, as well as with national and district level data, where available.
- c) To identify lessons learned and good practices and sustainability framework for each objective of the project.
- d) To provide clear and actionable recommendations for the next two years that will support the project in the delivery of sustainable benefits to the target communities.
- e) To deliver these objectives the consultant or consultancy firm reviewed the baseline survey report, CSOs capacity assessment report, project log frame, M&E framework etc.

### *Methodology*

The EVPRA midterm study was conducted in five selected sub-district of Dinajpur and Joypurhat Districts, namely Birampur, Dinajpur Sadar, Fulbari, Joypurhat Sadar and Panchbibi. The study used as like baseline survey methods. The baseline survey methods used mixed methods approach, beginning with a literature review of project reports, policy documents, journals and media reports; a quantitative survey of 955 households (HHs) selected through random sampling, due to inability to extract data from local government; and qualitative semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) with 34 project stakeholders in government and civil society. The household respondents include 85.97% females, 0.8% widows, 39.05% religious minorities, 29.2% ethnic minority, 3.0% unemployed and HHs belonging to different income level brackets 50.6% of the respondents self-reported as beneficiaries of SSNPs, whilst the remaining (i.e. 49.4%) reported that they do not access SSNPs.

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

## KEY FINDINGS OF MIDTERM STUDY

### Demographic and Socio-economic Background of Communities

- 85.97% of all respondents are women while 50.70% are women among all household members.
- 7.4% are either farmers or wage labourers or petty businessman with food accounting for more than half of total household expenditure, followed by education and health expenses. 80.5% respondents have demanded that food/rationing should be included in SSNPs while second highest 14.90% have chosen education as one of SSNPs.
- Among the beneficiary and non-beneficiary, the ownership of average land area is 21.4 decimal and 15.7 decimal respectively while it follows like 15.8 decimal and 19.6 decimal among the ethnic and non-ethnic respectively.
- In occupation, 13.9% are day labourer while 15.4% live on agriculture/fishery. Only 3% are unemployed and the highest percentage 61.9% are housewife or house maker.
- 27.7% sampled households are either farmers or wage labourers with food accounting for more than half of total household expenditure, followed by education and health expenses. And total 61.9% are housewife. 35.9% of total sampled household has monthly income per month from 14938 BDT (Baseline: 42.40% had average income 7887.68 BDT.)
- Total 56% respondent affected by natural disaster among them 83.75% affected by flood and 11.37% affected by cyclone.
- 66.9% of total population has unpaid loan with an average of 28540 BDT. In addition 73.4% of total population has savings with an average of 5260 BDT. (Baseline: 6.5% had average loan with amount of 28,465 BDT, 11% had savings with amount of 10889 BDT.)

### Community Awareness of SSNP

- 99% respondents have heard of SSNPs and average 81% respondents aware on each SSNPs where baseline value is 92% while 95.5% (*Baseline value 93.6%*) of total respondents think that they have right to SSNPs with provision of basic service. Further, 55.30% are aware of public complaints mechanism for SSNPs (Baseline value 12.3%). Among all the schemes VGF and VGD is least known to the respondents which include the percentage with 65 and 69 respectively.
- 78.3% respondents have informed that they are aware of the eligibility criteria for selection of beneficiaries of SSNPs (*Baseline value 74.20%*).
- Total 43% of all respondents have received information from CSO (Baseline value 8.40%), 39% of all respondents have heard from mouth of words (Baseline value 84.30%) and from Union Parishad 10% have got information about SSNPs. (Baseline value 1%).
- 57.5% of all respondents have ensured that they have gathered experience in participation of beneficiary selection process (Baseline value 14.10%)

- 11.6% of the respondents who have involvement in CSOs, CBOs, have been the part of the committee of local government (Baseline value 0%). 77.8% have thought that their participation in such committees will be effective for desirable change.
- Regarding the reasons for not being benefitted from any of SSNP schemes, 55.7% have reported that they tried to the access to SSNPs but failed and on the other hand, 26.7% are not applicable for this access of SSNPs in terms of eligibility criteria while the percentage of not aware about the scheme is too low with only 8.7%. And 7.0% have clarified that they have not tried to get access to SSNPs.
- Only 69% of all respondents say they have either participated or witnessed an awareness/advocacy program on SSNPs to sensitise the community (Baseline value 32%) and 82.5% of the respondents approach the local government's representatives directly for help or information (Baseline value 69.8%). Overall 93% of all respondents are satisfied with the SSNPs service delivery (Baseline value was 79.1%).
- Still 35.6% are demanding that inducement or favour helps to assure the access to SSNPs (Baseline value; 51.2%) while 88.5% are indicating the Govt. Officials (UP/UPZ levels) at receiving end of the inducement/favour. On the other hand 27.5% ethnic minority are claiming that they are discriminated while the percentage among the non-ethnic is 32.9%.
- Further 18.7% have reported that the allowance cards might be managed by bribery and at the same time 9% are demanding that the rich are being provided this SSNPs facility. On the other hand, 3% are claiming that eligible persons do not receive allowance card but others receive because of good relationship with the ward members and chairman.
- Average 6.91% respondent availed any one of selected 9 SSNPs where baseline value was 5.44%.

### CSO capacity

- About 24.3% of all respondents are the part of CSO, CBO or SHG and among all the respondents have reported awareness and capacity building as the outcomes of CSO participation.
- 81% are demanding that all casts/ethnic groups/religions/gender are the representative of all the associated CBOs while 11.6% are involved in any local govt. Committee. In addition, 55.25% have reported that they have received training from CSOs (Baseline value 16.90%).
- 8.69% of CSO respondents have reported awareness and capacity building as outcome of participation in CSO/CBO/SHG (Baseline value 1.7%) while the percentage with 9.01% have identified the improved livelihood and income as an impact of association with CSO/CBO/SHG.

*The qualitative findings include that Out of 4 FGDs with religious minority based CSOs, 3 have expressed their satisfaction about SSNPs service delivery as they have right to share their speech about their demand through interface meeting. Further, all of them are satisfied with training of Capacity building they received as now, they think that this training is important for them for organizational management.*