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PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIESA MICRO LEVEL STUDY IN AN AREA OF BANGLADESH

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ABSTRACT

Women and children participate mostly in family farm activities particularly in livestock, activities rather than crop. The type of crop and livestock activities performed by women were found to be a bit different than those of children. Only from landless households, woman labour was hired out while child labour was hired out both from poor farmers and landless households. To increase income, the distress rural women need sufficient institutional supports like credit facilities along with training for production of various farm and non-farm products. Institutional support is also needed for marketing their products. While for the greater interest of the society, to encourage child education rather than participation in employment activities by the child, Programmes like Food for Education (like Food for Works) may be introduced as a subsidy particularly to those families from which child labour is hired out.

I.INTRODUCTION

The contribution of women in agricultural activities is not properly recognized in economic terms in a subsistence economy like Bangladesh. Like women, it is widely agreed that children make a significant contribution in the peasant economy. Since their labour is often unpaid, their contribution is also unrecognized. In the context of rural Bangladesh, the farm and household are overlapping entities and confusion arises in determining which activities (agricultural, unpaid family help, work in the house, etc) should be considered in calculating employment rates. Confusion also arises regarding minimum age at which employment rate of child and adult should be calculated. As a result, the tools for measuring employment and unemployment ate not satisfactory (BBS, 1974) and these are even less adequate for measuring anticipation rates of women and children. However,

a rough indication of women's participation in the labour force compared to males can be seen from Table 1.

The poor participation rate of women as shown in the table is mostly due to non-recognition of their activities as productive efforts. Moreover, the standard data sources (e.g. the census) grossly understate women's productive contribution (Chaudhury, et.al. 1980). The table further shows that male and child labour (aged 10—14 years) participation in the labour force is considerably higher compared to that of female child labour.

TABLE 1. LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES BY SEX AND BROAD AGE GROUPS 1983—84.

| A C | Ban | ıgladesh | U | rban | R | ural |
|-------------|------|----------|------|--------|------|--------|
| Age Groups | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| 10—14 | 38.0 | 8.1 | 22.2 | 14.4 | 30.0 | 7.3 |
| 1564 | 89.8 | 8.0 | 85.4 | 12.1 | 90.5 | 7.4 |
| 65 and over | 74.2 | 7.1 | 58.2 | 2.2 | 75.9 | 7.6 |
| All ages | 78.3 | 8.0 | 74.3 | 12.3 | 78.9 | 7.4 |

Source: BBS, Statistical Pocket Book of Bangladesh, 1986, PP. 184-5.

The influence of 'purdah' and the restricted mobility of women have provided the basis for a clear division of labour between men and women. The tasks of women in rural areas are restricted mostly to the household farm activities while in urban areas they are mostly engaged in outside non-farm activities. However, distress women in rural areas are also engaged in outside non-farm activities particularly earth work under Food for Works Programme. These women are of great economic need—a need which seems to be sufficient to overcome social barriers and prejudices. In agriculture, a women's most important responsibility is associated with post—harvest perations of crops. Aside from this a wide range of vegetables, fruits and spices which are grown on homestead areas are also taken care by women. They also take care of household livestock and poultry enterprises. In a study Faruk et al. (1975) found that rural women spent 10—14 hours per day on various aspects of productive activities. The study noted that women spent less time on recreation than men. A similar finding was noted by Mead Cain (1977) in a micro study of a rural area of Bangladesh,

Like women, the rate of participation of child labour both in agricultural and non-agricultural activities is increasing with increasing poverty in rural areas. In Bangladesh, six to ten years old children constitute 18 percent of the total population and at least 40 percent of them never attend school. Of the 60 percent who enroll in schools, 70 percent

TABLE 2. DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYED POPULATION BY SEX AND OCCUPATION FOR 1983—84

| | Emp | loyed (in '00 | 0) | | Employed (in | %) |
|----------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| Male Female | Agricul- tural | Non-agri- cultural | Total | Agricul- tural | Non-agri- cultural | Total |
| Male | 16232 | 9315 | 25547 | 63.5 | 36.5 | 100 |
| Female | 216 | 2213 | 2429 | 8.9 | 91.1 | 100 |
| Both sexes | 16448 | 11528 | 27976 | 58.8 | 41.2 | 100 |

^{*} Employed population: 5 years and above.

