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Ways through enmity

Household livelihood strategies of the coastal migrant
The cases of metropolitan *Khulna* and its hinterlands, Bangladesh

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Foreword

Man's primal desire to *live* is perhaps his very last. With time, it is only invigorated by the longing to *live well*. Although a bit philosophical it may sound, yet it marks the beginning of every pursuit human beings make towards securing a decent living. In fact, it always stays at the centre of human being's every endeavour. And, most likely, this desire *to live well* brings in the exodus of population that starts with either inter- or intra-country movements and resettlements of various natures. Of course, there could be debates, regarding the definition (and degree) of *living well* as it may vary between countries, cultures, religions and so on. It also could be argued that definitions of *being well* can also vary between individuals since the exact patterns of need and necessity vary considerably between them. However, this variation and asymmetry is what makes migration an interesting area for study as all these studies reveal a series of unique stories regarding human endeavour and accomplishments that stem from the original wish to *live well*.

My attempt for this research began from a similar personal interest, to know and understand about the nature of migrants' efforts in the city considering they are managing the livelihoods mostly away from *home*. And although there are both poor and rich amongst the migrant population living in the city, it is particularly the efforts of the poor that fascinates me most as they are to manage without much resource to their belonging. I also realize the range of hostilities and challenges (as indicated herein as *Enmity*) that these people have to cope with, while living in a developing country. However, this interest made me search for relevant literature only to find out how little have been done in the context of Bangladesh in the study of migrants and their livelihood challenges. And this lack of literary resources is especially scarce for the case of migrants from the vast coastal areas (coastal areas have a reputation for being resourceful yet prone to natural and man-made hazards). As a city dweller myself (I live in *Khulna*, the second large coastal city in Bangladesh), I also come across many poor migrants from the coast. These frequent confrontations always make me wonder *why these people have to migrate from such resourceful areas and what helps them settle in the city*.

This research also comes at a time when migration as a field of study is fast becoming a global phenomenon and an interesting yet important area for discussions and debate. I hope this research contributes both to the global and national perceptions of migration (especially from coastal areas, being a potential yet increasingly vulnerable area), help fill in the missing links of the existing knowledge-base, help formulate any policy (to enable benefits for migrants and the destination cities) and to provide insights for further study.

Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere Inc.
DFID	Department for International Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization (of the United Nations)
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
GOJ	Government of Japan
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IOM	International Organization for Migration
I-PRSP	Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
ISI	Import Substitution Industrialization
KDA	Khulna Development Authority
MSE	Medium and Small Enterprise
OXFAM	Oxford Committee for Famine Relief
PPA	Participatory Poverty Assessment
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategic Paper
RMG	Ready-made Garments (industries)
SAP	Structural Adjustment Program
SL	Sustainable Livelihoods
SLA	Sustainable Livelihood Approach
SLF	Sustainable Livelihood Framework
UN	United Nations
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WB	World Bank

Summary

Rural-urban migration depicts an essential segment of rural-urban interaction. Especially for today's world, where cities continue to overwhelm its rural counterparts in terms of development pace, the exodus of population from the latter to the former thus speaks for the widening difference between these two places. On one hand, growing population movements within a country portrays the increasing dependence of rural over the urban areas, as rapid industrialization (ever-growing income opportunity) pull rural peasants in to the city. In addition, factors such as decline in agricultural job opportunity, reduction in benefits from agricultural works, increase in natural hazards, degradation of natural environment etc. often leave people without a choice and push them towards areas with better opportunities.

Rural coastal areas in Bangladesh offer an ideal backdrop for this study, as it produces all the natural and man-made challenges that force out migration. Similarly, *Khulna* also acts as perfect host for all the migrants coming in from these areas. These two, in combination, therefore constitute the study area. And as migration takes places, the people, being mostly poor, find themselves in the midst of a hostile environment in the city, quite different from that of their places of origin. Looking at these destitute migrants, the research therefore asks about the factors that make migrants' livelihoods vulnerable in both rural and urban areas. It also investigates about the extent of change that takes place to migrants' livelihood strategies (compared with rural times) and searches for the nature of rural-urban interaction that forms part of rural poor's livelihoods in the city.

This is an exploratory research that aims primarily at studying cases (migrant households in the city) selected on the basis of a set of pre-determined criteria. For data collection, a biographic-ethnographic approach is adopted, while in-depth interviews remain the primary source to collect qualitative data. In addition, a few other participatory research tools (focus group discussion, rapid appraisal tools etc.) have been implemented as required. The DFID sustainable livelihood framework constitutes the primary framework for research.

As the selected study area has remained quite unexplored before this research, the outcomes here is largely interesting and to some extents fascinating. Although migrants were categorized as *voluntary* and *forced* theoretically, very little empirical evidence have been found to call migration from coastal areas as being *voluntary*. As far as migration motives are concerned, it has been proved very difficult to identify a sole reason behind migration from the coast. Although natural factors have been found responsible for forcing migration; it has been observed that factors other than natural actually pose much greater threats to rural poor's livelihoods. In reality, migration motives depend largely on the possession of tangible and permanent assets (mostly land). People with such assets do not seem to move out permanently. Additionally, migrants in the city still seem to be mentally attached to their places of origin since they have relatives back there; in fact, most of them wish to go back if they ever have a chance. However, livelihoods strategies for the migrants did not really change in comparison to rural times as most of them still remains uneducated (developed some skills though). Similar challenges as in rural lives also persist in the city. And probably all these force them to live still as peasants in the city, as their coping strategies also remained rural as well. All in all, knowledge acquired through this research could be used to address current vulnerability issues reading potential migrants' livelihoods in rural areas, and of existing migrants' and hence develop policies accordingly to resolve these issues.

Keywords: internal migration, rural coastal areas, vulnerability, livelihood strategy, rural-urban interaction

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1.1 Introduction

I came to Dhaka to find a new job after I had to sell all my cultivatable land to pay for my daughter's marriage. I sold the land for 50,000 taka [\$800] ...now I do not have any land left to cultivate...then one of my friends advised me to move to Dhaka because it is a big city where you can do different types of work (Moizuddin Miah, rickshaw-puller Dhaka, BBC 2006)

This is just one voice amongst hundreds of thousands of migrants, trying to make a living in 'big' cities in Bangladesh. Migration, thus, forms part of many people's survival strategy. As known, it is also a very primal human tendency since people always moved to and fro, settled down to other places away from *home* in pursuit of a secured living and an improved *well-being*. Though a rather innate phenomenon, the rate of population movement (inter- and intra-country) is on the rise worldwide. The classic *push* and *pull* forces that induce migration from deprived regions to richer locations therefore persists, with rising population and availability of land and water becoming scarce every moment. Many new patterns of migration so emerged, owing to unprecedented urbanisation and manufacturing boom in Asia, increased occupational diversification and mobility in response to macro-economic reforms in Sub-Saharan Africa and added circulation within urban areas in Latin America (Deshingkar and Grimm 2004: 6). Broadly, this research addresses this area of study regarding people's movement within a country (commonly referred to as *internal migration*¹) and more particularly the migrant people's efforts to make a living and sustain in a city.

This chapter commences with the motivation for the study, elaborated as in the rationale. The next section states the research objectives, followed by the specific contextual issues. Here, the nature of general rural-urban migration is elaborated by looking at the reasons behind and consequence of rural-urban population dynamics in Bangladesh. To be precise, this discussion briefly covers both internal and external factors affecting the population exodus from rural areas of Bangladesh. Of course, these are all carried out while focusing on matters which potentially affect migrants' livelihoods at a household level. Once clear about the overall backdrop, a statement of problems is derived thereafter. Regarding the research topic, i.e. the livelihood strategies for rural migrants shaped by urban dynamics, a problem-tree is generated to pin-point the issues of their livelihood vulnerability. Subsequent to the problem-statement, the primary research question and a brief operational description of variables are provided. The study area is introduced then, with an outline of basic geo-sociological information about them. Finally, the schematic design for this research is provided.

1.2 Rationale

Study on *internal migration* (apart from the contribution made by *international migration*²) has become an increasingly important area of concern for governments, scholars and donors worldwide to develop a working knowledge-base. This is taking place, above all, with an aim to learn about migrants' problems and constraints in a city, to offer assistance accordingly to reduce probable loads on the already burdened cities and city governances. Hence, looking on to the migrants' behaviour, does not only enable researchers to make out their weaknesses but also helps fathom out their relative strengths and work out potentials. It is important so that

1. Population movement (within a country) as results of *push and pull* forces that result in people from poorer regions moving out to richer rural and urban areas (Deshingkar and Grimm 2004: 6), for the purpose or with the effect of establishing a new residence (IOM 2004: 32); the whole process is selective and mostly part of households' survival strategy (Lall *et al* 2006: 4)
2. Movement of persons who leave their country of origin, or the country of habitual residence, to establish themselves either permanently or temporarily in another country. An international frontier therefore has to be crossed (IOM 2004: 33)

these migrants can be backed by the policy environment³ to yield higher efficiency, thus reduce their livelihood vulnerability as a whole. Figuring out the exact number, type and actual opus of problems of these migrants also proves to be even broader than the issue of migration itself. And to learn about these migrants' behaviour fully, it is also necessary to see how migrants' rural counterparts behave in similar situations characterized by numerous *man-made* and *natural* constraints. This comparative correlation is also interesting from the scientific viewpoint in the sense that such study not only adds to the knowledge-base about migrants' and the stayed-backs' individual capabilities, but also gives a chance to construct judgements about their similarities and differences in their livelihood efforts. Since individual households outline the unit of a social formation, their study thus could help understand the root cause of social problems they becomes subject to while in the city.

Considering *Khulna*⁴ very little has been done here regarding migrants' livelihoods, since most research initiatives take place in and around the capital city, *Dhaka*. Nothing much has been carried out either to investigate why rural coastal areas, being so resourceful send away migrants to cities; it is also imperative to know about the issues that make rural living susceptible. Any scientific study therefore will not only add to the prevailing knowledge-base, it will also help city managers to look into the 'problem' of this type of migration and come up with 'potentials' to solve them. Additionally, devising and testing of research instrument(s) for this research could also be prove significant, to be used further.

1.3 Research objective

This research specifically looks forward to contribute to coastal people's livelihoods in rural Bangladesh, rural-urban migration debate, and migrants' livelihood strategies in the city with a focus on their rural background. Depending on these, the research intends,

- to investigate the extent of change in migrants' livelihood strategy (compared with the rural) induced by challenges posed by overall urban situations
- to search for differences in livelihood strategies among different categories of migrants and try to explain these differences (factors such as migration motivation, preparedness etc.), and
- to find out the nature of rural-urban interaction that may influence rural poor's livelihoods in the city

1.4 Out migration from rural areas: general factors

Rural-urban migration is a very common livelihood strategy for rural inhabitants of Bangladesh, while the factors/issues that induce migration remain manifold (**Annexes; table 1**). These issues are very much intertwined and there remains no clear distinction between them mostly. As there is no relevant literature or other source available for identifying the exact issues inducing migration from coastal areas, the following two categories address only the general issues that induce migration from all rural areas of Bangladesh. The categories are as follows, succeeded by brief discussions regarding each of them:

1. Migration influenced by internal (household) issues, and
2. Migration induced by external (broader socio-economic changes, national and international *structure and processes*⁵ etc.) issues

3. The *National Rural Development Policy* 2001 also fails to outline any mechanism to cover the extreme poor/migrants(**Afsar 2003b: 8**)

4. The third largest city of Bangladesh; known for its early industrialization and proximity to a broad coastal region. Please see section 1.8 for further details

5. Public-private organizations and policies/regulations respectively (**DFID 1999**)

1.4.1 Internal issues

Empirical evidences regarding migrants' livelihoods reveal a number of factors, which are believed to be more 'direct' yet internal reasons behind all kinds of migration that originate from rural Bangladesh. If taken into account, migration decision-making as a result of such internal household reasons therefore owes largely to the following, a combination of *trends*, *shocks* and *seasonality*⁶ portraying the vulnerability of rural people's lives:

Internal motivations behind migration

- In search for work; positive information on the city's job market; transferred by employer
- Loss of income sources at *home*; higher possibility of increased income in cities
- Affected by natural disasters (like floods) and natural trends (like erosion)
- Landlessness and homelessness at *home*
- Failure to pay premiums for NGO loans
- Marital reasons (divorce, newly married etc) or joining relatives/families in cities
- Threatened or uprooted by opposition (political/family members)

Table 1.1: Prominent internal motivations responsible for rural-urban migration in Bangladesh; see annex, table 1 for more
Source: Afsar 2000: 92, Ullah 2004: 35-36

1.4.2 External issues: rural socio-economic context

De-agrarianization has been pointed-out as one of the prime reasons behind current boost in rural-urban dynamics in developing countries. In a number of literatures, it has been designated as a long-term *trend* involving occupational adjustment, re-orientation of income sources, social identity transformation and spatial relocation away from strictly peasant modes of livelihood (Tacoli 1998: 158). Consequently, landless rural agricultural workers now have little incentives to stay-back in agriculture. For Bangladesh, the experience remains similar; studies show that around half of the poor migrants who arrive in Dhaka city were used to be agricultural labourers back home (Afsar 2003a). Despite the goal of many national initiatives to reduce rural-urban income gap (by upgrading agricultural sector and provide alternative income sources), social differences deepened over the years. The highly centralized bureaucratic governance did not change either as most of national development focus shifted away from rural to urban.

In its study, DFID (2004: 4) found that growing urbanization and infrastructure development also take land away from agriculture, as arable land on a per capita basis is declining in Bangladesh with a its growth of population. The survey also suggests that nearly half of the country's rural population are effectively landless (Black *et al* 2008 also verify this). This makes it an even harder structural cause to achieve significant reduction of poverty through land-based income generating activities. In addition, *alongside structural changes in the composition of output and employment, the proportions of GDP contributed by agriculture declined by 16.5%* (Afsar 1999: 237) (*see also Annexes; table 2* for more). Altogether these situations induce even the poor and the uneducated, the most unlikely to succeed in cities, to migrate. Thus, it adds with the previous knowledge-base that urbanization in Bangladesh is still much more a reflection of rural disparity rather an urban opportunity. However, there also remains the international impetus behind migration as the next sub-section discusses.

1.4.3 External issues: city context and international policy regime

Large differences in labourers' job benefits characterized labour markets during ISI⁷ (up till mid 1975) in Bangladesh. On one hand, the labour market was dominated by formal sector

6. Discussed elaborately in chapter 2, as the main components of *vulnerability context* for livelihoods of the poor

7. A trade and economic policy based on the idea that a country should attempt to substitute products which it imports, with local products. It was both outward-looking as it promoted exports and also inward-looking as it lacked links to the global market

jobs, protection of interests for labourers by concerned industries or companies since the labour unions were active and the government also being committed. During this time, a number of nationalized institutions, organizations and industries were established (Ahmed and Sattar 2004: 11; see also Annexes, table 3). However, on another hand, the potential informal workers, largely comprised of migrants, were pulled into the city as this industrialization was taking place and the communication sector was also developing. Hence sadly, but truly all these industries were not enough to create jobs for everyone, or suffice any wage standard either. There were neither any social protection and nor there were any collective representation whatsoever for the incoming migrants. All they could manage due to their lack of skills (largely for being from agrarian background) was to enter informality. It eventually led to the segregation of the labour market, separated so very distinctly that there was no mobility (chance to switch from informal to formal) likely between them. One strong reason for this could be the lack of education and training (improved nationally later in the following decades as adult literacy rate improved from 29.2% to 47.5% within two decades: 1981 and 2001; see BBS 2007a: 8). Later in the 80's, privatization and liberalization were prioritized with the introduction of the draft *National Strategy for Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction* (I-PRSP⁸) aiming for human development, economic growth for the poor, closing off gender gaps, setting-up social safety nets and participatory governance. Later, the shift to SAP (late 1980's- early 1990's due to the failure of PRSP) brought about a fundamental change into the labour market scenario. The much deliberated (if not practiced!) labour relation with their workplace perished with the end of social protection and the abolishment of trade unions. Informality thus, was further enhanced to a ubiquitous reality.

SAP⁹, on the other hand, could be termed as the beginning of 'true' globalization for Bangladesh as merchandise exports as a proportion of GDP had almost doubled between 1980 and 1993 (Khan 1995: 11). This was a time when decentralization started to take place and private investors began realizing the benefits of deregulation. The extraordinary growth in the readymade garments (RMG) sector contributed largely to such growth as the country was abandoned with its competitive advantage in cheap labour (mostly in form of migrants). The development of export oriented RMG industry (also shrimp, leather etc) by private sector proved enough in pulling rural people out of the already troubled lands. There has also been a momentous increase in the contribution of the services sector (like banking, insurance, health, education etc) to the GDP from nearly two-fifths in 1990 to almost half in 1995. However, SAP also marked the beginning of the exploitative relationship between the owner and migrant-worker as well. Here, the introduction of private industries are found (unlike Africa, mentioned by Hoeven 2000: 8), in the guise of formal sector enterprises with no or very little commitment for its workers. Now, without any union to support the labourers and the reigning absence of any explicit labour/wage law made way to a more informal relation between the owner and the worker. And this also probably paved the way for a reciprocal yet more inter-reliant relationship between formal and informal, to blur the boundary and enable small entrepreneurs to grow (as intended by globalization). This was the time when more women alongside men also began to migrate to urban areas independently (Afsar 2003b: 2). This new found aspiration therefore added (and is still adding) to rural-urban migration more, if compared with the first-time industrialization during ISI. As markets enabled people with opportunities, it allured them into bright city lights for a better life. Now, everyone had a job in the city, to support each other's economy in a mutual association.

8. The idea was similar to PRSP, with special interest on the increase of the local governments' participation in creating policies, which would lead to greater ownership of the loan programs, thus better fiscal policies

9. A term used to describe the policy changes implemented by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank for giving new loans to already indebted countries; generally, it is *free market* policy. These programs include internal changes (mainly privatization and deregulation) as well as external ones, especially the reduction of trade barriers

1.5 Problem statement

Although economic development is ‘the’ pursued sector for every developing nation, it also brings along with it challenges and vulnerability concerns for the poor people. For countries like Bangladesh, decline in natural resource-base, ill health, violence and other socio-political threats are common, which further affect and weaken poor people’s assets (thus capitals) required for their survival. [Hossain et al \(2003\)](#) identifies that, in urban Bangladesh, a good number of extremely poor and mobile groups are actually able to gain in economic terms, but again challenged by health and security issues. *Thus, although the urban population is ahead of the rural population on both poverty and social development indicators, the urban poor in general and migrants in particular find it difficult to sustain economic gains in the long run, due to intra-urban inequality in income and delivery of social services* ([Afsar 2003b: 11](#)).

More than 60% of the informal labourers and entrepreneurs in urban Bangladesh operate below the poverty line (see [Annexes; table 4](#)). As these workers are disadvantaged in the labour market, they are severely exploited and continue to stay put. In an effect, they cannot participate in the tax system, cannot avail any social security system, and thus become non-entitled to having access to basic social and urban facilities. This failing to meet regulatory requirements practically leads to *legitimate exclusion or constitute a form non compliance* ([Betcherman 2002: 21-22](#)). And with the rapid expansion of informal sector, exclusion also expands even more rapidly as studies reveal that low and irregular payment of wages become so extensive in the private formal sectors that nearly half of the RMG workers leave their jobs for this reason only ([Afsar 2003b: 4](#)). In addition, income inequality (uneven income/resource distribution) is also an emergent national trend alongside the increase of wage due to economic growth ([Hoeven 2000: 9](#)); this is also believed to be the reason behind the overall growth in relative poverty ([Islam 1999: 19](#)). Altogether, these urban constraints contribute significantly to the livelihood vulnerability of rural migrants as the following table outlines these in a systematic manner:

Livelihood challenges for migrants in the city

- Segmentation in labour market – being trapped into the realm of informality; unsecured job placement
- Large wage difference between skilled formal work with informal – relative poverty
- Lack of education; lack of schooling or training to upgrade and also to cope with change
- Commuting distance and cost; expensive without cheap/regular public transport
- Discrimination for women and children in labour market (difference in pay/salary)
- Child labour becoming an inevitable part of coping strategy for poor families
- Access to credit as start-up capital or running a micro- or small-enterprise is expensive (high interest rate)
- Unhealthy/harsh conditions: health hazards (inadequate medical assistance/compensation)
- Uncertainty/lack of jobs security (unquestioned firing/termination/joblessness during strikes)
- Unsupportive institutional environment, laws and policies/absence of effective labour law
- Unsecured land tenure - fear of eviction; access to public services and goods is very low
- Lack of access to basic urban services (water, sanitation, energy etc)
- Inability to participate and influence decision-making

Table 1.2: Major challenges posed to rural migrants’ job and livelihoods in urban Bangladesh

Source: Author based on the secondary sources mentioned earlier in this section

Depending on these previous discussions and following a number of literature reviews ([Afsar 1999](#), [Afsar 2000](#), [Afsar 2005](#), [Hossain 2005](#), [Kuhn 1999](#), [Ndoen et al 2008](#), [Siddiqui 2003 etc](#)), the statement of problem (figure 1.1) is prepared and presented in form of a *tree*. As the lower half of the *tree* tries to identify the causes and types of problems, the effects appear at the top. Of course, the causes and effects are not linear and certainly they are closely interrelated; yet it is left rather simple for retaining the simplicity of the model.

