Food Security and Nutritional Status of Rural Households in Some Selected Coastal Regions of Bangladesh

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Abstract: The study was conducted Khulna, Bagherhat and Satkhira districts based on the highest coastal areas of Bangladesh. To address the food and nutritional security and its determinant factors among coastal people in study areas, a total of nine upazilas in the three districts of Bangladesh were selected. It was also identified their livelihood risks and coping strategies during stressed situations. The study based on a sample of 450 coastal households revealed that the production of rice could meet their demand for 6 months followed by leafy vegetables (3 months) and chili (1 month). Most of the households (55%) were food secured whose calorie intake (2,801 kcal/capita/day) was much higher than the national average (2,318 kcal/capita/day). Majority of the food-insecure households were calorie deficient than that of food-secured household in the study areas. For food secured households, among various food items, rice supplied 71.33% of the total daily calorie intake followed by, edible oil (7.72%), sugar (5.58%), vegetables (5.18%), potato (3.65%), pulses (2.44%), and spices (1.85%). The similar results were also observed for food insecure households. Logit model revealed that farm size, farm income, off-farm income, and household crop production had positive and significant impact on attaining food security of the coastal households. Besides, the food nutrient intake was higher for large households compared to others. Flood, heavy rainfall, reduction of land productivity, crop damage by rat, lack of modern technology, salinity problem and high price of inputs were found to be livelihood risks for the coastal households. To meet their demand for food and other necessities during various stress situations they used previous savings; sold own assets; sold poultry and livestock; moved elsewhere to find work; borrowed money from relatives or others. Different social safety net programs may also be more effective support to the vulnerable coastal households during stressed situations.

Key words: Food security, rural household, nutritional status, coastal area, Bangladesh.