Source : BBS, 1986, p. 189.

drop out before class Five is reached (Cadogan, 1979). Due to extreme poverty in the poorer section of the rural households, most of them join the labour force to partially supplement subsistence income to their families. In agriculture they are mostly engaged in taking care of cattle and less labourious crop production activities. Besides, these, the children are also engaged in catching fish, collecting fire woods, fetching water etc, and thus release their adult family members for more productive work. Children from land poor or landless households where opportunities to perform family farm occupation are few or absent, have to find wage employment to add subsistence income to their families. Even some of them (between 10—14 years) are engaged in hard manual work like Rickshaw pulling. On the otherhand, children of economically solvent households usually avoid such physical works and mostly spend their time in schooling or remain voluntarily unemployed.

Studies relating to contribution of women and children in agricultural activities in rural Bangladesh are very few. Studies relating to wage employment of women were conducted by Rahman (1986), Begum, et al. (1979), etc, and that of children was conducted by Begum (1980). Another study on employment, unemployment and sexwise division

of labour was conducted by Khuda (1982). In this study data were analysed in terms of various groups, based on a variety of criteria like land ownership, age, sex, etc. However, the studies mentioned above did not show the pattern and the extent of participation of women and children in various types of agricultural activities (both paid and unpaid).

This study is however, concerned with only agricultural activities (both crop and livestock) participated by women and children. Both self-employed and hiring out activities of women and children have been considered. The main objectives of the study are:

- (i) To identify the socio-economic characteristics of those rural households from which women and children are hired out to perform agricultural activities;
- (ii) To estimate the contribution of women and children to their family income; and
- (iii) To analyse the extent of self-employed and hiring out activities of women and children in both crop and livestock activities.

II. DATA SOURCE

Data were collected during May-June, 1986 from a village called Ujan Ghagra under the Union of Ghagra of Sadar Upazila of Mymensingh district. The village is about 8 kilometers away from the district head quarter of Mymensingh. It is well communicated with the district town. The village is adjacent to Dapunia bazar. There is one Commercial Bank Branch, one BRAC office and one Multipurpose Cooperative Society in the bazar. Besides, there are three rice mills located in the bazar. Paddy, jute, wheat, mustard and pulses are the main crops of the village. There are two Deep Tubewells to facilitate irrigation in the cultivable lands of the village. It would have been better if we could select a remote area than the present one to reflect more rural characteristics of a village. However, due to constraints on budget, time and manpower this has not been possible.

The village consists of 4 'Paras' out of which data have been collected from two 'Paras.' Cluster sampling was used to select the households from the two 'Paras.' The number of households included in the cluster was 117. The purpose of cluster sampling was to include all types of rural households without any bias.

For collecting data survey method was used. The questionnaire covered basic information on socio-economic aspects and detailed information on utilization of time for various crop and livestock activities throughout the whole year. Since rural women are very shy in providing information to an outsider, data were collected by two local investigators. They were trained and frequently supervised by the researcher during the period of data collection.

III. SOME BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RURAL HOUSEHOLDS FROM WHICH WOMEN AND CHILDREN WERE HIRED OUT

To analyse some basic characteristics of the households, at first the rural households were classified into four groups: (i) Landless (without agricultural land), (ii) Poor farmers (farm size upto 2.0 acres), (iii) Middle farmers (farm size between 2.01—4.0 acres) and (iv) Rich farmers (farm size above 4.0 acres). It was found that landless and poor farmers' groups represented 42 percent and 46 percent of the rural households while middle and rich farmers' groups represented only 9 percent and 3 percent respectively (Table 3). Further, through investigation it was found that 93 percent of the landless households did not inherit any agricultural land and the rest 7 percent who inherited land were ultimately forced to sell their land due to poverty. Therefore, although the selected village is not too far from the district town, land holding pattern is not much different from other typical villages of Bangladesh.