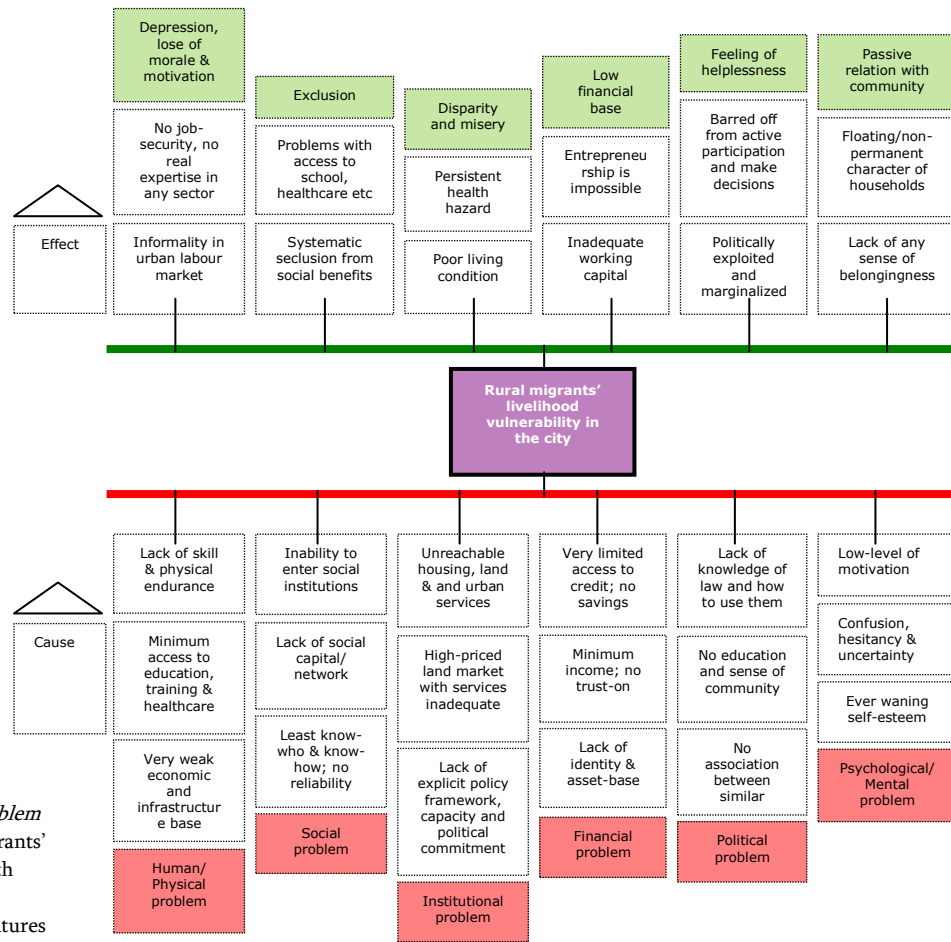


Figure 1.1: Showing *Problem Tree Analysis* of urban migrants' livelihood vulnerability with various causes and effects
Source: Mentioned literatures

1.6 Primary research question

The various components of the *problem tree* essentially identify the human, physical, fiscal and the psychological components of poverty. From that it is also not difficult to assume that the nature and the extent of problems embracing the migrants' livelihoods in cities are more complex, intrinsic and challenging, compared to rural livelihoods. Looking onto the stated causes and their effects in the diagram, it is therefore obvious that the manifold problems belonging to migrant-households are quite unique hence demands creativity to cope with. It is truly intriguing that being in such misery and short of resources, these people still manages to hurdle through all the unpredictable events and continue to live on. Truly, it makes me curious that poor migrants must have some managerial qualities (of their inadequate asset) that make them earn a living even being confronted by such magnitude of challenges in the city. However, whether these are human quality or entrepreneurial capability, the central theme is to examine these capabilities in specific contexts – i.e. the rural and the urban. The idea here is to see if this unique asset management quality has anything to do with their rural background and if they are influenced by their rural past. For a better understanding of migrants' asset management qualities, it is also imperative to learn from their rural kin and relatives who still live there. All these queries, in combination, are likely to portray migrants' internal managerial qualities towards a comprehensive and inclusive examination. Considering this, the research tries to answer the following question:

How do migrant households from rural-coastal areas manage their livelihood assets to adapt to urban circumstances and in which ways these adaptation strategies are determined by the prior challenges faced in rural life? In addition, how these strategies are determined by their motives for migration?

1.7 Operationalization of variables

The following set of variables are considered relevant for this research; they are intended for the investigation of the research question as all these variables are actually rooted in the research question itself. For a better understanding and further clarification of the question, it is necessary to commence with these working definitions. Later in Chapter 3, a number of indicators are derived in line with these variables, to help answer the sub-research questions.

Variables	Operational/working definition
Livelihood vulnerability	Insecurity and sensitivity impeding <i>well-being</i> for individuals, households and communities in a changing environment (ecological, economic, social, political) and their responsiveness and resilience efforts to risks during that time (Moser 1998: 3)
Environmental migrants	Persons or groups of persons, who for compelling reasons of sudden or progressive changes in the environment that adversely affect their lives or living conditions, are obliged to leave their habitual homes, or choose to do so, either temporarily or permanently, and who move either within their country or abroad (McKinley 2008)
Livelihood capital	Capabilities and assets at disposal and activities pursued or required for a means of living or in response to socio-economic stresses and shocks, which is not totally consumed in use (Rakodi 2002: 10-11)
Adaptive/coping mechanism	Strategic management of complex asset portfolios for income-raising, consumption modification and ‘strategy-sequencing’, intended to meet up immediate and future needs and respond to shocks and stresses in changing circumstances (Moser 1998: 5)
Survival strategy	The range of adjustments made by households in response to internal and external factors, to survive at the same level or attain upward mobility (Lingam 2005: 16)

Table 1.3: Working definitions of variables for the primary research question
Source: Cited literatures

1.8 Study areas

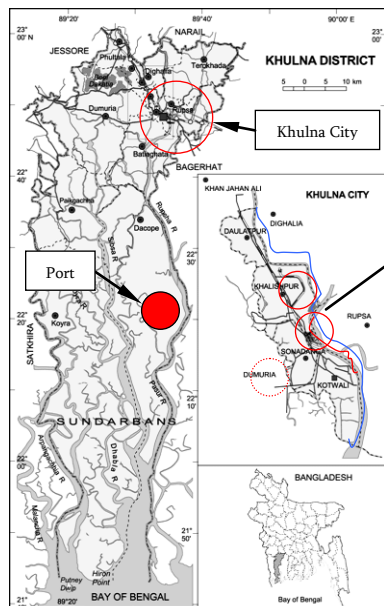


Figure 1.2: Showing clockwise-Bangladesh, Khulna District and Khulna City in 2003
Source: KDA

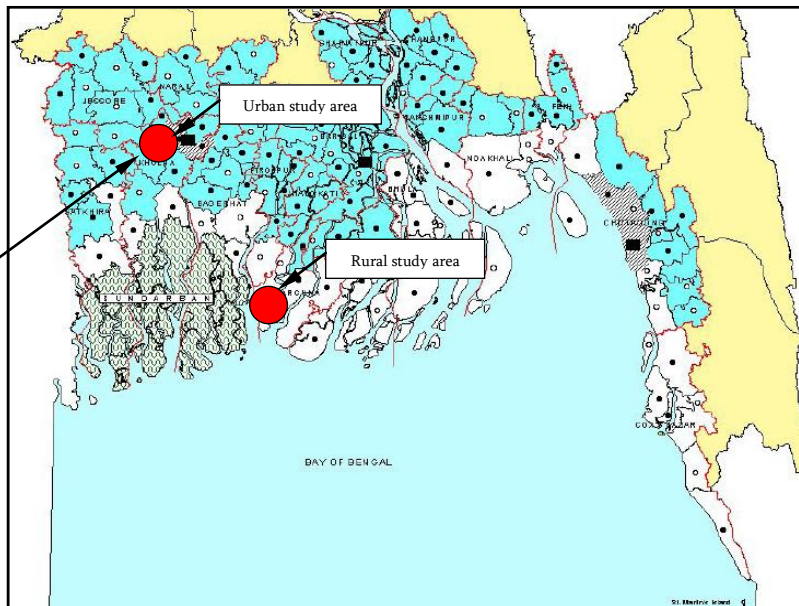


Figure 1.3: Showing urban and rural areas in coastal zones, Bangladesh; showing also the study areas
Source: Ahmad 2005: 4

Two different yet correlated study areas have been selected for this research; one is *Khulna*, the third largest city in Bangladesh, while the other is a specific *Thana*¹⁰ called *Patharghata*, one of *Khulna*'s neighbouring coastal areas. *Khulna* is one of the older cities in Bangladesh

10. Smallest local government jurisdiction for the Government of Bangladesh, comprised of a number of villages

and also an early industrial city where a fair amount of economic activities take place due to the presence of export oriented industries (jute, shrimp etc.). It is also not very far from the locations most vulnerable to natural calamities; hence it retains a good road and water communication network with these areas. Probably these two reasons, in combination, make *Khulna* one of the most popular targets for people in desperate needs for job. Although there is another ‘big’ city (called *Barisal*) closer to these rural areas, yet it is very common for people to choose *Khulna* instead. *Patharghata*, as the rural study area, is thus selected bearing in mind about its proximity to *Khulna*, its general socio-economic conditions and the availability of migrants from this area in *Khulna*. And above all, *Patharghata’s* history of being a natural-hazard prone area remains the most important selection criteria.

Khulna: *Khulna* has the third largest urban agglomeration in Bangladesh with a population of +1.5 million with a population density of 18,000/km² being one of the highest in the country (Anon 2000). It has also the highest concentration of urban poor amongst all the coastal towns and cities in Bangladesh (Ahmad 2005: 16). Currently it stands 37th in the list of world’s fastest growing cities (Citymayors 2007; see also Annexes, table 5; figure 1 for population growth trend). In addition, the city has one of the largest concentrations of slums (totalling 560) in the country as well, leaving almost quarter of a million living there with 90% of them falling below the national poverty line (Metro 2006). Probably this contributes most to the informal nature of its labour market (more than 50% engaged there; see Annexes – tables 4, 6, 7; figure 2) (Anon 2000). Besides all these, *Khulna* faces another constant risk; for its proximity to an almost 400 km long rural coastline, where natural disasters are part of everyday life of the peasants. *Khulna* thus has to face the primary thrust from the despaired after every such catastrophe. Usually when it is over (like cyclone *Sidr*, November 2007; see UNICEF 2007), the city is expected to swarm with people driven out by this, not to speak of the ever-presence of seasonal and commuter migrants (BBS 2000: 251-267).

Patharghata: The coastal zone of Bangladesh is the home for +7 million households. People have been living here for centuries and of course, in close interaction with nature. It is a *land of rivers, flood and marshes where man’s livelihood largely depends upon the vagaries of nature* (Establishment Division GOB, 1982 as cited in Ahmad 2003: 12). The countryside being largely agrarian in nature, the coastal livelihoods generally pivot around occupations like agricultural labour, small farming, fishing, petty business, and other non-farm supply sectors as most of them having no cultivable land of their own. This coastline of Bangladesh comprises of several thousand villages, which are vulnerable to natural disasters like floods, erosion and cyclones (see Annexes; table 8). And over the years, it has become the way of life for the inhabitants of these rural coasts. However, it takes its toll as frequent disasters sweeps through more often than not. Hence this is no wonder that in Bangladesh, 10% of its urban slum dwellers originate from displaced rural homes due to natural causes and consequences (Ahmad 2005: 16). Similarly, *Patharghata* has a reputation of being one of the most disaster-prone areas in Bangladesh. The *Thana* (under *Barguna* district) has an area of 387.36 km², which is bounded by *Mathbaria* and *Bamna* on the north, the *Bay of Bengal*



Figure 1.4: Patharghata Upazila (now Thana)
Source: Anon 2008a

on the south, *Barguna Sadar* and the river *Bishkhali* on the east, and *Sarankhola* and the river *Haringhata* on the west (Anon 2008). It actually defines the boundary between the sea and land. With population of around 150,000, its main occupations remain agriculture, fishing and agricultural labourer while main export items remain rice, molasses, *Hilsa* fish and shrimp. Average literacy for the *Thana* is less than 50%.

1.9 Research design

The research design outlines different sequential stages of the research in a systematic order. As it is drawn in a very linear and unidirectional manner (figure 1.5), in reality, feedbacks from various stages makes it more circular. Nevertheless, the research commences with the statement of objectives, mentioned in section 1.3, while the study starts with the preparation of a problem statement by reviewing a number of important sources which concern the contexts under investigation. The preliminary research question thus has been prepared depending on the research objectives and in line with the statement of problems. Later in Chapter 2, the theories regarding rural-urban migration and sustainable livelihoods are chosen as two main areas of interest, depending on the research question (thus variables in section 1.7). In line with these two theoretical areas, Chapter 2 discusses two sets of relevant theories, validates the variables and helps develop a number of theoretical notions to construct indicators for the research framework in Chapter 3. However, depending on the arguments posed and literary criticisms made in this chapter, the SL framework is adapted particularly to study rural coastal migrants' livelihoods in line with the interest of this research. The SLF thus serves as the research framework and harnessed accordingly to the purpose of this research.

Chapter 3 actually focuses on further elaboration of the original research question. Here, three sub-questions are developed to specifically answer the research question. These three sub-questions investigate migrants' livelihoods regarding three historical stages of their lives. Later, samples are selected depending on a set of pre-defined criteria; here the limitations for this research are also considered. Subsequently, a pool of measuring instruments is sought for, which fit the context and appropriate for the nature of data required. Thus, multiple and appropriate instruments helps better triangulation of data and its reliability. Before actual data collection, some piloting is carried out to check the validity and objectivity of the proposed instruments and also to train the co-researchers (also includes the researcher himself). In fact, piloting actually helped provide feedback for the interview and observation schedule. It also helped shape the research questions for their better refinement. Finally, the findings are presented and data is analysed in line with the schemes mentioned in Chapters 3 and 4.

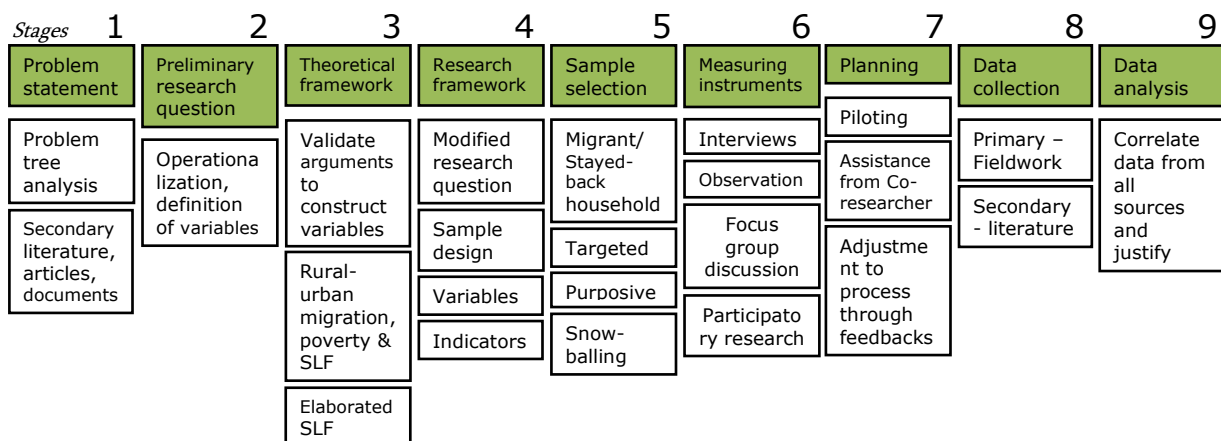


Figure 1.5: Showing proposed design for research (numbers 1 to 9 indicate various stages of the research)
Source: Author

2.1 Introduction

Investigation of the livelihoods of both migrants and the non-migrants in a historical outline requires a sound understanding of a set of related concepts namely rural-urban migration, the nature of rural-urban interaction, poverty and indeed theories concerning livelihoods (and ways to measure that). However, for the purpose of this research, the theoretical notions outlined in figure 2.1 would like to combine these diverse yet related theoretical areas to investigate rural coastal peoples' livelihoods in a historical-chronological order. To understand fully about the issues, debates and factors affecting their livelihoods (in the rural areas and in the city respectively), a correlation between them is essential. As this research focuses chiefly on rural coastal migrants, the primary area of study thus remains rural-urban migration and its various facets. Then again, it is also essential to have a comprehensive understanding about migrants' livelihoods; thus a second theoretical area is chosen, which looks into migrants' (and also their rural counterparts') livelihoods.

Here, the point of departure largely remains debates and discussions on rural-urban migration (and its various categories; section 2.3). Then the following section examines the *man-made* factors, which provide momentum for migration decision-making. Subsequently, the next section throws light on environment and its potentials as a determining factor behind migration decision-making, considering the secondary study area being the rural coast. As *internal migration* is essentially a consequence of an ongoing rural-urban dynamics, the subsequent section therefore discusses the issue of rural-urban interaction as part of rural people's livelihood strategy. Here, migration is discussed as a continuous and interrelated part of this interaction process. And last but not the least, poverty as a concept is examined with regard to its role in migration and migrants' livelihood challenges. Nevertheless, once these theories are addressed, a framework to study livelihoods is selected depending on its comprehensiveness to enable in depth research (section 2.4). Later the framework is customized for the best use with this current research. And generally, each section is wrapped up by a summary, with indications about the indicators for the research framework and issues to be looked at during data collection.

2.2 The outline of theories

This theoretical outline (as in figure 2.1) is designed to identify and develop variables through a review of the selected theories, which are supposed to address the queries raised by the research question in the first place. Here, migrants' lives are split into three phases and the relevant theories are presented in a chronological order in line with the migrants' life histories. The first set of theories (P1, represent phase one of migrants' lives) investigates and discusses about the rural context and its various (*man-made* and *natural*) elements that pose challenges to rural peoples' livelihoods. It also tries to find out peoples' livelihood strategies in the rural areas before migration. However, following these, P2 tries to find out the exact motives behind migration, the preparedness and rural-urban interaction as part of the livelihood strategy for the rural poor. Finally, P3 investigates migrants' livelihood strategies as the focus remains on migrants' assets implementation and management in the context of the city. However, as P1 and P3 largely deal with the contexts, and as the contexts have been elaborated in Chapter 1, mainly P2 (thus relevant theories) is elaborated here. And as all the theories are examined and arguments posted, the adapted SLF later provides for the variables, which are implemented later during fieldwork. Broadly, this sequence remains the phases for presenting and analyzing data in Chapter 4 as well.

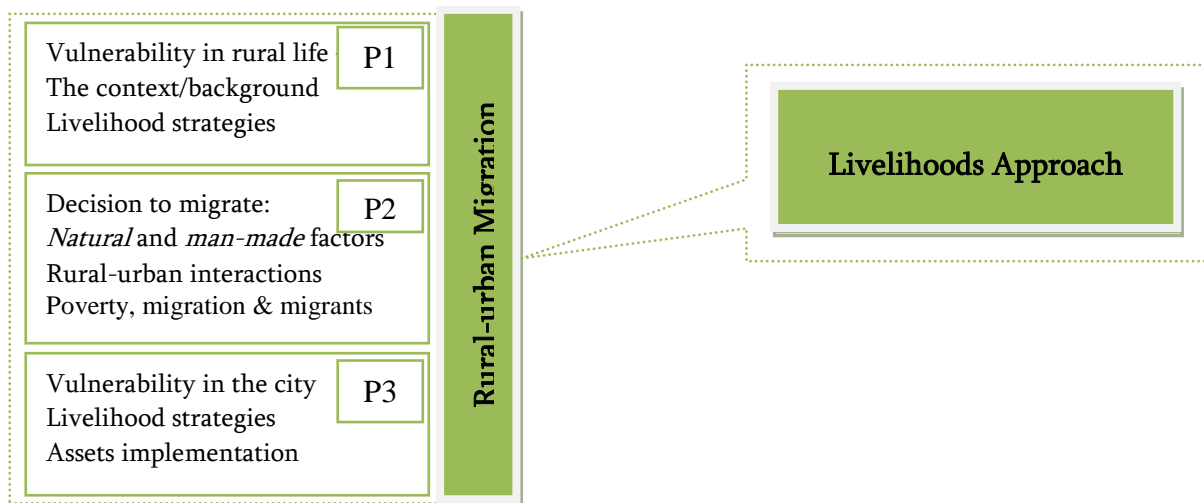


Figure 2.1: Theoretical outline for research: showing rural-migration and livelihoods as two key theoretical areas to be investigated as bold texts; the detailed areas are also mentioned in normal texts

Source: Author

2.3 Rural-urban migration

2.3.1 Rural-urban migration and migrants - a categorical overview

Migration within a country can be broadly categorized into four types, namely rural-urban, rural-rural, urban-rural and urban-urban. Often, all of these can be found in the same country – and sometimes even within the same area within a given time. However, for the interest of this dissertation, the focus will be on rural-urban category mostly. Since this type of migration is rapidly gaining in importance especially in the fast urbanizing (and of course, industrializing) economies of Asia, the rural-urban wage differentials are also growing. Although there are various instances of smaller movements typically undertaken by poorer people to smaller towns and to places with conglomerations of non-farm activities, the direct migration from rural to urban still remains a growing reality nevertheless.

The demographic characteristics of longer term migrants are usually different from temporary migrants¹. This latter category comes mostly from nearby rural provinces to work as freelance daily-basis workers/labourers or small traders. Even where urban incomes are not significantly higher than rural areas, urban work may be available more regularly compared to rural work, which is often associated to cropping and/or harvesting season (Deshingkar and Grimm 2004: 11-12). Asian country studies indicate that compared to permanent migrants, temporary migrants are more likely to be older, male, with lower levels of education, married (but leaving behind their families in the place of origin - from now on what will be called *home*), living in poor conditions and remitting most of their income.

Frequently, the term *voluntary*² is used to clarify the migrants' attitude towards moving out of home at their own will and own choice, although it is still obscure whether migrants who move from areas which do not guarantee their livelihood consider their departure as being *voluntary* or not. For example, in South-Asia, with a continuing high level of rural-rural migration, agriculturally poor areas send workers to better irrigated areas (*Ibid*: 6). In addition, as agro-processing and manufacturing have recently become more important in

1. *Internal migration* can be categorized into several types in terms of time-spending in a city; commuting, very short term migration, seasonal migration, long term migration and permanent migration are the forms of migration, which have been some familiar patterns in Asian countries (Deshingkar and Grimm 2004: 13); except for permanent, all other can be considered as temporary migration
2. Contrary to it comes the term *forced*, which is used to describe a migratory movement in which an element of coercion exists, including threats to life and livelihood, whether arising from *natural* or *man-made* causes (IOM 2004: 25)

attracting migrants, many people including the young and the middle-aged, travel to work in construction and urban services in the expanding informal sector (in line with the SAP model described in Chapter 1). At the same time, growing population pressure, environmental limits and falling agricultural commodity prices also cause exodus of people, making it difficult to judge whether the cause being *voluntary* (or *forced*) or not. And last but not the least, the wage difference between skilled agricultural work and unskilled informal work in cities is very large, contributing mostly to today's rural-urban divide; here, certainly, the move is *voluntary* while the underlying reasons remaining *forced*.

The type of migration could be very decisive; it shows whether migrants' possess any important asset back home or not, what is the family situation back home and at the same time outline the intentions behind the move. Thus this study also indicates whether and how migrants' remain attached to their places of origin. Simultaneously, it depicts what kind of livelihood strategy they were dealing with. Therefore, it is important to investigate these alongside people's motives for migration. On the other hand, although it is difficult to decide whether the migration being voluntary or forced, I would very much like to ask about the questions regarding the contextual elements (threats, challenges, opportunities, trends etc.) that make people move out of their home, leave their familiar territory, the community they used to be part of and of course their kin in the villages.

2.3.2 Internal migration and man-made factors

The beginning of the study on *internal migration* (especially the rural-urban category) and the recognition of a number of *man-made* factors behind it date back to more than half a century now. However, to start with, the following paragraph provides brief underpinning of the key theoretical ideas that have been developed in these six decades. Regarding the multitude of issues covered, these theories are considered relevant for the purpose of this research. Later in this section, the discussions continue about the causes and consequences of *man-made* factors behind migration.

As early as in the 1950's, Lewis outlined rural-urban migration as being the resultant of surplus labour in the rural agricultural sector, only to be compensated later by Ranis and Fei (in 1960's), who added that migration also takes place due to the technical progress helping the rural agricultural sector, and as capital investments drop in this sector. This way, they tried to explain the notion of surplus labour, that being left without any work, migrate to cities. Later, early in the 1970's, the famous Harris-Todaro model attempted to explain rural-urban migration flows as being closely linked with the ever-growing urban unemployment sector (and the opportunities it provides). This is the first model that attempts to explain its tendencies, and speaks for its potentials as a continual and on-going process that will never cease as long as urban areas will continue to provide employment opportunities. However, the all important theory (as far as this research is concerned) was first brought in by Stark and Levhari in 1980's when they outlined migration as a family's (livelihood) strategy to diversify its income possibilities by moving out of home in a temporary or a permanent basis. Later in late 80's, Katz and Stark came up with the model that suggests that migration is actually a resultant of considerable income differences between the rural and the urban as it has also been found while the discussions were made earlier in Chapter 1.

Subsequently, the following two decades experienced the evolution of all these mentioned theories through further elaborations. This way, Vishwanath (early in 1990's) explained migration from a 'job-search' perspective, more related to the models suggested by Stark and Levhari and Katz and Stark. Later Carrington, Detragiache and Vishwanath added on to this in late 90's, about the roles previous migrants play to influence fresh migrants from rural areas. However, early in 2000's, Ortega and Sato again went back to the dichotomy of rural and urban and speak for the better structural characteristics of the urban labour market in

comparison to rural. They also added that this relation between the rural and urban is equally beneficial for both migrants and city dwellers as this allows migrants to benefit from better employment prospects while natives also benefit from the labour demand boost following migration. Last but not the least, Fields (in mid 2000's) revives the discussion regarding migration due to inequality in rural job creation, urban job market and the sustaining wage difference that continually persists and pulls migration (Taylor and Martin 2008).

In additions to the theoretical debates and indications, factors like relative strength of the local economies (like availability and remuneration of jobs), existence of local amenities, cost and availability of public goods, institutional factors (introduction or enforcement of laws), absence of a rural credit market, credit constraints etc. influence the rural poor to take decisions to migrate. It also depends on its monetary and non-monetary costs (distance to potential destinations has been shown to intimidate migration). Migration is also facilitated by the concentration of the migrant pool (of same origin) in the area of destination (Lall et al 2006: 5). Several studies indicate that until recently, migration was dominated by single men and usually by young adults (de Haan 2000, cited in Ibid: 15). It has been found that relatively better educated male, aged 15 to 30, with relatively more contacts or *capital* has the highest propensity to migrate. But more women are migrating for work these days, not just as accompanying spouses. This so-called *autonomous female migration* has increased because of a greater demand for female labour in certain services and industries (like RMG) and also because of growing social acceptance of women's economic independence and mobility. *Segmentation along ethnic lines* has also been mentioned by many authors, which is mainly due to traditional skills and social networks. For example, if one person from a certain caste/tribe/region has good connections and finds work in an area then his/her relations and friends immediately follow.

A common strategy for poor families is also to take children out of school during periods of economic hardship and send them to work in neighbouring villages or towns as servants and apprentices. This can be associated with the availability of labour within the household, which is also a strong determinant of the likelihood to migrate. It has been found that labour-scarce households do not migrate (Ibid: 19). On the whole, evidences suggest that people with limited *access to land* and other *assets* are more likely to migrate. The poorest usually cannot migrate since they do not have enough *labour* or the resources required for start-up investments on tools and other assets, transport, food and shelter. The move often involves bribes, which they are to bear as well. This is a very distinctive phenomenon in South Asia (Ibid: 17-18).

As far as preparation for migration is concerned, researchers found that potential migrants invest in education before migrating, in anticipation that *human capital* will be useful and better rewarded in the city. They may also gather information about jobs through migrant networks or search for a job from the rural base using their kinship relations, which reduces both the risk of temporary unemployment and the uncertainty at destination. Migrants often resort to informal channels such as friends and networks. Most literature define migration decision to be selective; both low and high skilled individuals are more likely to migrate but usually for differing reasons: "surplus" low-skilled individuals have strong incentives to move to the city in search of a manual job they may not find in the rural area, while "scarce" educated workers may find that their *human capital* possibly better rewarded in cities than in rural areas. *Internal migration* concerns young men because men bear lower risks of vulnerability than women when migrating (Lall et al 2006: 4).

Whether or not migration is poverty reducing, it is certainly a dangerous ploy. Mosse *et al* (2002, cited in *Ibid*: 32-33) for instance, note in their study in India that migrants work long hours in harsh conditions; injuries are common and there is inadequate medical assistance or compensation. *Water, fuel, sanitation and security* are major problems regarding their everyday livelihoods. They face harassment, abuse, theft, forced eviction and even demolition of their dwellings by urban authorities. The sexual exploitation of women by masons, contractors, the police and others is not uncommon, but remains mostly unreported for the fear of consequences (loss of employment, violence). Even the children are vulnerable to such abuse. *Rickshaw*-pullers lose their *rickshaws* if they are late with rental payments, factory workers may be fired or subject to daily payment curtail immediately if they miss a day's work; there is also competition as others can replace them immediately. Workers are also exposed to great risk if they attempt to organize (as unions).

The work carried out by Stark and Levhari, for the first time, tries explicitly to explain rural urban migration as part of a family's livelihood strategy. Since the works of most others actually try to theorize migration from a more macroeconomic perspective, ample scope is thus left to explore the perspectives of the migrants themselves. It thus makes me interested to investigate the exact nature of micro economic causes and consequences from a more down-to-earth viewpoint. I expect to discover something more intrinsic and sympathetic by studying through the migrants' point of view, their acts, decision-making and movements to see how that comply with the macro perspectives.

Discussions presented later are based on more recent research concerning potential migrants' livelihood efforts prior to actual migration and various acts they engage into before part or the whole family decides to move out. It is only after almost two decades, in recent years, we find migration being studied from this perspective. It thus becomes interesting to look into migrants' preparations, their activities prior to migration, how they go (or even went) about various strategies to raise their income and cope-up with changing circumstances and also in the middle of an exploitative and dangerous labour market. Interestingly, this section also tries to correlate with the macro-economic perspectives of the previous section. It is somewhat an indication of the scope I mentioned about previously

2.3.3 Population displacement and environmental factors

Despite the terms *Environmental Migration* or *Environmental Migrants* (or even *Refugees*) are common in the scientific world, their origin and the motive are also under rigorous criticism by scholars in this particular field. According to Black (2001), this term was first popularized by Lester Brown of the *Worldwatch* Institute in the 1970s, which perhaps have become famous after El-Hinnawi (1985) and Jacobson (1988)'s frequent citation. Myers and Kent (1995 as in *Ibid*) also have used the term *Environmental Refugees* and described them as *persons who no longer gain a secure livelihood in their traditional homelands because of what are primarily environmental factors of unusual scope*. Nonetheless, the expression *Environmental Refugees* has been vigorously criticised afterwards by several researchers for being poorly defined, and legally meaningless and confusing. However, a distinction between *Environmental Migrants* and *Environmental Refugees* is drawn finally. The former is then described as *people who respond to a combination of 'push-pull' factors - prominent amongst them are environmental factors*; while the latter is described as *vulnerable people who are displaced due to extreme environmental degradation* (it is still debatable as there are always some choices left for refugees that indicates to some *pull* factors; for example, decision regarding *which place to go* can depend on the potentials the destination has to offer). As this term emphasizes the *force* element, IOM has recently suggested a broader working definition for *Environmental migrants* as...*persons or groups of persons who for compelling reasons of sudden or progressive changes in the environment that adversely affect their lives or living conditions, are obliged to leave their habitual homes, or choose to do so, either temporarily or permanently, and who move either within their country or abroad* (McKinley 2008).

However, the term *Environmentally Displaced Persons* is later coined by IOM, making it explicit from *Environmental Migrants* as...*persons who are displaced within their own country of habitual residence or who have crossed an international border and for whom environmental degradation, deterioration or destruction is a major cause of their displacement, although not necessarily the sole one (IOM 1996)*. Here displacement usually describes a situation where people have been uprooted from their home by an external event or process that they have little or no control over. A form of displacement thus often becomes part of the *forced* element of *forced* migration, while the *migration* element acknowledges the agency of *forced* migrants. In addition to debates about broadening the definition of displacement, disagreements also exist regarding when displacement should be considered to have ended (Kolmannskog 2008: 11).

Black (2001: 8) also has been very sceptic about the term *Environmental Refugee*, and termed it as political as anything else. He also suggests that it is not more than a political jargon since migration is not a new phenomenon by no means as ample evidence worldwide is found where long and short-term population movement has been a trend for centuries as a survival strategy. For example, in a study of response to floods in Bangladesh, he points out that there is a range of adaptive responses by local populations, which include forecasting, the use of warning systems, flood insurance, *relief* and rehabilitation efforts. Interestingly, it is noted that...*in contrast to the English meaning of flood as a destructive phenomenon, its usage in Bengali refers to it as both a positive and a negative resource*. For him, this notion of *Environmental Refugees* therefore, hardly conforms to arguments about recent destruction of the ecological balance by modern society; rather, migration is again perhaps better seen as a customary coping strategy. In this sense, movement of people is a response to spatio-temporal variations in climatic and other conditions, rather than a new phenomenon resulting from a physical limit having been breached (*Ibid*: 6).

However, despite Black's arguments, it is neither easy to be sceptical about the incidents worldwide nor it is easy to avoid them. As the magnitude of severity and destruction of natural events are growing everyday and affecting the poorer countries mostly, thousands of people are therefore *forced* to migrate (although this movement is said to be only temporary and does not entail a permanent change of residential location), which is seen typically represented by evacuation. Nevertheless, estimates suggest that between 20-25% of the world's population were affected by natural hazards during the 1970s and 1980s, which, during the period 1972-1995, have increased by 5-7% per year, while the damage resultant of these disasters increased by 5-10% per year. Predictions up to 2030 suggest a continuation of these trends in addition to their aggravation (Kondratyev, Krapivin and Phillips 2002, cited in Hunter 2007: 1).

Analysis suggests that environment as a contextual dynamics interacts with the individual, the households and other community characteristics to shape household migration decision-making (Ezra and Kiros 2001 as cited in *Ibid*: 3). As compared to migrants generally, those denoting natural disasters as the reasons for their move tend to be older, are more likely female-headed households and minority group members, and characterized by lower income and educational levels. Thus, researchers conclude that the less socio-economically advantaged may be those most likely to migrate following a natural disaster. It is suggested that those households with more assets may be more likely to rebuild, perhaps as a result of lessened damage due to their ability to undertake more mitigation measures such as installation of disaster-resistant windows and/or roofs (Peacock and Girard 1997 as cited in *Ibid*: 3).

Once the disaster is over, and the movement is completed, migrant households typically relocate only a short distance away³. Such short distance mobility (mostly temporary) is a product of lack of resources, presence of kin, and belief that things will get better eventually. Migration here is again a household coping mechanism, with members typically having little faith in finding permanent residence; displaced often continue to live in fear of eviction, either by governmental authorities or *natural* forces (Haque and Zaman 1989; Mutton and Haque 2004; Zaman 1991 as cited in *Ibid: 2*). In addition, Chan (1995 cited in *Opcit*) argues that migration is an option available only to wealthier households, while options are restricted for many others due to poverty, low educational attainment and social mobility, insecure land tenure, a lack of government aid, disaster preparedness and/or relief programs. Further, if provided the opportunity to relocate, many vulnerable households do so only to find themselves on different areas because these are the least expensive places to live. And the final migratory response to environmental hazards, for some cases, is of particular household members taking on more permanent migration while others staying behind.

It is a matter of great interest for me to see if migrants could be categorized on environmental basis only or not. What I want to ask by this is to what extent environment provides impetus and motivations for rural coastal migrants to move out. Additionally, it will be fascinating to see if 'man-made' causes have anything to make rural coastal people vulnerable to 'natural' forces. My point here is to identify what role environment plays (and how influential it is) to force people out of their home territory. In the process, the threshold limit beyond which migration attempts are described as either forced or voluntary can also be outlined. Finally, this research provides instances to draw comparison between forced and voluntary migrants from the coast.

2.3.4 Rural urban interactions - a typical livelihood strategy

As far as the usage of rural resources is concerned, the boundaries between urban settlements and rural hinterlands are usually more blurred than portrayed by administrative definitions. Urban residents and enterprises always have a considerably larger footprint over an area significantly larger than the actual built-up area, for its supply of products and ecological resources. Research carried out in many cities and their hinterlands in Asia shows that the growth of extended metropolitan regions where agricultural and non-agricultural activities are spatially integrated makes the distinction between rural and urban problematic (Firman 1996; Hugo 1996; Ginsberg *et al* 1991, as cited in *Tacoli 1998: 148*). This interdependence thus can be identified as the primary driving force for the activities that take place between these two contrasting yet mutually dependent places. It is equally true also for the villagers who produce basic commodities and offer cheap labour, hence need a marketplace to sell. Equally the urban centres must also consume products and services from the rural farm and non-farm sectors as they don't produce any. Even where things are defined and classified as either rural or urban and are spatially separated, there is a continued and varied exchange of resources.

Urban centres may provide markets as well as social services for the inbound rural population whereas, for many urban individuals, access to rural land or produce through family or reciprocal relationships can be vital. Therefore, dividing the rural-urban is, in some cases and for some groups, a detrimental part of their survival strategy (*Ibid: 149*). The rural-urban inter-dynamics thus is an ever-going process, fuelling the movements of people and products between these two places. And as today's cities are flourishing a thousand times over the rural areas, the population movement is naturally towards cities from the rural countryside that is often termed as *population migration*. And as far as migration to cities is concerned, it

3. In the abovementioned survey, nearly 88% of households had remained within 2 miles of their previous residence (Zaman 1991 as cited in *Hunter 2007: 2*)

is not uncommon for one or some of the members of a rural household to migrate but retain strong links with their relatives in rural *home* areas. When this happens, households can be defined as *multi-spatial*⁴. Traditional approaches to migration have mostly relied on the notion of *push-pull* factors as the main explanatory elements. In the neo-classical perspective though, decisions to move out are made at the individual level in response to hardships in source areas (the *push* factors) and to perceived comparative advantages in destination areas (the *pull* factors). The structuralist approach, which offers a more macro-level perspectives to migration, on another hand, tends to portray migrants as victims of national, regional or international (and even natural) events rather rational decision makers themselves. Here *push-pull* factors are considered as a dividing process with respect to access to resources, and migration as one of few options available to the most vulnerable population strata (*Ibid: 154*).

From rural migrants' perspective, it is important to maintain connections with nearby urban centres, possibly with kin/friends living there. Often it forms part of their livelihood strategy and even most sorted coping mechanism in times of crisis. Bright city lights, opportunity for a considerably higher pay with more job options thus become important pull factor for these deprived population group. Whether or not (and if, then to what extent) the vulnerable rural population group maintains this correlation with their urban counterparts is an area worth investigation. Similarly, from long time urban migrants' perspective, it is also important to maintain relationships with their places of origin as sometimes they invest/send remittances through kin/friends living there. May be it is also important from their livelihood perspective as well. Nevertheless, how these relationships are maintained, in which frequency this relationship is explored, what are the gains and losses are all simple yet important questions that need to be answered. And although this research very much intends to focus on more micro-level issues regarding households' livelihood strategies, the investigations also provides me with broader (like meso- or macro- level) issues for consideration.

2.3.5 Poverty, migration and migrants

Migration can be both cause of and be caused by poverty. Similarly, poverty can be alleviated as well as exacerbated by population movements. In some parts of the world and under certain conditions, poverty may be a root cause of migration, whereas in other parts, under different conditions, the poor will be among the last to move. As a working hypothesis, it can be proposed that poverty is more a root cause of population movement in Sub-Saharan Africa, where migration is often central to survival, than in Eastern-Asia where migration is more for human betterment than anything else (*Skeldon 2003: 1*).

Typically, the survival migration of the poorest is mainly local, or regional and primarily within the country. In apparent contradiction to the logic of survival migration, the general findings from most studies of migration in *voluntary* (non-shock or non-disaster) situations is that it is not the poorest who move but those with access to at least some resources, no matter how meagre these might be. Migration always involves some costs of transportation and the abandonment of much of the few possessions the poor might own. The poorest of the poor thus cannot afford either risk or movement and the majority starves *in situ*. Except for some particular areas and at particular times, mostly it is not absolute poverty that drives people out; it rather happens where people feel they are poor (relative poverty) (*Ibid: 4*). Probably it is not the poorest who migrate from the villages, relative to urban poor, and their concentration may be a drag on development. Given that migration is generally not the principal component of urban growth in the developing world (natural increase is usually more important), and that migrants have higher rates of employment than the locals. The principal causes of urban poverty therefore, are to be found in the metropolitan regions themselves rather than in migration to them (*Ibid: 9*).

4. Combination of farm and non-farm activities and rural and urban residence for a single household, as a survival strategy

However, migration as a consequence of absolute poverty thus shifts the focus to the issue of 'feeling poor', i.e. relative rather than absolute deprivation. Migration, of natives going outside their community, establishes linkages between origins and destinations. Migration thus creates the conditions that lead people to consider themselves to be poor, which in turn lead to further migration as they move in order to satisfy new-found aspirations (migration may help to reduce absolute poverty among some, while simultaneously acting to increase feelings of relative deprivation to others). In general, people may be better off economically as a result of migration, but the feeling of relative deprivation may generate resentment. This process sometimes remain at the root of migration attempts, giving the idea that poverty is the driving force but in reality is the product of a desire to better oneself against new standards. But the key point is that migrants from a community, and particularly the initial ones, are among the most innovative and dynamic of all (Skeldon 1990 cited in *Ibid*: 5).

If poverty is considered the result of the *forced* migration, maybe it is the fault of poor planning rather than of the movement itself. There is no necessary reason that the migration must lead to an extension of poverty although this often appears to be the idea. The principal reason lies in the nature of the migration process itself. Much of the migration may be circular in nature; labourers moving from villages to towns, either return at a later stage, or move to extend the resource base of their families by accumulating new resources elsewhere. Migrants rarely move simply from A to B but their movement is often a complex system of circulation between two or more destination. Also, migrants are rarely individuals operating in a social vacuum but are meshed into family, household, friends and other community networks. Migrants therefore, rather than individual income maximizers, can be depicted as risk-minimizing strategists, which actually falls within the so-called "new home economics" approach to theories of migration (*Ibid*: 8-9). It has also been found that migrants with entrepreneurial qualities are only the minority among the migrants.

The issues of *well-being* and *ill-being* are also very important considering rural migrants' coping. Being destitute and poor themselves, as discussed in previous paragraphs, most migrants experience *ill-being* as detrimental to their livelihoods. In their seminal investigation, Narayan *et al* (2000a) finds out that the former has a psychological and spiritual dimension as a mental state of harmony, happiness and peace of mind, while the later includes mental distress, breakdown, depression and madness, often described by the poor as impacts of poverty. Even children have a distinct view of the bad life as well. Studies suggest that it is only a little more that is required to make poor people feel well - a good quality of life thus includes just having enough, be sound bodily, being strong, good-looking, socially being well, caring for and settling children, to have self respect, peaceful relation within family and community; all very simple wishes. Having security, civil peace, and safe environment, personal security, confidence for future, freedom of choice and in action, being able to help others etc. affect the state of poverty of the so-called *poor*. It has been equally fascinating and curious to uncover that material wealth have been seen against *well-being* by many. On the other, experiences about *ill-being* include lack of physical asset (food, shelter, livelihood means, assets and money), hunger, pain and discomfort, exhaustion etc. Exclusion, rejection, isolation and loneliness are also part of it as discussed in the previous paragraph. The study further shows that bad relation within the family and outsiders, insecurity, worry, fear and low self-confidence in addition to powerlessness, helplessness, frustration and anger are also strongly perceived as key denominators. In a nutshell, the reasons behind poverty, as historically perceived, becomes multidimensional concerning from material to mental, from monetary to spiritual; all of which, to contemporary knowledge, are responsible for the livelihood vulnerability of the deprived, the destitute and the excluded.