It can be observed from Table 3 that the average family size is 5 and the number of family members increased with the increase of farm size which is supported by other village

TABLE 3. DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION BY AGE AND SEX OF DIFF-ERENT HOUSEHOLD GROUPS

| | | | Househo | old Groups | | |
|----|--|------|---------|------------|----------|--------------------|
| | Particulars | Rich | Middle | Poor | Landless | All House holds |
| 1. | Number of households | 4 | 10 | 54 | 49 | 117 |
| 2. | % of total households | 3 | . 9 | 46 | 42 | 100 |
| 3. | Average family size | 7.0 | 5.9 | 5.0 | 4.5 | 5 |
| 4. | % of population under different age groups : | | | | | |
| | Upto 5 years: Male | 7 | 7 | 7 | - 11 | 9 |
| | Female | 7 | 10 | 9 | 10 | . 9 |
| | (6—14) years: Male | 14 | 12 | 12 | 17 | 14 |
| | Female | 11 | 13 | 16 | 12 | 14 |
| | (15-60) years: Male | 29 | 32 | 28 | 23 | 27 |
| | Female | 32 | 22 | 24 | 22 | 23 |
| | Above 60 years: Male | _ | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| | Female | | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| | Total : Male | 50 | 53 | 50 | 54 | 52 |
| | Female | 50 | 47 | 50 | 46 | 48 |
| | Total Male & Female | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

studies (Jaim, 1982; NFRHRD Research Studies, 1978). The reason is perhaps, the larger farm size groups can afford to maintain bigger families with other dependents while poverty and lack of asset discourage extended family for poor households. It may also be due to higher child death rate among the poor families caused by disease and malnutrition.

For analytical purpose, we have defined child labour as those who belonged to the age group of 6—14 years, and women labour as those who belonged to the age group of 15—60 years. In defining child labour Begum (1980) has considered all children from nine to fifteen years old. However, he has considered only child labour hired by others. In Cain's (1977) village study, starting age of children at which they participate in family farm activities has been considered six. Since we are interested to look into participation of children both in family farm activities and others' farm (hired out), we have considered age six as the minimum age of children at which they start participating in agricultural activities. However, the term child labour has been used here in a broader sense to include both minor children and juveniles. Table 3 shows woman and child labour distribution by farm size groups. It can be seen from the table that child labour (both male and female) constituted 28 percent of the rural population and that adult female labour constituted 23 percent of the rural population.

Table 4 presents participation rate of women and children in agricultural activities by household groups. It was found that except for one household, the households from which women labour were hired out were different from those which hired out children. There are five broad categories of economic activities in which women in rural Bangladesh participate: (i) household work (i.e. cooking, cleaning, washing, fetching water and fire woods, caring children and the old, etc.); (ii) family farming (i.e. post harvest crop operations done at home such as threshing, drying, winnowing, storing, etc.). This may also include kitchen garding, caring animals, raising poultry birds, rice husking, etc.); (iii) family non-farming (i.e., sewing, handicrafts, etc.); (iv) non-agricultural work outside the home (i.e., teaching or other services, participation as casual labour in Rural Works Programme, etc.); and (v) agricultural work outside the family (i.e. hired by others for performing post-harvest operations of crops). For our purpose, we have considered only agricultural activities participated by women both for family farming and outside the family or in other words, hired by others (category (ii) and (v)). Similarly, participation in agricultural activities by children both for family and outside the family has been considered in this study.