The exact nature of poverty can be figured out through the study of migrant households. Whether it is relative or absolute, or is it due to lack of financial means or social connections, the possible means that the migrants believe could alleviate them out of that, is crucial. Nevertheless, these are actually indicators of the resources they possess, and assets they lack. It is equally interesting to find out whether migration brings about any changes to these households' livelihoods or not. Either way, it is of great importance to search for the elements which bar or facilitate this group towards acquiring the assets they require to get themselves out of poverty. Altogether, their current livelihood vulnerability alongside previous ones can also be revealed through this current research.

Poverty has a non-material dimension alongside its material one as well. As the material dimension (physical and tangible assets) is not very difficult to measure, the non-material assets (mental status) are just opposite when it comes to measuring. And to weigh up vulnerability and level of exclusion comprehensively, it is not wise to measure only one and leave the other behind. As the migrants to the city are vulnerable in their places of living as well as in their workplace, it is worth investigating into the exact nature of mental stress they have to cope with in order to carry on. Furthermore, investigation into this dimension considering rural times can potentially provide important mental status as whether this contributed to migration decision-making or not.

2.4 Measuring livelihood strategies for migrants

2.4.1 Sustainable livelihoods: an overview

Livelihood is about the ways and means of *making a living*. Wallman (1984, cited in Anon 2008b) in the early 1980s referred to livelihoods as more than just a matter of finding or making shelter, transacting money, and preparing food to put on the table or exchange in the market place. For him, it is equally a matter of the ownership and circulation of information, the management of social relationships, the affirmation of personal significance and group identity, and the interrelation between each of these tasks with the other. All these productive tasks together constitute a livelihood. Hence, livelihood is like an umbrella, which suggests that social life is layered and these layers may overlap; this is a very important analytical feature of the notion of livelihoods. However, the most widely accepted definition of livelihood stems from the work of Robert Chambers and Gordon Conway after a few years later when they came up with the groundbreaking definition saying, *a livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living*. Ellis, on the other hand, confirms it as *the activities, the assets, and the access that jointly determine the living gained by an individual or household (Ibid)*. One way or another, recognising the multiple dimensions of assets and people's multiple livelihood efforts are keys to the sustainable livelihoods approach.

The *Brundtland Commission*⁵ Report of 1987 offered the first appearance of this concept in policy debate of what was to be later idealized as SLA. It mentioned first, about development which needs to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, which we all know by now as the core definition for sustainable development. This definition contains within it two key ideas: one, the concept of 'needs', in particular the essential needs of the poor, to which the priority should be given; and two, the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organisation on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs (Solesbury 2003: 4). However, the origination of sustainable livelihood as a concept is widely attributed to Robert Chambers being at IDS. The complete definition says that *a livelihood comprises of the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living: a livelihood is sustainable which can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain*

5. Created by UN in 1983 to address growing concerns about the deterioration of human environment and natural resources and their consequences for economic and social development

or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the long and short term (Chambers and Conway 1992: 7-8). They criticised many previous analyses of production, employment and income as industrial and reductionist (as did Jordan 1996 a few years later), which do not fit or capture the complex and diverse realities of most rural life (*Ibid*: 4).

Following the open-ended discussions provided by Chambers and Conway, a number of research has been carried out ever since, to theoretically pin down SLA's exact nature. Of them, the asset-vulnerability framework remains a prominent one for measuring poverty, which tends to see how the poor manages asset portfolios for their survival (Moser 1998). It was a comprehensive work, marking a transition, from top-down to bottom-up thinking, to assess the *status-quo* of urban poverty. This was a change of approach, a shift from considering *what people do not have*, to *what people posses*. It tried to measure out people's assets and take account of both tangible (monetary/physical wealth) and intangible (social capital, household relations). Here, the poor themselves are considered managers of complex asset portfolios and the central assumption being the more assets people command in the right mix, the greater their capacity to buffer themselves against external shocks. Sequential uptake of coping strategies (households select from a range of nutritional, economic and social assets in response) is thought to be the main mechanisms for survival. The research was conducted to see how these five assets (labour, human capital, productive assets, household relations, social capital) are used by the poor to answer the following research questions and come up with a more comprehensive and complete outcome in comparison to previous researches:

1. What risk do poor households take in order to withstand long-term economic crisis, without irreversible damage to their net asset position?
2. Under conditions of prolonged uncertainty, how do households diversify their assets, minimize vulnerability and prevent asset erosion?
3. Are some assets more finite than others?
4. What are the implications for households when 'all capital is crashed in'?

Moser also talks about the background of poverty assessment initiatives and their attributes (like the *Income Consumption Approach* during the 1990s only to be followed later by a more comprehensive and subjective participatory approach). She also throws light on the fundamentals of vulnerability, asset portfolio, coping strategy and capacity to manage assets. This actually paved the way to more comprehensive and inclusive livelihoods framework, later to be developed by DFID and other donors like CARE, UNDP and OXFAM GB.

Generally, livelihoods approach is a conceptual framework developed to use for analysing, understanding and managing the complexity of livelihoods, enabling complementarities and trade-offs between alternative supporting activities to be assessed (Carney 1998 as cited in Rakodi 2002). This approach is a tool that provides analytical basis for livelihood study by identifying main factors affecting livelihoods and the elements of compromise between them. The livelihood concept is based on the recognition of multiple household activities in which people engage to ensure survival and to improve *well-being*. It is an open and flexible model, subject to critical appraisal and free for modification and upgradation for achieving any particular goal. The concept of livelihood goes beyond the notions of poverty and includes a number of other important elements. Here poverty is characterized not only by lack of assets and inability to accumulate a portfolio of them, but also by lack of choice with respect to alternative coping strategies (*Ibid*).

2.4.2 Livelihood approaches - principles compared

CARE's *livelihoods approach* is considered to be sufficiently inclusive to address the challenge of large scale poverty, yet flexible enough to address constraints that are context-specific. It is basically a framework optimized for programming, to cut-cross its development initiatives supporting issues like promotion, protection and provisioning of livelihoods for households (Carney 1999: 4). On the other hand, *Oxfam GB* takes its definition of sustainable livelihoods from Chambers and Conway, 1992 (later DFID developed *Sustainable Livelihood Framework* depending on Oxfam's). It stresses that sustainability needs to be looked at from several perspectives including economic (e.g. functioning of markets, credit supply); social (networks, gender equity); institutional (capacity building, access to services and technology, political freedom) and ecological (quality and availability of natural resources) (*Ibid*: 11).

For UNDP, *livelihoods* implies the means, activities, entitlements and assets by which people make a living. Here *assets* are defined as: natural/biological (i.e. land, water, common-property resources, flora, fauna); social (i.e. community, family, networks); political (i.e. participation, empowerment – seldom included in 'social' category); human (i.e. education, labour, health, nutrition); physical (i.e. roads, clinics, markets, schools, bridges); and economic (i.e., jobs, savings, credit). The sustainability of livelihoods thus becomes a function of how people utilize asset portfolios on both short and long-term basis (*Ibid*: 14).

Finally, DFID stresses the importance to livelihoods of capital assets and distinguishes five main categories of them: natural (resource stocks, from which livelihoods are derived; e.g. land, water, wildlife, biodiversity, environmental resources), social (networks, membership of groups, relationships of trust, access to wider social institutions upon which people draw in pursuit of livelihoods), physical (basic infrastructure: transport, shelter, water, energy and communications and the production equipment and means), human (skills, knowledge, ability to labour and good health, important to the ability to pursue different strategies) and financial (resources which are available to people: savings, supplies of credit or regular remittances or pensions and which provide them with different livelihood options) (*Ibid*: 8).

2.4.3 DFID Sustainable livelihood framework - vulnerability, assets, strategies⁶

As previously mentioned, the original idea behind DFID's SL approach was to increase its own effectiveness for poverty reduction. The framework is designed so by figuring out a set of core principles in the programming of its activities to ensure that these correspond to the issues/areas of direct relevance for improving poor people's livelihoods. The framework (figure 2.2) is originally people-centred. Its primary objective is to help identify the factors affecting livelihoods, their relative importance, and the way they engage with each other. However, as livelihoods are shaped by a number of different forces and factors that are also themselves constantly shifting and changing, the analysis therefore commences with simultaneous investigation into people's assets, their objectives (livelihood outcomes which they seek for), and the livelihood strategies (which they adopt to achieve these objectives). And precisely because of its systematic nature (discusses context, assets and strategies in a non-linear yet cohesive manner), DFID SLF is chosen as the most suitable framework for this research. Once placed in a time and place dimension (which SLF is adaptive to as it offers flexibility), it is so able to investigate the changes in migrants' livelihood strategies over time and correlate these strategies between two places connected by the migration movements.

6. This section has been prepared in light of DFID framework *guidance sheet* as referred in DFID 1999, and comments and criticisms provided by Krantz 2001 and Rakodi 2002. The structure of this section remains brief discussion on the underlying principles behind the framework, the schematic framework itself, *vulnerability context*, the *asset pentagon* and livelihood strategies. Although livelihood outcome is an important part of the framework, it will not be discussed as it is not necessary for the purpose of this research

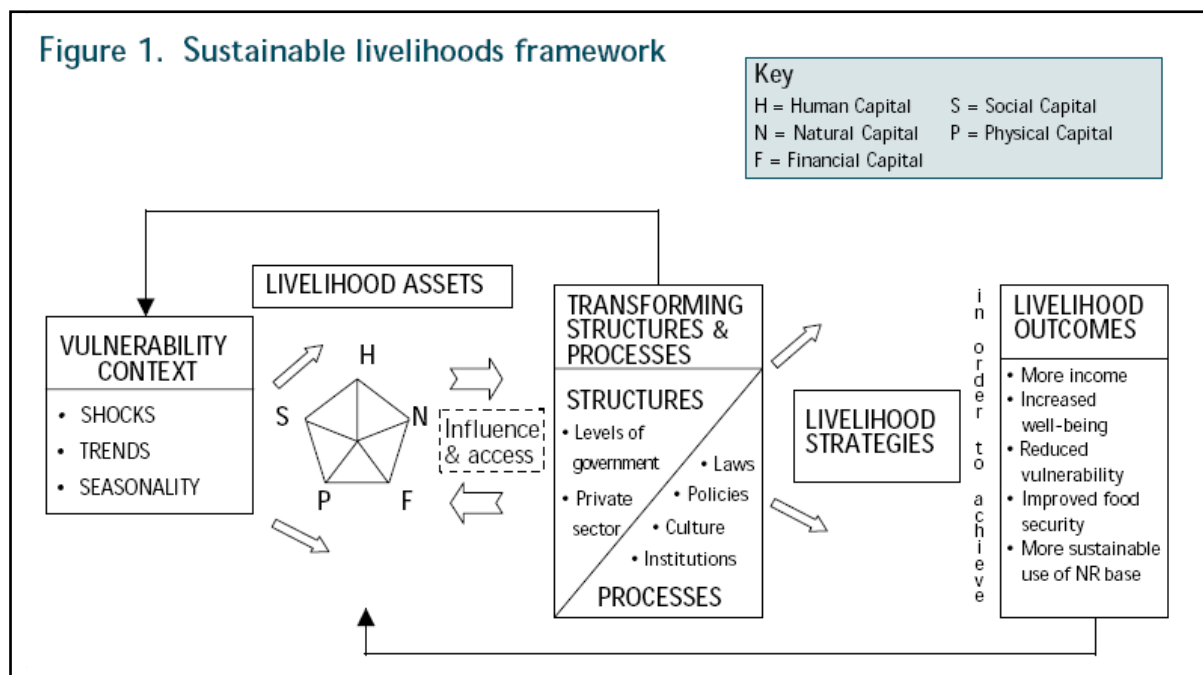


Figure 2.2: Showing sustainable livelihood framework by DFID
Source: DFID 1999

Here in this framework, the *vulnerability context* represents the overall external environment in which people live (DFID 1999: 22). People’s livelihoods and their access to and control of resources can be shaped by events largely beyond their control. For example, population-growth trends, macro-economic trends and policies, availability of natural resource, politics (internal and international), dynamics of technology, sudden shocks or events such as health issues, earthquakes, floods, droughts, conflict or war, agricultural problems such as pests and disease, inflation, and seasonal vulnerability of prices, production, employment opportunities or health can exert impact on livelihoods (Chambers and Conway 1992). Culture and household dynamics can also contribute to risk and vulnerability (Cahn 2002: 3). Of course, not all the trends listed here are negative or cause vulnerability; e.g. economic indicators can move in positive directions as well, diseases can be eradicated and new technologies may prove valuable to the destitute.

However, the use of *vulnerability context* draws attention to the fact that the series of influences is directly or indirectly responsible for many of the hardships faced mostly by the poorest in a society. It is common for them to be in a vicious circle; on one hand, the inherent fragility of poor people’s livelihoods makes them unable to cope with stresses, while on the other, it also makes them less able to manipulate or influence their environment to reduce those stresses. As a result, their vulnerability increases gradually and even when trends move in the positive or favouring direction, the poorest remain unable to benefit because they lack assets and strong institutions working for them.

Trends	Shocks	Seasonality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population trends • Resource trends (including conflict) • National/international economic trends • Trends in governance (also politics) • Technological trends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human health shocks • Natural shocks • Economic shocks • Conflict • Crop/livestock health shocks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of prices • Of production • Of health • Of employment opportunities

Table 2.1: Showing examples of trends, shocks and seasonality that constitutes vulnerability context
Source: DFID 1999

As explained earlier, the livelihoods approach is concerned first and foremost around people. It seeks to realize an accurate and realistic understanding of people's strengths (the assets/capital they possess) and how they go about their livelihoods to convert these into fruitful outcomes. Thus it assumes that people require a range of assets to achieve positive livelihood outcomes; no single asset on its own is sufficient enough to yield the desired livelihood outcomes that people seek. This is particularly true for people whose access to any given category of assets tends to be very limited, and that make them seek for other assets, to combine them in creative ways to make it up for the limitation to ensure survival.

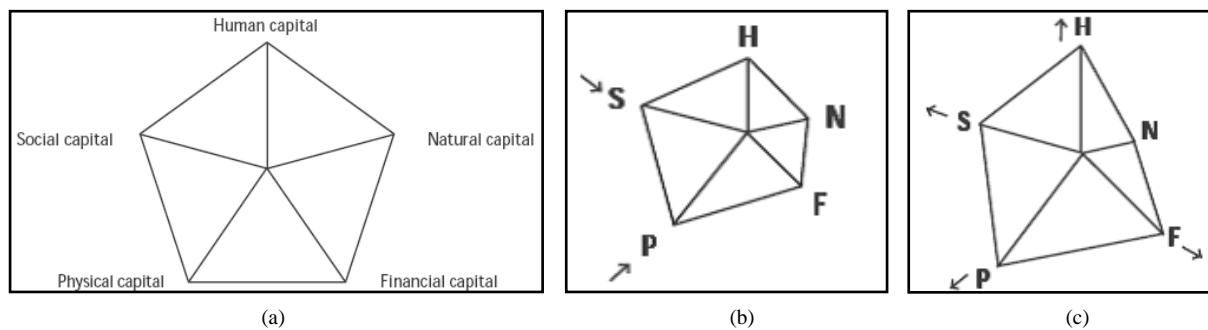


Figure 2.3: Showing asset pentagon by DFID: (a) Pentagon with all assets used equally (more ideal); (b) & (c) Deformed pentagon with asymmetric asset usage (more practical)

Source: [DFID 1999](#)

The *asset pentagon* forms the heart of the livelihoods framework (figure 2.2a), contained within the *vulnerability context*. The development of the pentagon is to provide information about people's assets/capital (see box below) graphically, hence presenting interrelationships between the various assets. The shape of the pentagon can be used to show schematically the extent of people's access to these five assets. Here the idea is that the centre of the pentagon, where the lines intersect, represents zero access to assets while the outermost ring represents maximum access. Considering this as the point of departure, different shaped pentagons could be drawn for different social groups or households. As asset management change constantly, the pentagon configuration changes accordingly (2.2b and 2.2c). However, it is important to incorporate a time dimension into any analysis of assets; to cover the effect time has on livelihoods as well as to make the model more comprehensive. Information is also vital here, on trends with reference to overall asset availability as well as, for example, on groups who are accumulating assets or on households that are losing and why.

Human capital: the labour resources available to households, which have both quantitative and qualitative dimensions. The former refers to the number of household members and time available to engage in income-earning activities. Qualitative aspects refer the level of education and skills and the health status of household members

Social capital: the social resources (networks, membership of groups, relationships of trust and reciprocity, access to wider institutions of society) on which people draw in pursuits of livelihoods

Natural capital: the natural resource stocks from which resource flows useful for livelihoods are derived, including land water, and other environmental resources, especially common pool resources

Physical capital: physical or produced capital refers to basic infrastructure (transport, housing, water, energy etc) and production equipment and means which enable people to pursue their livelihoods

Financial capital: the financial resources available to people (saving, credit, remittances, and pensions) which provide them with different livelihood outcomes

Source: [Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones 2002](#)

For the SL framework, it is very important not to have preconceptions like *what poor do* or *what their livelihood strategies are*; it is therefore, they are not assumed or presupposed. In the past making assumptions about the poor were very common, which eventually lead to twisted research outcome and as a consequence. It is therefore, the following types of issues are important working with this model to study *livelihood strategies*:

- Get to know about the livelihood ‘portfolio’ of different social groups by enquiring how they look like (percentage of income from different sources, amount of time and resources allocated to each activity by different household members etc)
- Find out how and why livelihoods change over time (changes could be long-term: response to environmental change; medium-term: change in the domestic cycle; or short-term: response to opportunities or threats)
- Find out how long term people think ahead; it is also important to know what people think investing in their assets for the future (e.g. saving). It should also incorporate, which types of assets is a priority
- Search for how ‘positive’ the choices are that people make (e.g. whether people migrate seasonally if there were income opportunities available closer to home or whether they were not saddled with un-payable debt etc)
- Look for combinations of activities that seems to be ‘working’ best; it is also to see if there is any distinct pattern of activities adopted by those who have managed to escape poverty
- Observe livelihood objectives, and see if they are achievable through current livelihood strategies or not

Livelihood outcomes can be called as the harvests of livelihood strategies. Again, the important idea associated with this element of the framework is that there should not be any assumption of any sort, that people are always entirely dedicated to maximizing their income. Rather, it is necessary to understand the nature of potential livelihood goals that people pursue. This, in turn, is supposed to help understand the challenged people’s priorities: *why they do what they do*, and *where the major constraints lie*. These can only be measured through participatory research.

2.4.4 Sustainable livelihoods approach: critique

SLF has been criticized for undermining the importance of one or more critical factors. By representing the reality and complexity of livelihood systems in a simple and logical way, the relative importance of some other factors and the relationships between the factors are lost the framework is assumed (although these depend on the perspective and experience of the user). Although there are a number of critical issues raised by several researchers and users as SLF’s drawbacks, the following criticisms helps me modify the SLF specifically for this research. These relevant discussions thus assist me to generate an inclusive view of SLF, to implement later for constructing questions for the fieldwork.

- The role of local government, power and rights to understand *how people relate to the institutional environment, where power lies* and *how and why change takes place*; this could be termed as the *political capital* for people’s livelihoods (Rakodi 2004)
- Violence and growing sense of insecurity affect the overall *well-being* of poor (Moser 2004); as violence and insecurity directly affect the livelihoods of the vulnerable groups in the society, it must make its way explicitly into the SLA framework; conflicts of interest are also not sufficiently acknowledged in SLF (Murray 2001: 7)
- The need for an explicit *information capital* as information provides a strong leverage that can be used to access the other forms of capital. It implies that different kinds of data endowed with relevance and purpose are used by people to make decisions in pursuit of their livelihood objectives (Odero 2003)

- *Mental capital* is also a determinant for poor people’s livelihood; it is the *mood* that makes the difference in work output, efficiency, social interaction, emotional responses, and judgement of life. The level of mental capital is subject to factors and changes on the socioeconomic position, neighbourhood context, social capital and other circumstances that surround the individual or the household (Arnot 1999). In WB studies (Narayan et al 2000a, 2000b), the subjective notions of *well-* and *ill-being* are thoroughly discussed
- A three-dimensional framework, with the third dimension representing time could facilitate a positive change to the overall outcome of the assessment, which a two dimensional framework cannot. It is practically important to count the historical trends affecting the livelihoods over the years (DFID 1999)
- Flexible design and openness to changes makes it adaptable to diverse local settings: thus it also makes the outcome more subjective to analyze (Kollmair and Gamper 2002: 8)

2.4.5 Migrants’ livelihood strategy research - the adapted SLF

DFID SLF is already rationalized in section 2.4.3 as the most suitable framework for the current research. However, depending on the livelihood challenges and vulnerability issues presented as in the problem tree (and also as a problem statement in Chapter 1), and theoretical issues regarding migrants and their livelihoods in this chapter, the SLF is customized specifically for the purpose of this research. Considering these, the issues are put sequentially (to be investigated regarding migrants’ livelihoods phases) in line with this framework (solid boxes; figure 2.4). This enables me to comprehend the livelihoods information of migrants’ and the stayed-backs’ from rural coastal areas of Bangladesh. Additionally, depending on the criticisms posed and the additional variables identified in the previous section, a few elaborations are also made to the original SLF (clear boxes; figure 2.4). For me, these are important variables to help formulate a set of comprehensive indicators in Chapter 3, and thus optimize SLF for an in-depth study of migrants’ livelihoods.

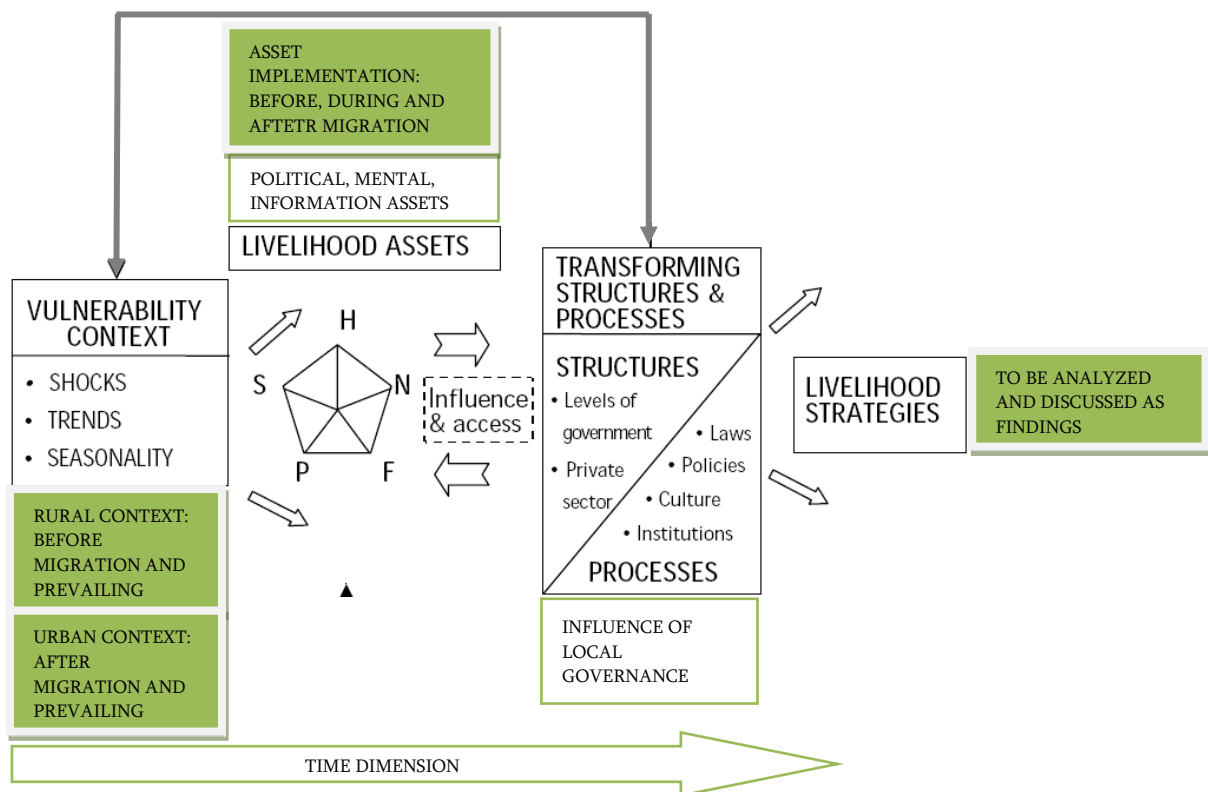


Figure 2.4: Showing the adapted SLF for the research with boxes containing issues to be addressed (and also how to address) to study migrants’ livelihoods

Source: Author based on DFID 1999

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the detailed methodology of the research. Primarily, it describes the objective (and preliminary research question) and derives the sub-questions depending on the discussions made in the previous chapters. Research type and strategy comes next, followed immediately by the research instruments and outline of possible samples and their selection criteria. The next section tries to illustrate the research framework that outlines the set of indicators for measuring out the variables, while questionnaire design and data collection experience follows respectively. Then, a section provides explanations about how data quality and reliability is ensured and data is refined for the research, indicating the possible methods of triangulation. After that, possible methods and approaches for analyzing the data is presented, while the limitations of the study and methods how limitations are overcome have been described in the end.

3.2 Research objective

As mentioned in Chapter 1, this research specifically intends to contribute to the areas of coastal regions of Bangladesh, rural-urban migration, and coastal-migrants' livelihood strategies in the city with a focus on migrants' rural background. Firstly, ample scope exists regarding the comparative study of rural migrants' livelihoods in the city since there remain all kinds of migrants (permanent, seasonal, floating, circular etc) with varying backgrounds. Carrying out such a research will certainly help classify their distinct livelihood strategies as a whole, but may as well look at distinct asset-implementation patterns separately. Secondly, the potentials for studying migrants' livelihoods in a historical context cannot be overlooked. What it suggests is that investigations can be made to find out to what extent the migrants' livelihoods change over time with the change of location. It can be assumed that migrants' livelihoods strategy and application of livelihood *capitals*¹ could change significantly as the context changes drastically from rural to urban. Therefore, the potential differences also fall into the scope of this research; additionally, it speaks in favour of the originality of the research and promises to contribute to knowledge in this field. Finally, in recent theories, a lot of debate still subsist regarding displacement/migration due to environmental reasons; these debates still ask if environment is the number-one reason behind migration from naturally troubled areas or not. Especially in a natural disaster-prone country like Bangladesh (and more specifically the study areas concerned for this research), very little has been done to accrue working-knowledge on whether rural-urban migration is the outcome of natural disasters or it is a typical survival strategy (more *voluntary* in principle and a continuing process). Hence, considering the arguments this research intends,

- to investigate the extent of change in migrants' livelihood strategy (compared with the rural) induced by challenges posed by overall urban situations
- to search for differences in livelihood strategies among different categories of migrants and try to explain these differences (factors such as migration motivation, preparedness etc.), and
- to find out the nature of rural-urban interaction that may influence rural poor's livelihoods in the city

1. The sustainable livelihood (SL) framework identifies five core asset categories or types of capital (as shown in the pentagon in previous chapter) upon which livelihoods are built. Using of the term capital is to imply that it is the product of investment which yields benefit over time. For this research, the assets or capitals will be used as synonymous and will be considered as building blocks for migrants' livelihood strategies

3.3 Research question(s)

In order to realize the objectives, this research seeks to answer the following research question, followed by three sub-questions. Nevertheless, these three sub-questions are developed in light of the refinements made to the research question by the theoretical review and also in line with the three life phases of rural migrants. The underlined text is the primary research question itself, while the paragraphs following that are the three detailed sub-questions (in *italics*), followed by the intentions/aims of each question.

How do migrant households from rural-coastal areas manage their livelihood assets to adapt to urban circumstances and in which ways these adaptation strategies are determined by the prior challenges faced in rural life? In addition, how these strategies are determined by their motives for migration?

a. *In what ways, people's livelihoods are challenged by natural and man-made factors in the rural coast?*(Corresponds to Phase 1 of Chapter 4)

The primary aim for this question is to understand about the circumstances of coastal villages (current and past, when migrants used to be rural inhabitants) that induce migration. In line with this, it tries to fathom *how much (and whether) the situation has changed now from earlier times, prior to their migration*. Thus, it seeks to make a distinction between two different rural times. At the same time, it also asks about the livelihood strategies of migrants' and people who do not migrate and therefore, looks for their individual assets/capitals. This question, however, does not necessarily ask for the reasons/causes behind migration directly. It rather tries to recognize the rural vulnerability context (composed of trends, shocks and seasonality and also influenced by culture and institutional processes); because it is where migration stems from.

b. *To what extent does migration-preparedness vary between forced and voluntary households and how this variation may have consequences for migrants' livelihood strategies?* (Corresponds to Phase 2 of Chapter 4)

This question also refers to the pre-migration phase of migrants' lives; but unlike question a, it focuses on the latter phase of their rural lives, the times immediately before and during migration. This question also aims for a livelihoods study, but investigates specifically about possible motives for migration by asking *if there is any significant difference between forced and voluntary migrants regarding these motives*. However, it also asks about issues like, *how much migrants were ready for moving out, what kind of preparation they had to take for moving out and if there is any difference between their strategies or not*. It also would like to know about *what actually helped migrants most during moving out from home, choose destination and settle down there finally*. Overall, this question looks up at the adjustments and sequencing of migrants' asset portfolio for that particular time.

c. *Compared with rural times, what are the assumed differences (and similarities) in migrants' livelihood strategies now?* (Corresponds to Phase 3 of Chapter 4)

The intension of this question is to investigate migrants' present livelihoods and account for their survival mechanisms in the city in a historical-chronological order (starting from the time when they got underway in the city). The question likes to provide a comparative correlation between these two locations by asking questions like *how livelihood assets are implemented now and how they were implemented during rural times*. Thus it recognizes the similarities and differences between these two times and places as well. Additionally, it also likes to see *to what extent migrants' current adaptive/coping strategies are related to their rural past and whether their coping strategies vary from rural times*. It asks similar question like question a, regarding current *vulnerability context, culture and processes* in the city. In a word, the answers are attained through a systematic investigation about various livelihood assets/capitals in line with the SLF.

3.4 Research type and strategy

Most people living in both rural and urban areas of developing countries are engaged in a constant struggle to secure their livelihoods in the midst of adverse social, economic and political circumstances. Two points are central to comprehend such struggles; firstly, the context of poverty and the reasons behind it, which need to be understood through the analysis of social relations in a historical context (e.g. between people with and without land or between rural and urban households etc. and thus seek for reasons). Secondly, the modes of livelihoods for households are highly diverse. Rural households, for example, may derive a part of their livelihood from farming, a part from migrant labour members working in urban (or other rural) areas and other parts may be from a variety of informal activities. However, *this requires analysis of the historical context, inference of the broad trends of change, and critical investigation of the institutional framework through which relations between macro-, meso- and micro-levels are worked out over time* (Murray 2001: 4-5). As far as this current research is concerned, it similarly prioritizes historical information and also seeks for correlation between different places (regarding migrants' lives, thus livelihood strategies). It considers people's background, their places of origin, any existing interrelation between places and also looks for relation between different levels as mentioned above and as outlined in the DFID SL framework. For me, this provides ample in-depth information for bringing out comprehensive results for this research.

The research is *exploratory* as it seeks to look into the context of rural-urban, with reference to specific cases of migrants' livelihood approaches to reveal the un-anticipated. It is a case-study mainly, looking at selective cases of migrant households in the city. The strategy is fundamentally inductive², although it starts off with deduction (make use of SLF). But it looks forward to make necessary suggestions to the improvement of the SLF model in the end (back to induction again) (Gilbert 2005: 144). For data collection, biographic-ethnographic research will be used in combination with other participatory appraisal tools, effective for in-depth social research (McGee 1997; Appleton and Booth 2005). The following features typify ethnographic research (Hammersley 1990, in Genzuk 2008: 4-5):

- Focus on a single setting or group usually, of relatively small scale
- People's behaviour is studied in everyday context
- Data is gathered from observation and relatively informal conversations usually
- The approach to data collection is *unstructured*
- Data analysis involves interpretation of the meanings and functions of human actions

3.5 Research instruments

To elaborate, biographic-ethnographic research *seeks to understand the changing experiences and outlooks of individuals in their daily lives, what they see as important, and how to provide interpretations of the accounts they give of their past, present and future* (Roberts 2002: 1), while PRA is *a form of assessment based on the participation of a range of different people including people from the community affected* (or concerned). *The emphasis is on participation...the aim is for people to analyze their own situation, rather than to have it analyzed by outsiders* (Gosling and Edwards 1995 cited in Horn 2003: 1). And as ethnographic methods are passive in nature (*Ibid*: 23), there is a need for some active means (participatory research tools like PRA) for a greater triangulation of data. It is therefore, intended in this research to combine one of such techniques for and a greater validity.

2. Qualitative, open-ended, circular, iterative (generating and continually testing working hypothesis), rooted in lived experience, flexible, changing design, knowledge generating and participatory (Jennings 2005: 29)

1. **Thematic semi-structured interviews:** designed for a certain purpose to complement the outcomes from HHQ but information is mostly qualitative
2. **Household questionnaire (HHQ):** to accumulate structured and more quantitative information
3. **Focus group discussion (FGD):** socially oriented tool to capture real-life (qualitative) data in a participatory social environment carried out in the presence of a small group
4. Participatory research (PR) tools: a combination of rapid appraisal tools like seasonal analysis³, trend diagrams⁴, and wealth ranking⁵
5. Participant observation: the researcher shares as intimately as possible in the life and activities of the people in the specific setting under observation
6. Field notes, journals (log-books), photographs, videos as supporting documents

For sub-question *a*, the required information is mostly qualitative since the outcome is expected to be mostly generalized. This is why HHQ and FGD act as the key instruments for data collection with a focus on in depth interviews. In addition, PR tools are implemented for rapid appraisal - to cross check on data in a short amount of time as allocated time for the field trip in rural areas was made very limited. Here, frequent yet casual observations will also be made during the interviews.

For sub-question *b*, as this is mainly comparative, requires mostly historic qualitative data for making a conclusion. Since the instruments for question *a* are supposed to collect all the quantitative and historic data regarding rural *vulnerability context*, only semi-structured questions are used here as sources for makeover information to collect the remaining information. For the sake of this research, this instrument seems sufficient, for making up judgements on migration motives and assets implementation and sequencing prior to, during and after moving out.

For sub-question *c*, structured HHQ is implemented again as the required information such as *financial or human capital* remain mostly quantitative (income, expenditure, time, education level etc). Yet again, there are also needs for qualitative data as *mental capital* (notions regarding *ill- or well-being*) or *social capital* (information like social networks), which demands for qualitative information and hence, require tools like semi-structured interviews and observation on specific issues. Since, livelihood changes over time are the main factors here, interviews and observation, in combination with HHQ provides comprehensive database in response to the question. As this question also seeks to compare between two different time periods, the focus of the semi-structured interview thus is on historical/chronological management of assets regarding household history.

3.6 Research population and sampling design

As far as the units of analysis are concerned, the number of respondents here is small, totalling six migrant households from *Patharghata Thana*. As mentioned earlier, the key notion for this research is to investigate each case from a very close-by situation, to bring out

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3. Reveals links between aspects of people's lives and the environment and documents issues as labour, income, expenditure, crop patterns, river flows, rain, animal fodder, debt, disease or food availability. Seasonal analysis also documents gender variations (e.g. how do women's and men's seasonal labour patterns differ?) (*Ibid: 12*)
 4. Representation of the changes in life, community's resource base and gender specific changes; it is used for identifying changes in areas such as forestry resources, fuel economy (fuels used, time constraints, distances covered, changes in labour patterns), price development, marketing opportunities, land use patterns etc (*Ibid: 14*)
 5. Tool to determine relative wealth of each community member, including gender-base differences in wealth; it also aims to discover reasons for relative wealth or poverty rather than looking at exact earnings. Wealth ranking reveals the community's criteria for *poor* and *rich* (*Ibid: 17*)

the unique characteristics instead of quantifying facts. Although it becomes difficult to generalize this way, yet this small sample size enables a more inclusive view in a historical context. In addition, this small size also helps provide examples, and enable scope for discussions through the researcher's own interpretation. For this research, households are purposively selected from two categories (*forced* and *voluntary*; meant for minimizing possibilities for a selection bias) on the basis of their migration decision-making process. For selection of the cases, *targeted sampling*⁶ is sought for with the implementation of snowballing. Out of the six, three households are selected from *voluntary* (more planned) category and other three from *forced* (unplanned due to external forces or reasons) category.

In addition to these six, another six households are selected *purposively* (with some common criteria elaborated later), from the migrants' *home* villages, as the idea remains to cross check and correlate the information given by the primary respondents with their rural counterparts. Here, the information does not only help generalize the vulnerability and challenges, it also provides background information about the livelihood strategies of the migrants and their rural folks. This supplementary information is therefore intended for an in-depth understanding of the contexts where the migrants originate from. In addition to these two, the respondents for the FGD are randomly selected after the actual visit to the rural areas.

1. Departing from the definitions in chapter 1, it is hence important to choose a proper set of criteria as well. As designed, the six primary respondents,
 - have to be people originated from same coastal areas (as *Patharghata* is already chosen)
 - have to be in the city permanently for minimum of one year (assuming it is enough for settling down; there is no rational basis has been set for this though)
 - three of them have to be migrated primarily for *forced* (cyclone, erosion) reasons while other three for *voluntary* reasons (depending on their own interpretations)
 - have to be challenged people in terms of money and resource; my criterion will be to select them by looking at their living/housing conditions (they have to be living in low-cost neighbourhoods and preferably in slums in *Khulna* city)
 - need to have connections with their villages through part of families still living there
2. The secondary units (six rural households) from the rural-coast,
 - have to be living in the same coastal villages where the migrants originate from
 - have to live in the villages permanently for at least one generation
 - have to have sour experiences (like total destruction of houses) of natural disasters
 - have to be family members of the primary units

3.7 Research framework

As specified in the last chapter, an elaborate and detailed version of SLF by DFID acts as the research framework for this research. The intension of using this framework as a basis for further research primarily aims at getting a comprehensive outline of migrants and non-migrants livelihood approaches. The other reasons include:

- Understanding of the combinations of modes of livelihood in a historical timeline
- Acknowledging the need to transcend the boundaries between conventionally distinct sectors (urban/rural, industrial/agricultural, formal/informal etc)
- Recognizing the necessity to investigate the relationships between different activities that constitute household livelihoods, such as intra- and inter-household social relations

6. It is a prescriptive sampling procedure, and to some extent purposive as well, to be used in the field as a means of systematic targeting to reach specific subjects (e.g. particular households) [Wilson \(2005: 49-50\)](#)

Sub-research questions	Units	Variables	Indicators	Instruments
In what ways, people's livelihoods are challenged by natural and man-made factors in the rural coast?	-Migrant households -Stayed-back Households (rural times)	- <i>Vulnerability context</i> - <i>Structures and processes</i> - Assets	- Trends (long-term micro-economic context) - Shocks (natural, man-made) - Seasonality (recurrent events) - Institutional environment - Livelihood assets/capitals	Quantitative Qualitative -FGD -PR tools
To what extent does migration-preparedness vary between <i>forced</i> and <i>voluntary</i> and how this may have consequences for migrants' livelihood strategies?	-Migrant households	-Migration motives -Strategies Adapted -Assets	-Situation (s) influencing Migration -Preparation time and destination -Adjustment to asset portfolio -Sequencing of asset portfolio	Qualitative -Semi-structured interviews
Compared with rural times, what are the assumed differences (and similarities) in migrants' livelihood strategies now?	-Migrant households in historical context (city)	- <i>Vulnerability context</i> - <i>Structures and processes</i> - Assets	- Trends (long-term micro-economic context) - Shocks (natural, man-made) - Seasonality (recurrent events) - Institutional environment - Livelihood assets/capitals	Quantitative Qualitative -Semi-structured interviews -FGD

Table 3.1: Showing the research framework derived and elaborated in line with the SLF by DFID
Source: Author

3.8 Questionnaire design and instrument sequencing

With reference to the indicators and in combination with semi-structured interviews and structured questions, a *question pool* is developed first. Later, this *pool* is redistributed under three sub-questions, representing three chronological phases of migrants' lives. FGD and PR tools are used randomly, but with specific purpose to cross check any given information in a changed settings (e.g. FGD is carried out in the presence or 5-12 persons; here, people respond differently from interviewed individually). Additionally, the journal and recordings are considered to be used extensively for keeping record of the observed events and quotations during the interview sessions and other informal conversations.

- The questionnaire is designed with a variety of ways to explore behavioural data, opinions, feelings, knowledge, and background information by participants. This way, the same respondent is expected to provide differential views on the same issue when asked in a different way
- The comprehensive investigation framework provides choices for respondents as well, which are likely to bring out their expressions in their own terms (like the *wealth ranking*)
- Follow-up questions are designed, which could help to go in-depth and acquire details

3.9 Data collection and experience

Taking up ethnography as the research approach means that the 'on-field' collection depends mostly on the existing situation, the nature of the setting, and of course, point of view of the researcher. However, the following is an account about how data has been collected.

- With the help of co-researchers, a pilot survey is carried out before the actual survey. An effort is also given to get to know respondents in person first by visiting them. This earlier efforts also helped check on the validity and objectivity of the proposed instruments. It also benefitted the co-researchers (including me as well) about what could happen later in 'real time'. Piloting also helped for providing feedbacks for the questionnaire and observation schedule, to make necessary adjustments to them. It also helped build trust amongst everybody concerned
- I Spent at least two days with each family in the preliminary phase, and got back to them again whenever I felt it was necessary (see [Annexes, Table 10](#) for schedule)

- I had to change my strategy a bit when I visited the study areas. I had to make adjustments to the instruments (used FGD more instead of PR tools) as I realized that FGD was proving more appropriate for bringing out information with a quickest possible time. PR tools proved to be ‘difficult to understand’ for some respondents (especially in rural areas) and were eating up valuable time. Time was important since it was rainy season in Bangladesh and travelling more than 150 km each day mostly on small-engine boats was proving very costly. However, FGD actually allowed me to investigate an additional area (*Southkhali*, a similar neighbouring area as *Patharghata*) instead of one. I feel it improves the data quality and helps generalization
- I also involved myself in observing the setting while keeping in mind about the purpose of the whole study; observations helped me grasp issues like *mental capital* (e.g. certain questions made some of the respondents cry even in front of the me; this is what I could take note of only)
- I used to be very descriptive in taking field notes as detailed records of quotations were also kept. I also made sure that description are separated from interpretations and my own judgments
- Native language (*Bangla*) has been used during all interviews

3.10 Data quality: validity, reliability and objectivity

Data triangulation is conducted for ensuring validity and comprehensiveness; alternative independent measuring instruments namely semi-structured questionnaire, FGD, observation schedule, PR tools and recordings are used for the same queries. This way, they complement each other and help construct validity. For reliability, as consistency and dependability of the data are most important, careful and rigorous design of the questionnaire-guidelines is carried out. As mentioned, practical training of research assistants (on the basis of theory) proved very important, which is supplemented by a journal for keeping record of open-ended questions and observations. For literature, references from books, reviewed journals, articles published in famous academic institutions and prominent websites are only cited. Different sources and strategies, as mentioned in section 3.3 are also implemented.

The participant part of *Participant observation* demands an insider’s view for experiencing an environment. Nevertheless, there is clearly an observer side to this process as well. The information collected in each interview and in the observations during the fieldwork thus was transcribed into a log book (field journal; as mentioned previously) as soon as possible to avoid only trusting in the long term memory of the researcher(s). Notes about possible interpretations during the interviews or observations have also been taken. However, they were clearly separated from the actual data gathered. By the end of each day, a review of the information collected was undertaken and if possible, a better processing of it was made. As planned, the researcher returned to almost all case-study locations for at least one day to validate and triangulate as well as further to explore specific identified issues. Triangulation has also been done within the family members by observing them in different times in a day.