It can be seen from Table 4 that about 90 percent of women irrespective of all household groups participated in family farm activities. Further, it can be seen from the table that only from landless group women labour was hired out for agricultural work. About a quarter of the total women labour force from this group was hired out to participate in agricultural activities. On the average only 10 percent of the rural household hired out female labour for agricultural work.

The situation is a bit different for the child labour. It can be seen from the table that with some variation among the farm size groups about 50 percent of children (both male and female) participated in own farm activities. Further, it was found that in the tich farm size group, no female child participated in agricultural activities. The participation by the children of landless group in own farm activities was also found to be low compared to middle and poor farmers' groups due to the fact that the landless group had little scope in own farm activities.

TABLE 4. PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND CHIL-DREN IN AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES BY HOUSEHOLD GROUPS

| n | articu | 10.00 | | | Househol | ld Groups | |
|----|--------------|--|---------|----------|----------|-------------|---------------------|
| r | articu | iats | Rich | Middle | Poor | Landless | All House- holds |
| Α. | Part (a) (b) | icipating Women: In own households Hired by others | 89 | 93 | 91 | 81* 61* | 91 11 |
| В. | Part. | icipating Children: In own household: Male Female | 25 — | 71 63 | 70 54 | 41 44 | 54 50 |
| | (b) | Hired by others: Male Female | _ | 14 | 14 | 27 7 | 20 3 |
| C. | Part | cicipating Households from which Woman Labour Hired Out: Percentage | | _ | _ | 24 | 10 |
| D. | Part | icipating Households from which Child Labour Hired Out: Percentage | _ | 10 | 7 | 24 | 15 |

^{*}This includes 12% women who were both self-employed and hired out by others.

It was found that on the average 20 percent of male child and 3 percent of female were hired out for agricultural work. The percentage of male child hired out was the highest for landless group and only from this group female child was hired out. On an average only 15 percent of the rural households hired out child labour for agricultural work. Among the household groups, it was found that 24 percent of the landless households hired out child labour while middle and poor households hired out not more than 10 percent (Table 4).

The analysis further showed that average farm size of the households from which child labour was hired out was 1.28 acres while average farm size of the farming households of the village was 1.39 acres (Table 5) and as mentioned earlier all the households from which women labour were hired out were landless. Average value of livestock and poultry of the rural households in general was Tk. 3217 which was about 4 times higher compared to the households from which women labour was hired out and slightly more than double compared to that of the households from which child labour was hired out. The analysis indicates that child labour is hired out for agricultural work relatively from poor households but the households from which woman labour is hired out are amongst the poorest in the village.

TABLE 5. AVERAGE FARM SIZE, FAMILY SIZE AND VALUE OF LIVE-STOCK AND POULTRY OF THE RURAL HOUSEHOLDS IN GENERAL AND THE HOUSEHOLDS FROM WHICH WOMEN AND CHILDREN WERE HIRED OUT TO PERFORM AGRICUL-TURAL ACTIVITIES

| Particulars | All Households | Households from which women labour hired out | Households from which child labour hired out |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|---|---|
| Farm size | 1.39 | 0 | 1.28 |
| Family size | 5 | 4 | 4 |
| Average value of : Livestock (Tk.) | 3054 | 733 | 1287 |
| Poultry (Tk.) | 163 | 120 | - 132 |

Investigation regarding marital status of the women labour who were hired out by others showed that half of them were widow and among the rest, 17 percent were divorced, 8 percent were unmarried and 25 percent were married (husband alive). The widows who represented 50 percent of the wage labour expressed that death of their husbands was the main reason for participating in agricultural activities as hired labour. The rest 50 percent expressed that since their family income was inadequate to subsist, they had to sell their labour. We, therefore, found that economic pressure has compelled the rural women of Bangladesh to enter the employment market to supplement their family earning. In the case of child wage labour (for agricultural activities), 70 percent children expressed that their family income was not enough while 20 percent said that their fathers were dead and 10 percent said that their fathers were sick.

Regarding occupation of the head of the households from which women labour were hired out, it was found that for widows who represented 50 percent of woman wage labour there was no other earning member. Among the rest of the households, it was found that 33 percent of the heads of the households were day labourers, 8 percent engaged in petty business and 9 percent were sick who were physically unable to contribute any income to their families. In the case of child wage labourer it was found that 69 percent of the heads of the households were day labourer, 19 percent were farmers and for the rest 12 percent the heads of the households were dead and there was no adult male earning members. Further, it was found that children started participating in agricultural work from the age between 7 to 8 years. Regarding education, it was found that with the exception of one child who had primary education, all the children and women who were hired out by others were illiterate.

Contribution to the gross income of the families of woman and children hired by others are presented in Table 6. Women labour who were hired by others contributed 24 percent of the total income to their families from agricultural employment. From other activities like rice husking, 'katha' sewing, and working in cottage industries they contributed another 11 percent to their family income. In the case of households of child wage labour, it was found that children contributed 17 percent of income to their families from participating in agricultural activities.

As expected, the wage rates for women and children were considerably lower than wage rate for adult male. The wage for women usually consisted of two meals plus half seer of rice and for children it consisted of three meals puls Taka seven in cash. For adult male labour, the wage usually consisted of three meals plus taka fifteen in cash per day. Compared to rural households in general, the income sources of the households from which women and children were hired out were found to be slightly different. Employment found to be the main source of income for the households from which women and children were hired out. On the other hand, for the rural households in general, the main source of income was from crop and other sources (selling of milk, egg, vegetables, etc.). Further, average gross income of the rural households in general was found to be 2.65 times higher

TABLE 6. AVERAGE INCOME FROM DIFFERENT SOURCES FOR THE RURAL HOUSEHOLDS (HHs) IN GENERAL AND THE HOUSEHOLDS FROM WHICH WOMEN AND CHILDREN HIRED OUT.

(In Taka)

| - | ources (| of | For all rural HHs | % of total | HHs from which women labour hired out | % of total | HHs from which child labour hired out | % of total |
|----|----------|--|-------------------------|---------------|---|---------------|---|---------------|
| A. | | ne earned by the en and children : Agricultural | | | | | | |
| | ,, | activities | 320 | 2.46 | 1178 | 24.06 | 1370 | 16.78 |
| | (ii) | Other sources | 55 | 0.43 | 538 | 10.98 | _ | _ |
| | | Sub-total | 375 | 2.89 | 1716 | 35.04 | 1370 | 16.78 |
| В. | Incon | ne earned from employment by other family members | 4236 | 32.60 | 2882 | 58.85 | 4423 | 54.20 |
| C. | Incom | ne from crop production and other activities | 8380 | 64.51 | 299 | 6.11 | 2368 | 29.02 |
| | Total | enter annial de Principal de Arthur Albury (1995). | 12991 | 100 | 4897 | 100 | 8161 | 100 |

than the income of the families from which women labour was hired out and 1.59 times higher than those families from which child labour was hired out.

Findings relating to rural indebtedness showed that about 70 percent of the house-holds received credit from both institutional and non-institutional sources. However, little access to institutional sources was found for the households from which woman and

child labour were hired out. This was because of the fact that the farmers of the rural households in general received credit from BKB while households from which women and children were hired out did not receive such credit due to lack of collaterals to provide security. Further, it was found that the amount of credit received by the households from which child labour was hired out was about two and half times higher than those of the households from which women labour was hired out. This was because of the fact that some of the households from which child labour was hired out owned land and received credit from the BKB

TABLE 7. INDEBTEDNESS OF THE RURAL HOUSEHOLDS IN GENERAL AND THE HOUSEHOLDS FROM WHICH WOMAN AND CHILD LABOUR HIRED OUT.