However, objectivity is ensured by carefully choosing the words for the questionnaire comprising clear and unambiguous questions avoiding leading or provoking questions.

3.11 Data analysis and interpretation

Analysis is the process of bringing order to data, organizing them into patterns, categories, and descriptive units. For this current research, data reduction and management strategy proves essential in the analysis since there has been a lot of data acquired through many different sources (by instruments) and also in a number forms. The main challenge for this research was to combine all these outcomes into a simple interpretative form which makes a cohesive sense. However, as the fieldwork concludes, all the data were organised in a pre-established scheme described below, which helped organize data, to answer the research questions.

- Findings from all sources are compiled and presented in a chronological order, in line with the framework suggested in Chapter 2; the rural context came first, then came migration and moving out phase followed by current status in the city
- Findings are interpreted in form of reports, and results are deduced depending mainly on semi-structured interviews. Interviews act as the core, as all other information only complementing it. Thus the reports comprise of pure descriptions and quotations of the experiences of people in the research environment
- Quotations are used extensively as examples, as well as to provide raw images of the situations being described; the sources of quotes mostly remained interviews and FGD
- For each phase, a set of arguments are placed and correlation is established between the data acquired from several sources; thus an analysis is presented
- The outcomes from informal observations are also coded in line with three phases of migrants' lives. However, going through the field notes actually helped recollect the exact interview environment as I often had to look for some missing parts of a data to cover up a loophole. An entire activity was also reported in detail and depth (where it was felt necessary) to exemplify a typical (and/or exclusive) experience
- Quantitative information (like income, expenses etc.) are implemented (infrequently though) to add further value to the already stated qualitative results
- The outcomes from participatory tools (like *wealth ranking*) also helped as visual and graphical evidences, in line with the quotes and descriptions, to further conform to the arguments about the reliability and the validity of acquired information by other instruments
- Sequencing for different kinds of questions for each interview topic, including past, present, and future questions, proved utterly useful during compilation and analysis phases

3.12 Limitations of the study and overcoming those

1. Unavailability and reliability of data (on *Khulna* and *Patharghata*) seemed troublesome as I intended to use them as a secondary source. I used my personal connections and came across with a few academic works in my university regarding the coastal areas, which to some extent, proved useful.
2. Inexplicit individual preference for sample selection with chances for not being unbiased. There was always a possibility for selection bias due to such a small number of subjects. This is why I developed a clear set of selection-criterion and decided strictly to stick to them.
3. Unavailability of all household members during the survey time; I had to pay a token amount of money each day (worth a day's pay), especially to the breadwinner(s), to keep them in their houses during the interview times. Additionally, I invited some 'still' absent respondents to my house for a cup of tea; it helped me make up for their missing views (and information). Finally, before coming back to the Netherlands, I visited all the respondent households again.
4. Dilemma of using co-researchers or reducing sample size; on one hand, the greater the sample size the better the result is expected while on another, it is also difficult to attain a considerable number of samples within the allotted time without their assistance. Eventually, the sample size could not be increased due to time constraints. However, I selected only one co-researcher in the end, which proved useful since this person being a social-worker himself, was able to communicate with the respondents very well.
5. Translation from *Bangla* to *English* was feared to affect the accurate interpretation. I tried to listen and read the quotes over and over again to overcome that as much as possible.
6. Rainy season reduced mobility and travel time and expenses proved much higher than expected as I had to use buses, ferries, motorcycles and small engine boats to reach the designated places. Nevertheless, rethinking and adjustments to research instruments (during fieldwork) helped me make up valuable time.

Chapter 4: Research findings and analysis

4.1 Introduction

Findings in this section appear as in the form of stories; stories regarding areas of importance (and also interest) brought forward in the theoretical framework and referred to as *Phases 1, 2 and 3*, as described as in the theoretical outlines in Chapter 2. As shown on the right hand side of figure 4.1, topic(s) enclosed in each box therefore are fieldwork outcomes¹ regarding specific phases, which are directly or indirectly related to the pre-selected theoretical field as in the boxes on left. However, the chapter will commence with some of the demographic details of the main research respondents, i.e. household heads of migrant families.

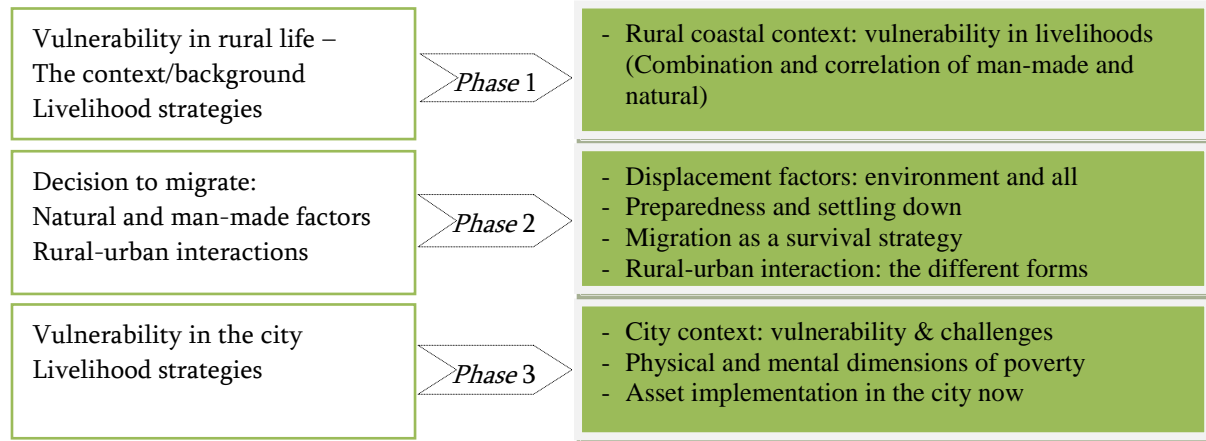


Figure 4.1: Showing the key elements of the theoretical outlines and issues covered by fieldwork data regarding the elements
Source: Author

4.2 Research respondents: details

The following personnel are the heads of migrant households; they are the primary respondents settled in two different places in *Khulna*. Amongst them, except for *Liton*, all other live in *Tootpara*, a slum-ridden area in the city, a popular living place for many *low income* people. As *Liton* is new to the city, he lives outside the city, in an area called *Elaiapur*. However, the information of the secondary respondents, i.e. the relatives has been provided in the Annexes (see [Annexes, table 9](#)).

Name of household head/major respondent	Known as	Sex	Current occupation	Age (in <i>Khulna</i>) (yr)	Type of migration	Interview taken on
Md. Abul Hossain	Abul Hossain	M	Carpenter	55 (28)	Forced	12.07.08 13.07.08
Abdul Hakim Majhi	Abdul Hakim	M	Carpenter	65 (18)	Forced	15.07.08 16.07.08
Md. Shamsul Haq Haoladar	Shamsul Haq	M	Plumber	45 (11)	Voluntary	17.07.08 18.07.08
Md. Mosharraf Hossain	Mosharraf	M	Apprentice, day labourer	32 (5)	Voluntary	19.07.08 20.07.08
Md. Panna Miah Faraji	Panna Miah	M	Construction worker	52 (28)	Voluntary	21.07.08 22.07.08
Md. Liton Sikder	Liton	M	Day labourer	25 (>1)	Forced	24.07.08 25.07.08

Table 4.1: Showing details about the primary respondents (rural coastal migrants in *Khulna* city)
Source: Author

1. Results are combination of information gathered through in-depth interviews, structured questions, focus group discussions, participatory techniques and original quotation from the interviewed respondents and researcher's own interpretation through observation

4.3 Findings and analysis

Each of the following sub-sections contains exclusive information referred to as findings from primary sources (fieldwork carried out in August, 2008) and occasionally from some secondary sources, with reference to the three phases identified at the beginning of this chapter (thus Chapter 2 and 3). In addition, each sub-section is summarized in the end, by an analysis of the chapter. The analysis, however, tries to set up correlations between different phases of migrants' lives. Thus, depending on the information provided in the findings, the analyses will basically be sets of my own debates and arguments regarding the queries raised by the sub-research questions. Each section, therefore, begins with the context for the question followed by the arguments and possible debates.

4.3.1 Phase 1

4.3.1.1 Rural coastal context: vulnerability in livelihoods

Challenges in coastal inhabitants' lives are manifold; but to classify them generally leaves us with two broad categories – the *manmade* and the *natural* factors, which altogether contribute to the livelihood vulnerability of this destitute people. Of course it is often too difficult to distinguish whether such a given factor remains a cause or whether it is a consequence. However, for the sake of comprehensiveness, I would like to describe them as a combination of the two factors, and leave the justification to the deliberation of the reader.

Landlessness, dispossession of land or access to agricultural and homeland, for me, constitutes the number one sector of vulnerability for the rural coastal inhabitants. People who have at least a piece of land to their disposition were (and still are) considered to be much more secured comparing to the people who does not have any. Most of the respondents have given similar thoughts on this. One of them, *Shamsul Haq*, who migrated permanently to *Khulna* more than a decade ago, was telling me, “*If I only had any piece of land myself, I would never have migrated in the first place; (because) I could have produced some rice for the year at least – in that case, I would not have to buy any staple food for the whole year*”. *Liton*, on the other hand, migrated to *Khulna* just less than a year ago. After *Sidr* (the before-mentioned cyclone that devastated Bangladeshi coasts at the end of 2007), he left home permanently. But even his statements are also similar – this situation did not really change for several decades; and in fact, the situation probably has deteriorated.

Not having a land of their own, also make inhabitants climatically vulnerable, especially to three usual occurrences namely cyclone, inundation/flooding and erosion (which, in turn also affect harvest and add further misery). I found that people, who do not have any land, are forced to live outside the protective embankment (or dam – a high and thick mud-wall constructed to keep out flood water) on the shore of the open river/sea. This is government's *Khas* (own) land which anybody can use. Because this land is not their own and because it is not in any case permanent land to reside/agriculture on, these destitute people build their houses over there with very fickle, non-permanent, less strength materials like reeds, bamboo etc. (figure 4.2), which, naturally are very less resistant to strong wind, heavy rainfall and not to mention 250km/hour cyclone. It is these very people who are affected most and it is these very people who are eventually forced to move out if they can manage to survive such events. But it is the same thing that still takes place there. During my visit to some of these areas, I noticed several households are still springing up on these open shores and outside the dams (see figure 4.3), even they have been thrashed a few months ago on the same plot of land. I found out they have nowhere else to go except for building something there with same reeds, rags and similar non-permanent stuff.



Figure 4.2: Showing house destroyed by *Sidr*(notice the quality of construction materials), *Southkhali*
Source: Author



Figure 4.3: New construction again outside dam (notice the river in the background), *Southkhali*
Source: Author

Land, for Bangladeshi people, resembles a spiritual sense of being and security; it symbolizes the sense of attachment to a certain place (*Bhita*) or the place of origin in general (*Desh*). For the Bangladeshi natives, it is the last thing they want to give up on earth. Most of the migrants, as I found, lack this asset seriously. Additionally, everybody admitted that people who actually stay back in villages are essentially in possession with adequate land. Land, thus, supplies them the rice for the whole year, provide a source of income (agricultural products for sell) and the essential sense of attachment to the land their ancestors left behind.

Seasonality (periodic fall in income/production etc. that affect livelihoods and take place during certain times each year) puts up another facet of vulnerability. I found both migrants and stayed-backs equally complaining about this. Seasonality, thus, exerts an unyielding stress on the employment sector of the already troubled rural livelihoods. In addition to the information provided by the households, the FGDs thus reveal the exact nature of the problem. As it is found, most rural people in the coast have their professions related either to fishing or general agricultural works. Although fishing can be done all round the year, the pick period remains mostly the rainy season when fishermen travel to the sea for a good catch and possibly earn enough money to carry on for the rest of the year. Professional fishermen actually do this for 3-4 months a year and fish casually or sit idle for the rest of the year. Of course some of them try other sorts of works during this jobless period, while none being permanent in nature and apparently with a very low pay. In addition, the availability of jobs also become scarce in that period as *Mosharrif* was telling me, *Even if I could find some jobs (during the dull period), I could never manage for more than 15 days a month*. The similar things also happen to agricultural workers, who, because of salinity, can only sow once a year after the rains (although all the higher lands in the country can be sowed 2 to 3 times a year). Thus these labourers remain largely jobless for the whole of the rainy season as nobody else can possibly employ them as well. All of these make the labourers search for other means of income to sustain during the rest of the year. Seasonality thus contributes to occupational insecurity round the year and eventually causes hungry periods and food crisis.

Coastal lands of Bangladesh are also characterized by insecurity and violence as well. I found one subject (*Abdul Hakim*) who lost everything when his boat was hijacked by looters and he has been thrown out to a distant island, from which he could somehow make it to the shore and save himself. During this, some of his helpers and fishermen in the boat were held hostages as two of them were killed while trying to resist the offenders. However, I tried to check on to this statement by asking other respondents (also raised during FGDs) as they all

acknowledged it. I then came across with some news on the front page of some newspaper just before I came back. The heading read “20 fishermen are held hostages as dacoits hijack boat near the Bay of Bengal”. It made me believe the fact I came to learn from *Abdul Hakim*. Nevertheless, *Abdul Hakim* had to flee to *Khulna* eventually, as he only managed the boat and the nets by taking a loan from a nearby bank (*Krishi Bank* - agricultural bank of Bangladesh). And all the land he mortgaged to the bank had to be given up to the bank for repaying the debt. I remember *Abdul Hakim* could not hold his tears while describing this.

Among other factors, internal family reasons also contribute to livelihood vulnerability, which mostly includes conflicts with none but the near and distant relatives. Amongst the respondents, several of them experienced exclusion from parents’ family very early in their lives. They acknowledged that they had been mentally anguished by step mother after their own mothers died while they were only kids. Thus the lack of sound bringing-up resulted in quite a few outcomes including drop-off from school, restraint from further education, driven out of home etc. For example, *Abul Hossain* lost his mother when he was three and his father married again as he turned out to be a destitute ever since. He never went to school, only to be raised later by the mother of a *Mahajan* in *Patharghata Bazaar* where he used to work even being a bare child². Therefore, without any family ties (no brother or sister of his own either), *Abul Hossain* eventually had to become a *soldier of fortune* from his very early days. He recognizes this to be the primary reason he could not educate himself and gradually lost all his attachments with his family. *Abul Hossain* believes, this is what made him leave his village eventually and not to go back again. He, along with other migrants also talks about negative family effects like filing of fake civil/criminal cases against relatives and neighbours, conflicts regarding land ownership, misuse of political connections to frighten opponents and trigger violence³. These are common events that still take place in rural coastal areas of Bangladesh that drive people like *Shamsul Haq*⁴ out of home apart from cyclones.

Except for all these, there are a number of unwanted/accidental events that affect the livelihoods of coastal inhabitants; mostly, these events leave them no time to prepare. Amongst all, the most problematic is health hazard. Every family I interviewed has similar experiences of sudden illness of its family members. Most of them even have experiences of losing close relatives like a brother or a sister or even a parent. For example, *Abdul Hakim* once got very ill and stayed like that for more than three months (he could not explain to me – from his description, I realized it was *Jaundice*). In consequence, he had to sell his wife’s ornaments and all his goats gradually to pay for the continuing expenses. *Panna Miah*, on the other hand, lost his younger sister due to some kind of unknown illness which they later discovered as *Cancer*. He was telling me...*we never would have lost her if the disease was diagnosed earlier...we tried many local doctors and quack; they also prescribed medicine...we only came to know it was Cancer when we finally took her to Khulna...* Similarly, *Liton* lost his only brother when he was drowned in the nearby river. Later, just before he migrated, he had to take care of his father when he broke a leg; the local treatment failed again and the leg was swelling and causing great pain. He, along with his ailing father, visited three different districts for a satisfactory yet cheap option for treatment and finally managed that after two months of trotting as they learnt about a charitable hospital in *Barisal*.

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2. Nevertheless, this early training came to his use later as he gradually excelled himself as a carpenter and used to construct houses and build boats on his own
 3. *Panna Miah* tells a similar story about one of his own uncles, who, being a wealthier man than his father, always tried to grasp his father’s share through evil means. To create trouble, this uncle used his good connections with local *Union Council* chairman (elected public representative of rural local government) as well as with police through bribes. To cope with this, *Panna Miah* had to marry one of his cousins, the daughter of another uncle, to acquire more wealth through marriage and become stronger within the family. Recently his brother has again been subject to the wrath of a local political leader due to similar influences
 4. Had to escape the disgrace and harassment created by his father; elaborated in later sections

Thus, they had to travel another 200 km even to avail that! Due to distance to avail quality healthcare (although all rural healthcare centres have been reported to be within 3km of all the households, most of them become inaccessible in rainy seasons), lack of quality and facility in government healthcare centres (unavailability of doctor, out of stock subsidized medicine etc.) and due to lack of resources (money for travelling, to pay for the fees and medicine etc.), rural people suffer a lot and usually become subject to frequent harassment. Three of the households also have experiences of sudden death of its poultry and livestock due to some illness.

In addition to the above factors, a few other can be named, which contribute significantly to the overall vulnerability context. Access to credit at a reasonable interest rate remains a great difficulty for all the villagers. In fact, this situation has not changed much, as everybody testified and came up with similar stories. Fascinating but true is the story that all of the people I interviewed are actually frightened of the NGOs and their loan schemes. They don't really trust them as they readily call NGOs as *blood-suckers* due to their very high interest rate and the way they behave whenever someone fails to pay back a certain premium. *Abdul Hakim* once drew a loan from a local NGO, to compensate for the bank loan he took previously. Later, on a few occasions, he could not pay the premium back to the NGO in time. In his words, *The Samitee* (the group, which he is a member of) *and the officers* (NGO field representatives) *equally pressed me every day of the week and later embarrassed me in front of other people in the marketplace...these people only understand money and do not care about other people's dignity...I will never go for an NGO loan again and I actually discourage others these days...* Due to lack of possession of any permanent assets (like land - a potential property for mortgage to take up a loan), rural people have to borrow from *Mahajan* (literally means the *big man*; local elite and rich people – usually owns land or boats or both) at a very high rate (as much as 120% –150% a year). Bureaucracy of the government banks also slows down loan sanction process and makes even people with assets to go for a much faster option like the *Mahajan*. Sadly but truly, in case of late pay back or failure to pay cause these people to lose even their only land to the rich and the elite.

And last but not the least, issues like rising cost of production (fertilizer, seed etc.), drop in fish catch, ever-increasing cost of household commodities (inflation), fluctuation in crop (produced) prices, and lack of a steady market are also been identified as a few other factors that severely affect the livelihoods of coastal inhabitants.

4.3.1.2 Phase 1 analysis: vulnerability and livelihoods

As suggested by the findings (and also supported by other secondary sources), the lives of rural coastal people seems to be comprised and equally influence by the following notions.

Trends: Landlessness in rural coastal Bangladesh can be primarily described as an outcome of sustained and long-term erosion and frequent flooding of the river systems. It can also be considered as hereditary as the sub-division of family land is also reducing the size of the land in each generation. Thus, nobody is still clear about the exact ratio of landless people due to *natural* causes comparing to landless people due to hereditary reasons. In addition, conflicts regarding land ownership (mostly within family members) also adds to this overall scenario as filing of false cases, induced police harassments and conflicts between neighbours remain frequent. With millions of pending cases in judiciary regarding land ownership also speak in favour of this fact. Apart from issues regarding land, insecurity in occupation also remains a very significant trend. During FGDs, I found fishermen afraid of the looters in the sea; although there are navy patrol boats in the sea now, fishermen still feel that the number

of boats is not adequate enough to safeguard thousands of fishing boats exposed in the open sea. May be this also affects many recent-generation people's decision-making, not to take up fishing as a profession anymore. Probably it is also due to a drop in fish-catch ever since some special kind of fishing nets have evolved that destroy even the broods. Simultaneously, many people, previously engaged into agriculture, seem to lose interest on it as the return from that is not increasing. Probably it is partly due to the growing cost of production (prices of seeds, fertilizer etc. has went up heavily in recent years) and part due the very nature of these lands (only one harvest is possible during rainy season, as salinity⁵ prevails through the rest of the year due to its proximity to the sea).

Shocks: Although cyclones remain the most ominous shock for the poor coastal people, yet I did not really find a person who termed it as such as outside people like me perceives it. Interestingly, I found people enthusiastically discussing about things like *what happened after cyclone, what kind of relief (donation) they managed to get and about the politics behind relief works etc.* It seemed to me that cyclones in fact, offer opportunity to most although a few lose it all. However, *whether it remains a shock and to what extent it can be called a shock* still remain my questions. And as the frequency of cyclone hits have increased over the past few years, I really doubt *whether it can be called a shock or more of a trend?* Nevertheless, it does not matter much since the detrimental effects of cyclones cannot be denied and it still remains one of the major threats now and forthcoming years. In addition to cyclones, sudden looting of fishing boats in the sea also remains a great shock for fishermen. Sudden illness and access to quality health service is also proving to be costly issues at the household levels. I remember the evidences now, when people had to sell almost everything of their physical assets just to pay for emergency medical expenses for one family member.

Seasonality: The rural economy, as I found, revolves around agricultural seasons and it is especially true when people seem to have cash in their hand right after harvest. And it is exactly the time in a year when day labourers and other dependent professionals, who do not have any cultivable land on their own can a make a living quite easily by doing works for the well off. However, for the day labourer, the jobless period begins in the rainy season as mobility also reduces. The problem of unemployment then takes places as these apparently rich people, who provide employment after harvest, also become moneyless. The agricultural workers actually work in someone else's field during and after rainy season when salinity in land reduces. They work until the harvest is over; after that, the jobless period begins. The same thing also happens to fishermen who travel to the sea in rainy seasons hoping for a good catch. After the season ends, they have to wait another 3-4 months before the next one appears. Therefore, it is clear that seasonality in production actually correlates with the seasonality of employment in these areas. It is no wonder cities usually swarm with seasonal migrants at this exact time when jobless periods hit rural areas hard every year.