| | | | T | pes of Hou | seholds | | | |
|------|--------------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| | Sources of credit ¹ | Rural h holds i general | n, | from | eholds which en labour out | Households from which ur child labour hired out | | |
| | | % of house- holds received credit | Amount per house- hold (Tk.) | % of house-holds received credit | Amount per house- hold (Tk.) | % of house- holds received credit | Amount per house- hold (Tk.) | |
| (i) | Institutional: BKB | 21 | 803 | | | 12 | 589 | |
| | BRAC | 15 | 102 | 42 | 113 | 18 | 155 | |
| | Total | 36 | 905 | 42 | 113 | 30 | 744 | |
| (ii) | Non-Institutional | 32 | 530 | 25 | 325 | 41 | 291 | |
| | Grand Total (i+ii |): 68 | 1435 | 67 | 438 | 71 | 1035 | |

¹In a few cases some households received credit from different sources. Therefore, actual percentage of household received credit would be less than what has been shown in the table.

TABLE 8. PURPOSES OF BORROWING FOR THE RURAL HOUSEHOLDS IN GENERAL AND THE HOUSEHOLDS FROM WHICH WOMEN AND CHILD LABOUR HIRED OUT

(In Percentage)

| Purposes 1 of borrowing | Rural HHs in general | HHs from which women labour hired out | HHs from which child labour hired out |
|---|----------------------------|---|---|
| Agricultural Production | 15.94 | | 12.50 |
| Cow purchase | 4.35 | | 12.50 |
| Fish culture | 1.45 | | |
| Business | 13.04 | 12.50 | 12.50 |
| Purchasing paddy for husking by 'dheki' | 5.80 | _ | 12.50 |
| Land mortgaging | 2.90 | 12.50 | - |
| House repairing | 5.80 | 12.50 | 12.50 |
| Land purchase | 8.69 | _ w | 12.50 |
| Family consumption | 36.23 | 50.00 | 12.50 |
| Medical treatment | 4.35 | 12.50 | 12.50 |
| Marraige | 1.45 | _ | _ |
| Total: | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 |

¹In some cases there are overlapping of purposes. However, the purposes which are shown in the table represents the main purposes of borrowing.

The rural households in general and the households from which child labour and women labour were hired out received credit for a variety of purposes of which family consumption was found to be the most prominant for all types of households. Besides

production, consumption and business purposes ; credit was also received for land purchase and land mortgaging (Table 8). However, in the case of households from which child labour was hired out the purposes for which credit was received found to be more productive than the other types of households.

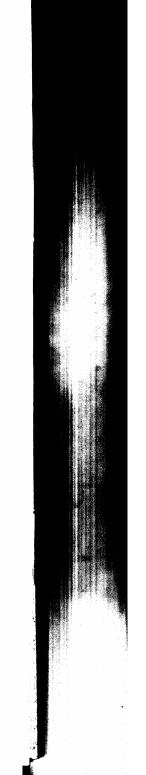
IV. PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN AGRICUL-TURAL ACTIVITIES

Considering 8 working hours per day, women labour per household contributed 109 days of which crop and livestock activities consisted of 48 percent and 52 percent respectively (Table 9). The detail nature of crop and livestock activities are presented in Appendix Tables 1,2 and 3. The children mostly participated in livestock activities, rather than crop production activities. Considering all rural households, it was found that out of 67 average participating days, livestock activities consisted of 78 percent while crop activities consisted of only 22 percent. However, the nature of crop and livestock activities performed by women and children was found to be much different as can be seen from operationwise distribution of the activities (Appendix Tables 1—3). Again the women and children were mostly self employed rather than hired by others for performing agricultural activities. In the case of crop, the percentages of hiring out days for women and children were found to be 16 and 31 respectively. No woman was hired out for performing livestock activities while for children the percentage was only 22.

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TABLE 9. PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN CROP AND LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION ACTIVITIES BY ALL HOUSEHOLDS (AVERAGE NO. OF DAYS PER YEAR)

| Enterprises | Particulars |)M | Women | Ö | Children |
|-------------|-----------------|------------------------|------------|-------------|------------------------|
| | | No. of days % of total | % of total | No. of days | No. of days % of total |
| | Self-employed | 43.44 | 84 | 10.19 | 69 |
| Crop | Hired by others | 8.42 | 16 | 4.53 | 31 |
| | Total | 51.86 | 100 | 14.72 | 100 |
| | Self-employed | 57.14 | 100 | 40.47 | 78 |
| Livestock | Hired by others | *** | 1 | 11.32 | 22 |
| | Total | 57.14 | 100 | 51,79 | 100 |
| | Self-employed | 100.58 | 92 | 50.66 | 76 |
| Crop and | Hired by others | 8.42 | ∞ | 15.85 | 24 |
| Livestock | Total | 109.00 | 100 | 66.51 | 100 |
| | | | | | |



PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN CROP AND LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION ACTIVITIES FROM THE HOUSEHOLDS WHICH HIRED OUT WOMEN AND CHILDREN (AVERAGE NO. OF DAYS PER YEAR) TABLE 10.

| Households from which child labour hired out | % of total | 35 | 65 | 100 | 37 | 63 | 100 | 36 | 64 | 100 |
|---|----------------|---------------|-----------------|-------|---------------|-----------------|--------|---------------|-----------------|------------|
| Household | No. of days | 12.64 | 23.40 | 36.04 | 38.16 | 65.65 | 103.81 | 50.80 | 89.05 | 139.85 |
| from which at hired out | % of total | 28 | 72 | 100 | 100 | | 100 | 58 | 42 | 100 |
| Households from which woman labour hired out | No. of days | 18.02 | 46.99 | 65.01 | 46.14 | 1 | 46.14 | 64.16 | 46.99 | 111 15 |
| | Particulars | Self-employed | Hired by others | Total | Self-employed | Hired by others | Total | Self-employed | Hired by others | F |
| | Enterprises | | Crop | • | | Livestock | | | Crop and | Timenston! |

Participation of women and children in crop and livestock activities by the households from which women and children were hired out has been shown in Table 10. It shows that on the average women were hired out for 47 days per year for crop activities while children were hired out for 89 days per year mostly for livestock activities.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The analysis showed that women and children participated mostly in family farm activities. Further, participation in livestock activities was found to be more than in crop activities, particularly for children. It was also found that the households from which child labour was hired out were generally poor, but the households from which women labour was hired out were among the poorest of the rural households. Economic pressure is forcing the rural women in Bangladesh to break away from their traditional roles of housewives to work outside the home. On the other hand, children of poor households have been found to be economically useful for their families. As a result instead of sending them to schools, their parents encourage them to join an farming activities

To increase income for the distressed families from which women labour is hired out, more employment opportunities both in farm and non-farm activities should be created. They may be encouraged for poultry raising, kitchen gardening, fish cultivation, etc. For these activities institutional supports like credit facilities, arrangement for marketing of products along with training facilities are needed for the rural women However, different types of organizations like BRAC and Grameen Bank have come forward to help the rural poor. But their scope is limited and more support is needed to help the distressed families.

On the other hand, child wage earnings become increasingly important where adult earnings are insufficient and less stable. Stable employment to the adult workers through creating more employment opportunities, particularly in non-farm activities would reduce participation of child labour as hired labour. With increase of income to these families more children would go to school which is beneficial for them as well as for the society. For this reason, if necessary food for education programme (like Food for Works Programme) may be provided to the poor families to educate their children for the long-run benefit to the society.