Structures and processes: The most required institutional intervention in rural coastal areas is an easy and quick access to credit facility that offers credit at a reasonable rate of interest. As I discovered, the need for money is usually related to a certain period of a year. For example, most fishermen have to borrow a big amount of money with a quite high interest rate, from *Mahajan* when the fishing season starts. For each trip, they have to hire a boat, buy fuel and 6-8 days' worth food for the whole crew; they also have to fix the nets and buy other accessories. The good thing about borrowing from *Mahajan* is that the money is obtainable

5. It is only during rainy season when fresh water flows in plenty to keep away saline water, making the conditions conducive for agriculture. More recently the season change has also become irregular probably due to global climate change; it again adds troubles to agricultural production as the rainy season has also shifted considerably and salinity became unpredictable to deal with

rather quickly in comparison to banks or NGOs. However, if the catch is not good, which is very common, the interest rate grows cyclically and these people become sort of slaves for the *Mahajan* for indefinite time, unless the debt is repaid. In the absence of a sympathetic banking system (less interest, short-term quick loan, flexibility in mortgage rules since many of the people do not possess anything to mortgage), in the presence of ‘not very trusted’ NGOs, and of course without the intervention of Government (although it is not actually possible since Bangladesh has a very centralized and bureaucratic system of Governance), the institutional environment mostly remains like this. In addition, lack of options and opportunities for participating in local Government also does not help governance as a whole. This is how the common people are excluded from the so called *processes*.

Livelihood strategies of the rural poor: Generally, rural poor’s lives pivot around a more informal approach to their livelihood strategies. Their livelihoods actually stem from a casual approach, dependent mostly on ‘chance’ rather on planned or organized efforts towards a more secured one. And possibly this strategy owes mostly to the lack of assets/capitals to their disposal and to a more compromising attitude of *accepting events (shocks, stresses etc.)*, *to forget them and start over again*. It seems that the problem is chronic. On one hand, these people cannot access/invest into something more beneficial because of poverty and thus, they are unable to earn more than their current wages, to be enabled to grow or even aim further.

As discussed earlier, rural coastal people’s lives depend largely on natural (re)sources; their availability, affordability and accessibility to them thus form the very heart of rural coastal livelihoods. Till date, the rural society is still very much agrarian in nature. For that reason, people who cannot afford, avail and/or get access to such (re)sources usually struggle with their livelihoods. Land (for cultivation, residence and creating job opportunity), river (for use, daily consumption, and creating job opportunity), and climate (season change, rainfall, salinity, river tides, hazards – affect survival, production, and job opportunity) thus represent the (re)sources. During the surveys with secondary respondents and during the FGDs at the rural areas, people immediately testified about all these facts. One of the secondary respondents (*Nur Islam*), a typical native, was telling me, *I thought of leaving many times but did not do so since I still get some crops (rice mainly) from my land...I also live a bit away from the shore (thus I am out of immediate danger of being eroded by the river or blown away by cyclones)...I grow a few vegetables on my yard and raise a few poultry...I use to fish every day, thus avoid buying any...and if I need a bamboo for (building) my house, all I have to do is to ask my rich neighbour - that, he would give me for free...however, I am barely managing my living now...my kids are young and I have no one else to earn except for me. I cannot also afford to buy any land since I can’t save anything...*

As far as the primary respondents for this research are concerned, they also did not have a ‘real’ command over none of the resources (elaborated later in the following sections). Of course, some of them used to possess land (like, *Liton*), some worked on other people’s land (like *Panna Miah*), some were fishing (like *Mosharraaf*, *Abdul Hakim*) and people like *Abul Hossain* and *Shamsul Haq* used to be day-labourers. But the main difference between them and *Nur Islam* is that the latter possesses lands, which are still productive and less vulnerable to natural degradation. On the other hand, all the migrant respondents, in some moment in time, found themselves without any land. For example, *Mosharraaf* and *Abdul Hakim* had to sell their inherited land to pay off for their debt, while *Liton* and *Abul Hossain* lost their only pieces of arable land due to erosion. Although *Liton* still have some land left, he expects that to erode in a few years. And people like *Panna Miah*, *Abul Hossain* and *Shamsul Haq* were subject to seasonality, which, at this point is also recognized as a consequence of

unproductive rainy period of every calendar year. Seasonality, thus, also proves to be an ‘expensive’ natural cause that hampers job opportunity and livelihoods as a whole.

Of course, all these people had (and have) good social networks (to get access to job) and most of them possessed self-sustained homesteads (kind of farmhouse) that produced vegetable, poultry and even livestock, useful for daily use as well as in times of crisis⁶. During FGDs, many said that they use to sell trees as logwood, in times of immediate needs (like medical emergency, marriage). Additionally, many of the respondents had (secondary ones still have) more than one breadwinner in the family (the entire family participates in various revenue generating activities), who compensate for other(s) if necessary. There are also *man-made* opportunities like borrowing (persons, banks) and scope for entrepreneurship (*Abdul Hakim* used to be a fishing-boat owner while *Shamsul Haq* had his own salt business). And it is equally true that the above mentioned events offer more ‘secured’ livelihood opportunities than the *natural* ones. However, when it comes to the context of the rural coast, all these certainties seem to be somewhat associated and so affected by the uncertainties of nature (like cyclones), seasonality (jobless periods) and persisting trends (river bank erosion, salinity). As discussed at the beginning of this section, nature, therefore make people reliant on ‘chances’ due to their absolute dependence on natural (re)sources only. And without any sustainable *man-made* livelihoods means, they often have to seek for alternative yet more ‘secured’ livelihood means, which urban situations offer. Migration (permanent or seasonal), thus continues to be the ultimate ‘planned’ livelihood strategy for many rural poor.

4.3.2 Phase 2

4.3.2.1 Displacement factors: environment and all

I was sceptical earlier about *how much environmental detriments matter to force people out of their places of origin*; it still remains an ambiguity for me even after the fieldwork is over. While choosing six respondents according to the preset criteria, and depending upon the initial stories they told me, it seemed pretty clear that natural hazards provide the single most essential impetus to affect migration decision-making. The *forced* migrants also identified themselves as being singled out by events like cyclones and systematic erosion. Nevertheless, looking at the circumstances and the experiences shared by the respondents, it seems that natural factors play its part only. To explain this, several interesting yet factual insights are provided in the following paragraphs.

Although the *forced* respondents’ age was ranging between mid 20’s to early 60’s, almost all of them have survived a minimum of two severe cyclones, in which, each of them lost at least two of their very close relatives. In addition, all of these six lost house, cattle, poultry and the entire physical asset they used to possess. Furthermore, two of them actually experienced long term river bank erosion⁷ and was on the verge of losing the only land they possessed before cyclones hit them. However, nobody really had taken a decision to move out overnight even already being in such misery and uncertainty. Everybody waited for something to happen. For example, *Liton* and his family were resisting for more than twelve weeks after *Sidr* hit them. They were surviving on reliefs supplied by government and NGOs and were actually waiting for more assistance, probably some job opportunity to come in their way (not long ago, *Food for work* programmes used to take place after such disasters). But they had to leave eventually even if having a small piece of land in their possession still.

6. Parallel experiences have also been shared by other studies in similar coastal areas (see [Hakim and Ahmed 2007](#))

7. It is a continuous natural process that takes place when river current becomes stronger and waves are formed bigger than normal (happens especially in rainy seasons when the extra water passes through downstream rivers coming from upstream areas). During this time, in the absence of concrete dams along the Bangladeshi rivers, the clayey land on both side of the river break up in big solid chunks and start to fall into river bed. As it starts to happen, several kilometres of land can be eaten up by the river within days.

Abul Hossain, on the other hand, lost his land (about 140 m²) due to erosion but was still carrying on with his skills as a carpenter and boat-maker. He was telling me, *First I lost my only cultivable land due to erosion, then I lost the piece (of land) on which I lived with my wife after I married her...but after I lost everything to erosion, I moved on to the WAPDA land (government land) just outside the dam. Even this risk (of moving out on to the open shore) was not paying off...my jobless days started increasing and income started to fall sharply...I started to struggle even to manage two square meals a day.* After this, he and his spouse were hit by the cyclone and that marked the end of the village days for *Abul Hossain*. In a similar way, my other subject *Shamsul Haq* also told me about his rather similar yet fascinating effort. *You know*, he was telling me, *I faced cyclone three times...one time I was recovered miles away from my home...but nothing let me down...I did not have anything in my possession but I have always tried. I even slept on the verandah of my father's house with my newlywed wife. But I never gave up...I was doing a petty (salt) business on my own...but I could not expand it since I had no capital to invest...then came the cyclone – my business was gone...I ran from door to door...could not borrow from banks since I had no land to mortgage...nobody would lend me any money for my business...later, due to conflicts with my father and step-mom, they bribed the police to beat me up in front of everybody...I could not take it anymore...you tell me, how could I stay?*

On the other hand, different experiences regarding migration motives have also been shared by the remaining three of the respondents, who actually claimed themselves as *non-forced* (or more *voluntary*) when they were selected for interview. Interestingly, two of them were in fact *forced*, not primarily because of natural reasons but apparently for *man-made* reasons. However, looking into their livelihoods reveal that they were already leading a vulnerable life as they were not in possession of any real physical asset (land is considered as the most important physical asset in Bangladesh). For example, the case of *Abdul Hakim* can be brought up as a series of events compelled him to such a situation that left him without a choice and force him for the city.

Being an entrepreneur by heart, pursuing a dream to become a *Mahajan* himself, *Abdul Hakim* drew a certain amount of loan from bank to buy a sea-going fishing vessel, after mortgaging the only piece of land on which he lived. He was doing well until he lost his boat and the fishing net to looters. Thus suddenly, he found himself in the middle of nowhere and at the level of his employees. He then tried to fish in the nearby river but was resisted by government as it was running a campaign against some special kind of fishing and fishing-nets. All these turned him into an immediate jobless, a potential defaulter of loans and a man even without a place of his own in his own village. *We (me and my wife) decided that it is better to even start begging in the city rather live like that before the countrymen*, *Abdul Hakim* was telling me...*and after all, nobody will recognize us there!* He could not possibly stay because it was not also dignified for him anymore to once becoming a boat-owner and an employer himself and then to starve before someone whom he once employed.

Similar is the story of *Mosharraf*, who was residing with his maternal grand-parents after his parents left for the city a few years ago. They were also indebted to a bank and were paying off monthly premiums from their income in the city. Being a capable young man himself, *Mosharraf* was earning his living before the jobless period started to become a real issue. Simultaneously, fishing started to become difficult as seasonal fluctuations and fish-catch started to become scarce. There were also government regulations persisting and fishing nets were seized frequently by officials as these nets were able to catch and destroy smallest of broods during fishing. Due to the nature of his job, he could not save much for the jobless

days either. And on top of all these, the pressure from banks started to become real intense as parents started to fail paying for monthly bank premiums. These, in combination, forced him to leave for *Khulna* to join his parents eventually. And before he left, the last piece of land had to be sold off for paying the bank back.

Panna Miah, in contrast, used to be an agricultural worker himself, who along with his younger brother worked on the remaining land. In fact, his father had to sell most of the land to bear the educational cost for his elder brother, who was studying in a nearby town. *Panna Miah* and his younger brother worked also as contracted seasonal workers on other people's land. Together, they used to be the major supporting force for elder brother, who was the main breadwinner for the family after his father retired. Like *Mosharraf*, *Panna Miah* also started to realize that his earning was not proving enough for feeding a growing family (he just got married) and no real return was coming (the pay was not raised for many years) from working for other people as well. Because they remained jobless for almost 3-4 months after the harvest in late winter, they were forced to borrow money from land owners (their employers) at a very high interest rate to survive that particular patch. But what it led to was even more dangerous. As they had no savings from the previous year, paying back was always a struggling time, and the whole situation truly turned into a circular and never-ending concern. Effectively, these two brothers were forced to work for the land owner for free and sometimes had to sacrifice their wage they were supposed to get at the end of the harvest. For *Panna Miah*, it started to become a dangerous *seasonality*, a vicious circle that he thought he could cope with, by starting to work as a seasonal migrant in *Khulna* city.

4.3.2.2 Preparedness and settling down

Within 2-3 days we just decided that we have to leave. We could not bear the agony of starvation any longer. The relative (living in Khulna) visited us right after Sidr hit us (three months before leaving village) and asked us to leave with him but we did not want to leave the land that belonged to our ancestors – we (family of parents and a younger sister) decided to stay on and wait for things to improve. Later, things got really bad as we suddenly started to realize there is no relief coming our way anymore. It went on like this for a few more weeks until we started to starve. Then later at some point, we found our backs on the wall as we were continuously starving for more than two days. Then we decided to call him (relative) and ask him to take us away with him... This was *Liton* explaining to me about his preparedness experience. I start this section with his case since he represents the freshest migrant household that I came across during my study. It was actually the relative (not really a family relative – this person was related to one of *Liton*'s village neighbours and often visited his house), who played the role of a saviour for *Liton* and his family. He paid for their travel expenses and kept the whole family in his city house for more than a week before the family managed a house themselves in a nearby slum. And predictably this is the most characteristic affiliation that migrants seek help from. However, this characteristic remain the same irrespective of migrant category (*forced* or others).

Although *Abul Hossain* is categorized as *forced* according to the selection criterion, he and his wife took much longer time than *Liton* before migrating. He also has a quite different motivation and somewhat opposing preparation before actually moving out. Being a carpenter, *Abul Hossain* used to take contracts for works such as boat-making or house construction. As I said earlier, being a *soldier of fortune*, he did not have any real attachment either to his own land or with his family. He told me he was always looking forward to move out since finding a regular job in the village was becoming increasingly difficult and he also had a dream for living in the city. Before he and his wife left finally, for about one and half

year, he started collecting information about *Khulna* city from the seasonal migrants working there. Amongst them, he had friends who let him know that he could make a living in the city by building boats there. They also told him that *Khulna* was a flourishing city at that time and business opportunity like this was plenty. However, he and his wife started to think seriously about migrating after the second big erosion (by river *Bishkhali*), which took his house and the remaining land from the first erosion. So, within the last month, they decided to leave forever before they discussed together about what they could possibly do in the city. He told me, *I sold my apparatus for 800 Taka and left for Khulna. After we reached Khulna, we spent our first night in the Boat Terminal and then rented a house by river Rupsha.*

Shamsul Haq also had a similar story; after consistently being poked by step-mom and own father, and not being able to progress in business (as said earlier, could not manage a loan for a proper business), he was desperate for a change to make a decent living. Describing his motivation, he was telling me, *Show me money (monetary gain), I can do whatever you ask of me!* Later, this motivation further grew when some countrymen (working in *Khulna* as day labourers) informed him that *Khulna* is a place where he could find lots of job, decent places to live and ample chances to grow. Being an entrepreneur in nature, it was a goldmine he always wanted to burrow. But again the affection to his place of birth was still strong. He told me, *I could not really let go of my sympathy (to my home)...but suddenly on one day my father bribed police and they beat me in front of my neighbours and that was it! At that very moment I thought it was enough...I cannot lose my dignity...(then) I asked my wife...we sold one of her Sarees and a floor-mat to a neighbour on that evening and left for Khulna at night. We did not let anyone know...we thought we could earn more in the city than we earn now.*

Unlike their *forced* (due to *natural* and *man-made* reasons) counterparts, the more *voluntary* migrants' from the coast seem to have differences in their preparedness for the city lives. For example, *Abdul Hakim* never really had a plan to migrate in the first place. After his great loss to the sea, he was left without any choice than to migrate to the city. From this perspective he could not really prepare himself for the city. But as he was saying, *I have seen men going to town, to Khalishpur precisely (a place where mainly the jute mills are located in Khulna)...they worked in the jute mills and made their livelihoods...* It is thus clear, he was informed much earlier than he committed himself for *Khulna*. He also had his brother in law's family living in the city. This family, however, was always in his mind but he never thought of seeking any help from them. He, after a brief discussion with his wife, decided to leave within a week after the looting; he left his only son in custody of the grandparents. Like *Shamsul Haq*, *Abdul Hakim* also left at night, while the travel cost was met by borrowing 100 Taka from his relatives. He told me, *Nothing would have stopped me from leaving...I did not want to be left as a beggar in my home...I knew I was a quick learner, I had this confidence in myself that I can quickly learn a trick or two to specialize about something. I could also work as a day labourer...* Once in *Khulna*, *Abdul Hakim* did not want to go back home again.

Mosharraf also never thought of coming to *Khulna* either, although his parents were living there for almost 12-13 years before his move...*My income started to decline...* he told me...*I never really liked fishing either...it was risky...I went to Khulna before but that was just to visit my parents and relatives. I was not prepared in the sense that I was not thinking about that unless I almost started starving. At the same time, I was getting pressurized from people to whom my father was indebted to...I had to sell off my fishing net and the only land we had to pay off for father's debt.* He added, *I still think of going back...I never really consider living in the city permanently...I don't belong here...* It took *Mosharraf* only one month to decide to leave his village finally. Although he had to move, he confessed, he had this

comfort of mind that at least his parents live in the city....*I knew I could always turn to them; not all the other people have this luxury.*

Lastly, I present the case of *Panna Miah*. He is unique in the sense that he is the only person amongst all the respondents, who had experience of circular migration before the permanent one. Quite interestingly, unlike the other five, he is the only case as well, who used to live a bit further away from the coast. *Panna Miah* is also the only person who came back to village after spending almost five years in two different towns (first *Khulna* and later *Chittagong Hill Tract*⁸). As mentioned previously, *Panna Miah* first went out to town with his brother, leaving his wife behind. He was telling me, *We (me, my brother and my wife) sat together and decided to give it a try (seasonal migration) to tackle these jobless months...we thought we could come back again after we save some money. Once decided, we left for Khulna while the travel cost of 50 Taka was provided by my elder brother...then he continued...We collected information about Khulna from wood merchants who used to travel frequently; we also had an uncle working in BOL (National Oxygen Factory) whom we visited earlier...he gave us hope that we could do like that when he visited our home last time. We actually stayed in his house for a few days before we started to live on our own in a nearby logwood storage for free...that way we started saving a lot of money.*

4.3.2.3 Migration as a typical survival/coping strategy

How typical migration is for the rural people in the coast? This was my first question to the participants during the FGDs while I was visiting the *Sidr* affected areas⁹ during my field trip. I observed people looking at each other with a question mark on their face. I later discovered that the question mark was regarding me asking, *what kind of comical question that is?* It also raised a certain amount of exclamation amongst them as because migration (mostly *seasonal* and *circular*) has been a very know phenomenon for them for a few decades now. It came out through the discussions that a large segment of the rural inhabitants are ready to move out if necessary, providing the move will only be temporary. As a matter of fact, on that spot I met at least 3 persons who are 'active' seasonal migrants themselves, who just came back from *Khulna* and *Chittagong* a few days ago. In addition, I asked people whether they know anyone or any family who left permanently after the cyclone. The result was astonishing as I found that they know only one such family who left for *Dhaka* after this year's cyclone even after every family in the vicinity being equally devastated. Conversely, they named a few persons and households who actually came back to their relatives and left-behind homesteads for getting a share of the heavy relief that was offered in the affected areas.

During both of these discussion forums, I met a few people whom I recognized as circular migrants. These persons were actually living in big cities for 5 to 8 years before finally coming back to home due to internal family reasons. Amongst the villagers of *Southkhali*, I also came across one person (*Shafiq*) who recently sent his wife abroad (to UAE for working as maid) as part of his survival strategy. When asked about the motives for migration, he replied that it is the extended income opportunity above anything else. When I asked the same question to the seasonal migrants, they also gave me similar impressions of raising income and making sure about the constant flow of income as being the primary determinants for their migration-decisions. During this discussion, it became apparent to me that nobody these days want to leave their *home* for good, as better communication has become a major

8. He went there as government was giving away lands to landless people in that somewhat remote township; he lost his first wife and a child there due to malaria; he himself was also infected but somehow managed to come back to native village and recover

9. In addition to my visit to *Patharghata*, I later went to visit another severely affected area due to cyclone. The village is called *Southkhali*, situated on the other side of river *Baleshwar*, just opposite to *Patharghata*. I conducted an additional FGD there to check on the vulnerability issues and also some issues regarding migration as a coping strategy

force in this dual household mode of economy. These people actually calculate the family-cost of living in the city permanently, and compare that with the combination of living ‘the bad times’ of the year in the city and ‘the good times’ with family back home as more beneficial and sustainable. The villagers of *Southkhali* also told me that almost two-thirds of the villagers are actually seasonal migrants who travel mostly to *Khulna* and work there as either day labourers or rickshaw pullers. The migrations take place at two different times for two different groups of people. For people who work as fisherman don’t leave during the rainy season as the seasonal catch of fish kicks up. While for day labourers, rainy season remains the time for starvation as mobility and supply of money really shrinks up; and as the season lingers, so do the jobless and foodless days. These people therefore, don’t have any other option than to migrate.

I was asking one of the migrants about *how long they have been doing this?* This was a young man probably in his early 30’s; I found that even he has been engaged in this venture for almost 8 years. Asking the same question to another person also provided me with similar information. Both of them told me that they usually work as rickshaw pullers as they know some rickshaw-garage owners, with whom they have quite a good relation built over the years. Although it was hard to find a job when they first went to *Khulna*, it is relatively easy now to go back there, find a place to live and a suitable job since a number of people are always there. They have some fixed places to live in the city now with some fixed provider of jobs. Certainly, seasonal migration has become a much known ground for all these people. Even if jobs are also scarce in the city it is not really a problem for the seasonal migrants to find one. In their words...*any job is good job than no job at all*...first amazed me. I later realized that these people remain so desperate that they would do any job as the problem of jobless and hungry period in villages is extremely acute.