APPENDIX TABLE 1. OPERATIONWISE DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICI-PATING TIME OF WOMEN IN DIFFERENT CROP PRODUCTION ACTIVITIES

| | | | | (% of | total ti | me devote |
|------------------------|--------|-------------|--------|---------|----------|----------------------|
| Crop production | | | Crops | | | |
| activities | Paddy | Jute | Wheat | Mustard | Pulses | Vegetable & fruit |
| A. Paddy | | | | | | |
| Drying of paddy | | | | | | |
| after threshing : | 20.56 | | | | | |
| Winnowing and | | | | | | |
| cleaning : | 9.15 | | | | • | |
| Boiling : | 14.03 | | | | | : |
| Drying after | | | | | | |
| boiling : | 29.21 | | | | | |
| Storing : | 4.32 | | | | | |
| Husking by 'Dheki': | 22.37 | | | | | |
| Drying of straw: | 0.36 | | | | | |
| 3. Jute | | | | | | |
| Separating jute | | | | | | |
| fibre & drying | | 66.55 | | | | |
| Storing of jute : | | 7.77 | | | | |
| Drying of jute | | | | | | |
| sticks : | | 25.68 | | | | |
| C. Wheat | | | | | | |
| Separating wheat | | | | | | |
| grains from harves- | | | | | | |
| ted plants, winnow-: | | | 43.28 | | | |
| ing & cleaning | | | | | | |
| Drying & storing : | | | 56.72 | | | |
| D. Mustard Pulsss | | | | | | |
| Drying harvested | | | | | | |
| plants & separating | | | | | | |
| grains : | | | | _ | 12.15 | |
| Winnowing, drying & | | | | | | |
| storing of grains : | | | | 100.00 | 87.85 | |
| E. Vegetables & Fruits | | | | | | |
| Seedbed preparation | | | | | | |
| and plantation : | | | | | | 29.37 |
| Weeding & watering | : | | | | | 65.03 |
| Harvesting | | | | | | 5.60 |
| Total: | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 |

APPENDIX TABLE 2. OPERATIONWISE DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPATING TIME OF CHILDREN IN DIFFERENT CROP PRODUCTION ACTIVITIES

(% of total time devoted)

| Crop production | | | Cr | ops | |
|-----------------------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|
| activities | Paddy | Jute | Wheat | Mustard | Pulses |
| Land preparation | 12.54 | 15.65 | 2.38 | _ | 7.81 |
| Uprooting seedlings & | | | | | |
| transplanting | 9.42 | _ | | | |
| Weeding | 10.42 | 44.90 | 1.59 | 66.66 | 29.69 |
| Irrigation | 4.76 | _ | 3.17 | _ | - |
| Harvesting & | | | | | |
| carrying | 16.23 | 16.32 | 17.46 | 16.67 | 60.94 |
| Threshing | 6.52 | - | 17.46* | 16.67* | 1.56 |
| Drying of paddy | 5.54 | | _ | _ | _ |
| Storing of paddy | 1.61 | _ | _ | _ | _ |
| Drying & pilling | | | | | |
| of paddy straw | 32.96 | | | ÷ | |
| Separating jute | | | | | |
| fibre & drying | | 22.45 | - | | _ |
| Storing of jute | _ | 0.68 | | _ | |
| Watching birds | | | | | |
| after seeding | | | | | |
| of wheat | | _ | 57.94 | - | - |
| Total: | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 |

^{*}Includes drying also,

APPENDIX TABLE 3. OPERATIONWISE DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICI-PATING TIME OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY PRODUCTION ACTIVI-TIES

(% of total time devoted)

| Activities | Women | Children |
|----------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Feeding of livestock | 8.59 | |
| Cleaning livestock shed | 2.85 | 12.92 |
| Straw cutting | 1.44 | 15.18 |
| Keeping livestock in shed | | |
| in the evening | 1.94 | _ |
| Feeding poultry | 52.92 | <u>-</u> , |
| Settling poultry in proper | | |
| place in the evening | 32.26 | 11.48* |
| Tendaring livestock | | 41.88 |
| Collecting grass | - | 18.54 |
| Total: | 100.00 | 100.00 |

^{*}Includes livestock keeping in shed in the evening.

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