How much time did it take you to find a job was my last question to all these migrants. I came across information here, similar to that of my literature survey, but with a different explanation. In the earlier paragraph I mentioned about ‘desperation’ being one reason why migrants can manage jobs in a much faster fashion. Interestingly, there is also another basis why they can manage jobs in 2-3 days of their arrival. In the city, there are some job providers who prefer these kinds of newcomers over more experienced ones. It is because they can hire them in a better bargain, and possibly with a much lower price. Job providers can also force these newcomers into work for a much longer duration as the ‘desperation’ is also well-known to them. However, it portrays an exploitative scenario with a manipulative relationship that all the newcomers are often subject to. But left without any choice, and without a well-defined labour rule, this is the reality temporary migrants have to cope with.

4.3.2.4 Rural-urban interaction - the different forms

Most of my studied respondents do not possess any physical asset back home, which is not unlikely since they did not have much even before they migrated. Either they possessed nothing on their own and used to live on government land or they sold whatever they possessed before they migrated to *Khulna*. I found only two among the six of the interviewed respondents, who still have some kind of asset back home. *Liton*, who just came to city almost a year ago told me, *I still have 3 Katha¹⁰ of land back home with my house on it....we did not sell it since it will probably be eroded to the river within a very short time, may be within two years...we also tried to sell it before we came, but nobody was really interested to buy it.* On the other hand, *Panna Miah* has his step mother still living in the plot of land his

10. *Katha* is a unit of area for land measurement in Bangladesh; 1 *Katha* = 725 sq. ft. (or almost 70 m²) of land

father used to possess. It is also a very small piece of land (7 *Katha*) which consists of a few trees, a house and a pond. When I asked him whether he invests there or not, he replied that it is not at all suitable for agriculture. He also added that even if it was cultivable it was too small to make a living with. The land is also shared by all his brothers and step mother. However, all of them gave me impressions that they would have visited home more frequently if they had some land (agricultural mostly) or any other investment back there.

Apart from agricultural land and any sort of physical asset (like house), there is also another significant factor that migrants consider essential in their livelihoods. It is the relation with the close relatives (like parents, brother/sister etc.) back home. For all of them, this is very important although nobody really benefits either financially or from any other physical means whatsoever. Because Bangladesh is a country dominated by rural settings and mostly it is difficult to designate any boundary between them, the relation with rural people with the urban is also much intertwined. From my knowledge, I know that it is difficult to find out many households in the city who does not have any relatives back in their rural bases. It is also difficult to find households that do not get agricultural products and money once a year from the land they possess in rural areas. Given the fact that the migrants themselves do not possess any such land back home, and their rural counterparts being poor as well, getting any return (monetary and/or crop) is also out of question. However, they cherish at least the relation they maintain with people back home, whom they visit at least once a year or during occasionally (on some special days like religious festivals or to mourn parents' date of demise etc.). I found *Panna Miah*, who visited his *home* last time to persuade some political leaders to get his elder brother out of potential trouble. Similarly, the other migrants actually visited their place of origin, to check on their relatives after *Sidr* hit them last year. Sometimes, though not always, these people have to spend money or bear the cost of occasions or someone back home. For example, *Liton* still has his grandmother back *home*, to whom, although occasionally, he uses to send some amount of money. Similarly, *Panna Miah* feels it is his duty to send some clothe at least once a year even if it is his step mother.

Similar is the story from the other side as the rural relatives speak of their expectations over the migrant relatives in the city. Although they do not get anything much from the city relatives, they like to foster this relation by visiting them once or twice a year. One of the secondary respondents, *Hemayet Faraji*, told me that it gives him...*a sense of closeness as well as a sense of comfort and security that at least we have a place to go in case we are in danger*. The frequency of visit by rural relatives is also testified by the migrant households as they informed me. Even if they are not well off financially, the migrant households in the city still like to entertain the relatives to best of their abilities. They told me that they expect guests once or twice every month which makes it 20 to 25 times a year. And as I mentioned previously, this is the same pattern of liaison the migrant respondents used to maintain during their rural times. Even though communication was not that easy, they used to visit their city relatives at least once a year. And people like *Abdul Hakim*, *Mosharraf* and *Panna Miah* always had someone living in the city to whom they could turn to in case they needed them. In fact, these relatives often advised and assured them that they can come and make a living in the city in case they have to. This sense of comfort, the migrants confirmed, was always at the back in their mind as *Liton* was telling, *He* (the relative in *Khulna* city) *assured us that at least we do not have to die being in the city...there are many shrimp factories where I could work...we knew it was not going to be so bad...* Probably it suggests about the rural peoples' mental dependence over their city relatives.

Last but not the least I will quote some fascinating remarks by the migrants regarding their motivation to possibly go back to their places of origin; except for one, all the other respondents have actually shown their interest to go back if they get a chance. For me, the reasons embrace a lot of causes including dissatisfaction with city life (not being able to fulfil the dream), current situation of job market, market price for staple and other food items, development of rural areas, mental attachments to rural bases etc. However, I would like to present the quotes in the following paragraph.

Asking him why he wants to go back to his village, *Liton* told me, *It is the attachment I feel with my home...it is also that I like the work I knew (agricultural labour) comparing with the day-labourer job I do now...although business opportunity in the city is better, the overhead cost is also lesser in my village...and overall it is about the peace of mind....* Similarly, *Shamsul Haq* responded, *In villages, you don't have to buy a number of things so you can save some money...I always thought of making some money here (Khulna) so that I can invest in my home village...With money, maybe I could start a business there as I always dreamt of or maybe I could buy a piece of land...but I cannot afford those anymore...Mosharraf* also responded in a similar fashion telling me, *I have been thinking of going back to village for more than one year now...but I can only go (to village) if I can manage some money to buy a piece of land to grow rice (as rice is becoming very expensive these days)...I could also start a small shop instead...and for my child, I will try to find the best school there to compensate for this school (because she goes to a Kindergarten now)...Abdul Hakim*, on the other hand, has expressed his motivation from a different perspective, *I will go back if I become wealthy here...I want to go back with my pride (that I once lost there)*. Then he added, *(I have to go) because everyone in buried there...village (situation) has also improved; new roads and hospitals have been constructed and other amenities have developed as well...many people still recognize me...fishes are fresh and maybe you don't have to buy everything*. Finally, *Panna Miah* tells me, *If I get a piece of land (I will go back)...I will be able to cultivate it...I think nobody would come to the city and bear the agony (of a despaired life)...of course some may come and develop themselves providing they are capable and rich...*

Apart from all of them, it is only *Abul Hossain* who does not want to leave *Khulna* for anything; it probably because he has a piece of land in *Khulna* and also maybe he does not have any family back home now. He believes it is a good environment here and his know-how about his work and potential clients are much better comparing to rural times. He also thinks that after all these years he has become a citizen in *Khulna* and does not have such attachments with village as shown by other villages. Nevertheless, the other respondents also talked about the goods in a city life, but they also have shown their urge for going back, which makes rural urban interaction a potential area for further study.

4.3.2.5 Phase 2 analysis: migration and livelihood strategies

Trends, shocks and seasonality: The rural coastal context is comprised of *man-made* and *natural* phenomena. And it is almost impossible to quantify which one of these two plays the penultimate role to influence migration decision-making as these two are very strongly interwoven. It is really difficult to hold *natural* causes like cyclones and erosion responsible for forcing someone to migrate when he/she is already compelled to live onto the open shore due to a *man-made* reason like landlessness as he did not have any. Nevertheless, as I found, there also remains a subtle difference between the situations faced by each category of migrants. As rural context comprises of all these *trends, shocks* and *seasonality*, the *forced* migrants are mostly affected by *shocks* while the *voluntary* migrants are influenced and to some extent made to take decisions due to a combination of *trends* and *seasonality*. From one

side, it is not sensible to generalize these findings with such small sample size, but from another, it also makes sense to realize that only these *shocks* strike suddenly and strike without leaving any time for preparation. To remember *Abdul Hakim* (*man-made*: fishing boat looted when he was doing pretty well with his business) or *Liton* (*natural*: hit by cyclone *Sidr*, when he was doing well as an agricultural worker and had his poultry and cattle), there was nothing much they could do when they abruptly lost everything and even started to starve. But as mentioned earlier, above all else, the vulnerable rural context is to be blamed, which provides this backdrop much earlier before such *shocks* smack the poor in the face.

Preparation period and asset sequencing: Depending on the contextual forces, it is *Panna Miah* and *Abul Hossain*, who seemed to be better prepared during their move out, compared to *Liton* or *Abdul Hakim*. *I had some ideas about Khulna (before migration)...as Panna Miah was describing...I also had a dream...I cross-checked my previous knowledge with the seasonal migrants and traders (who travelled to Khulna for their purposes)...then I accumulated some money (elder brother gave me) before leaving...The statement clearly suggests about his sequencing of assets when compared to Liton's, as he described his situation...I also knew about Khulna but never thought of going for it...I decided to call my friend (neighbour's relative in Khulna – his contact person), I was desperate...we did not have to eat anything or the money to pay for our travel costs...Liton had a similar start (collecting information through social networks) like Panna Miah, before leaving home. However, as Liton could not manage the financial means, he could only deploy his social capital as part of his migration endeavour.*

There is a significant difference between the amounts of time taken by each household to take decision for moving out. As I found out, the preparation time significantly varies between the two categories. Although passively informed for years, *forced* migrants' ultimate decision to move out took them less than a week. Consequently, their *voluntary* counterparts were better prepared in the sense that they knew and were committed for a few months before moving out. However, it is interesting that every one of them essentially had some previous information and know-how about *Khulna* and other cities (like *Chittagong* and *Dhaka*) as well. This information, either actively or passively helped them prepare. Mostly, the *forced* migrants always had someone close (kin or very close friend) already living in *Khulna*, while the source of information for the *voluntary* were either relatives or travellers (like seasonal migrants). Although some of these people primarily refused that they were thinking about taking help from these relatives, I discovered later that they eventually started living close-by to those relatives when they were in *Khulna*. Therefore, it is needless to say that the presence of these relatives was always in the *forced* people's mind and it gave them a sense of comfort and security to take the risk of deciding so quickly. However, one thing has been common for the migrants is that all of them chose *Khulna* finally because it was the closest city from *home*. It was also familiar because they had the best information about it than any other big cities. And except for one, everybody has a dream of going back *home* if there is a chance.

Situation(s) influencing migration: On one hand, as the *forced* households did not really get any chance to prepare themselves, the first thing they considered was how to manage a livelihood in the city. As one of the *forced* people (*Liton*) told me...*I was ready to do anything when we first came to the city...we were just thinking about surviving first – you know, we were starving for days...this statement, to some extent is different from the voluntary ones', who knew before coming (through their information base) about possible jobs they might have in the city and how their existing skills and qualities could be useful there. Although all these households tried various professions (ranging from rickshaw*

pulling, day labourer's job on construction sites, van driver, hawker etc.) after reaching *Khulna*, it is still the *forced* households, who were ready to take risks with their lives and were truly, as they call themselves, 'fast learners'. It is due to this entrepreneurial quality of theirs' (also seen while they were in the village), the most important *human capital* for an illiterate person, which helped them getting prepared for the city and later develop a few more skill when they were in the city.

However, most of the *forced* migrants also had good social networks (in the form of relatives and friends who offered them jobs, provided accommodation, inspired and assured them on several occasions, provided mental support etc.), which, to my belief always played a very vital part in their migration decision-making. In fact, a person like *Liton* has even been benefited in monetary terms as mentioned previously. Apart from these, the *voluntary* migrants were better prepared in monetary terms as they knew they have to leave. Unlike the *forced* people (who either had to borrow, or sell off even a mat to pay for the travel expenses), the *voluntary* counterparts were better off in terms of money as they were able to make up some amount through their own means (*Abul Hossain* sold off his carpentry apparatus or *Panna Miah* got money provided by his elder brother); here none of them had to borrow from external sources. To be true, the best asset for *forced* migrants was their *human capital*, their keenness to snatch onto anything that possibly comes their way, and backed up by their useful social relations. And for the *voluntary* people, it is probably the *information* (thus *social*) *capital*, again backed up by their *financial capital* and self-belief in their *human capital* (ability to labour) that played the most important part.

Permanent migration - a unique response: As mentioned, rural-urban migration portray a familiar livelihood strategy for many coastal poor. However, in terms of 'strategy', there is a fundamental difference between these two kinds of migration movements; i.e. seasonal and permanent. To start with, seasonal migration seems to be a normal 'coping strategy' for many of the rural coastal population. Depending on the experiences obtained during the FGDs and secondary interviews, it often becomes difficult to call some of these migrants as 'poor'. I remember one of them (*Mohsin*) at *Southkhali* telling me, *I prefer Khulna whenever the fishing season is over here...I know many others from this village, who travel as far as Dhaka during the rainy season...however, I stay at Khulna around 3 months at a stretch, while my wife and parents stay back...I don't need to migrate to Khulna permanently since my parents are still living and they have their own house and land here...I actually can manage jobs on other times here. I only choose Khulna while I am out of work or in emergency...after Sidr, we carried on well as relief was plenty; but I only went back to Khulna when there was no relief anymore...I know a rickshaw-garage owner (from whom I borrow rickshaw) and I also have a place fixed for me to live there...I can always come back home quickly if my family needs me (as it takes only 4 hours by bus)...*Certainly, it is difficult to call this man a poor person, comparing with the primary respondents. If recalled, there is a clear difference between this statement and those provided by the permanent migrants.

Permanent migration can be seen as a more exceptional response to a more radical shock (or a set of simultaneous shocks and stresses, and/or possibly in combination). Fieldworks experiences suggest that permanent migration is taken up more for 'survival' rather for 'coping' in order to ensure an income that at least confirms people do not have to be hungry at the end of a day. Thus permanent migration is only taken up when the usual coping strategies do not seem to work anymore. This is when people like *Abul Hossain* lose all attachments to his *home*. Being devastated by cyclones several times, losing the only land to erosion and chronic jobless periods due to seasonality did not help him 'cope with' any

longer. Thus it came down to mere ‘survival’ efforts more than anything else. Thirty years back, due to lack of communication means, there was no possibility for seasonal movements either. Therefore, without any physical asset to latch on to, or not having any growth opportunity without a substantial job market or even without any close relatives, the only motivation for *Abul Hossain* remained to leave *home* permanently and head for the city.

4.3.3 Phase 3

4.3.3.1 City context - vulnerability & challenges

City context is characterized by a similar yet more complex set of challenges in comparison to rural context. It is sometimes even more challenging compared to rural times, which most predictably owes to the job market scenario as utterly pointed out by all primary respondents. Availability of job, seasonality, job security, remuneration security, competition, unsafe job environment, exploitative nature of employer, violence etc. are quite frequent and was readily singled out as the major concerns for all the households and the breadwinners particularly.

Regarding the availability of job, it is found that none of the respondents manage to find a job through the full working days in a month. Even during pick seasons, where job opportunity is available, these people remain jobless for about 7 days in a month. On an average, the number of working days varies between 15 to 22 days in a ‘good’ month. However, if it is acceptable then things turn much worse in rainy season (similar to rural times – this happens even in the city!) when the number of working days really reduce and sometimes comes down to even 7 days a month. The number of working days thus remains mostly between 10 to 15 days. In addition to all these, the job is not secured enough. For day labourers like these migrants, they are never sure if they can work another day with the same employer tomorrow. As *Abul Hossain* was telling me...*The employer himself holds the sole authority for a job contract as there is nothing written between me and him. He can suddenly decide that he will not going to call me again tomorrow. It also depends on his ability to employ me as well...It is very hard to manage...I am not even sure today whether I am going to find a job for tomorrow or for whom I am going to work...*

There are also problems with remuneration as well. I did not find anything regarding an explicit labour law as I went through several relevant literatures (for example, [Ahmed and Sattar 2004](#)). There is nothing written or predetermined by any law concerning a minimum labour wage. There is also nothing specified regarding what is to be the minimum hour and what should be considered as extra hours as well. And though the migrants are mostly illiterate themselves, it is even more difficult for them to learn about these sorts of rules even if rules were there. However, all these labourers are aware that there is nothing regarding minimum wage and hours while all these make them susceptible to exploitation and harassment. When asked about this in the urban FGD, *Panna Miah* answered for the others, *We have no choice...we are helpless because we need to keep good relation with this guy (the employer) even if he pays me less today or forces me to work extra hours...we need him for tomorrow...Sometimes they are not even paid at all after their work is finished; they are to lend their labour as well! In addition, the similar things happen to their spouses as well. Although these spouses work in more casual and part-time basis (like handicrafts for NGOs), the payments are mostly delayed, infrequent and given at will of the employer.*

The more permanent and long term migrants like *Abdul Hakim* and *Shamsul Haq* complained about the competitiveness in the labour market, which they think is mostly due to the presence of seasonal and temporary (like commuters) migrants in the city. When asked about what kind of problem they face, they replied with resentment that the problem is twofold. On

one hand, these less-skilled people take away their positions as labourers in the market while on the other hand, these people seriously hamper the standard of wage. According to *Abdul Hakim* and *Shamsul Haq*, the seasonal migrants take up any job and at any price offered by the employer as more experienced and skilled people like them cannot bring themselves down to these occasional people's level.

In addition to this uneven competition, job is also unsecured in terms of physical safety. Amongst all the respondents, *Shamsul Haq* is basically crippled. He was showing me his elbow and waist with displaced bones, and telling me how it happened, *I was working almost 50 feet high above the ground when this happened. There was no safety net beneath and I was actually breaking through a wall. It is when I lost my grip and fell from that...I tried to grab on to something but could not resist it. When I was dropped down there, everybody thought I was dead...nobody came to my rescue...even the contractor, for whom I was working, actually fled...later, one of my fellow workers took me to the hospital...I was there in the hospital for more than two months...but I did not get proper treatment since I could not pay for it...some of my previous clients in the Bazaar actually paid part for my treatment but I never fully recovered...I still feel acute pain in my bones.* This is when *Panna Miah* joined in and talked about violence as well...*This is not all*, he told me, *I was subject to force bribery a few times...I was compelled to pay a local muscleman and the son of the employer even...the muscleman actually beat me as I was not able to pay the 20 Taka he asked of me...*

Most of the studied households have only one breadwinner in the family. Even if people like *Mosharraf*, *Panna Miah* and *Shamsul Haq* have their wives working part-time, yet it is not at all sufficient to bear the cost of the family in case of their husbands' absence, sudden illness, and jobless periods or even for the future of children¹¹. Additionally, these households do not have any sort of savings whatsoever. They live in rented houses, and most of them do not acquire any physical asset (land, house, TV) or expensive belonging (jewellery) either. They do not also have any other kind of investment, which altogether make their lives even more susceptible. Without an alternate means of income, these people remain seriously exposed to sudden shocks like illness or sudden expenses like marriage and all. It is when they have to borrow from neighbours, fellow workers, and relatives or from people for whom they work. Consequently, they do not have much option either as borrowing depends on the availability of money to the borrower as well. However, borrowing persists and seems to be a very important part of their coping strategy which eventually gives way to indebtedness. Due to the absence of a reasonable urban credit provider as government banks¹², these people always have to borrow, similar to rural times, from rich people with a very high rate of interest. As we can assume, these loans prove chronic, recurring and expensive in the end.

My only regret is that I did not get any education...If I had any, I could start working as a contractor myself since this occupation requires some reading and writing skills to read and sign documents...this was Shamsul Haq, when I asked him about his educational qualifications. Like him, all the other migrant breadwinners or their spouses are illiterate. Of them, a few can merely sign their names, but as they all realize, the level of education is not even close to enough to do well in the city. Subsequently, it is further alarming to notice that even their educational levels are the main obstacles on their way forward, their children are not much educated either. Although the overall educational level is raised throughout the

11. *Panna Miah* told me, "I need to start saving...I need to do that badly...I have to do that because I have another daughter to wed...sometimes darkness grabs me...without money (and savings), its total darkness"

12. Although there are NGOs providing credit, they are not trusted at all by the surveyed households as the interest rate offered by them is way too high. *Liton* told me, "I have seen my landlord suffering after taking NGO loans...whenever he (landlord) fails to pay the weekly premium, the field officers come and uses slangs..."

country during the past two decades (as referred in Chapter 1), the second generation of these migrant families are still trailing the paths of their parents. *Abdul Hakim*'s son did not finish grade 7 while two sons of *Abul Hossain* did not even complete the secondary level. And although having the higher educational ambition for his daughter, *Shamsul Haq* had to marry his daughter due to social pressure. Apart from all the causes and reasons, this lack of education is probably one of the major reasons why these households could not upgrade themselves in terms of social position or income, even after being in the city for more than two decades.

In addition to these micro level issues, there are also other more meso level vulnerability issues like the decrease in real income (due to inflation). All of the households actually talked about this event very vocally and let me know that their purchasing capacity have severely deteriorated although their income has increased in monetary units. Everybody told me they had to curtail the consumption of all kind of luxury items and even basic protein food like beef or even chicken. For them, these basic items have become luxury to afford these days. In addition, due to the rising cost of staple food, they are to consume much lower quality rice while the intake of flour items has to be stopped.

Lack of involvement in social processes and institutions is also a major issue regarding urban livelihoods' vulnerability. As in their rural times, migrant households still do not (and probably cannot, due to the nature of their jobs) participate in social forums. None of them are currently affiliated with any social organizations (associations, groups, co-operatives, NGOs, political parties etc.) either. This, in fact, has systematically barred them from accessing urban social institutions like *Ward Council*¹³. In truth, these institutions are so much politicized that everybody feels that the councillors will be of no use in case they need him. The public representative is thus considered by them as being biased and nepotistic. *Mosharraf* told me...*when he (Councillor) is called for things to settle and arbitrate, he is often partial...he does not even ask for other people's opinion...he does not need our views and never calls us...*In addition, *Abul Hossain* tells a similar story, as his name was never registered in the 'elder and potential pension getters' list as he did not vote for the *Councillor* in the last local election. Similar experiences have also been shared by *Shamsul Haq* and *Panna Miah*, which they believe are the reasons they don't like to participate any more even if they are called for.

There are also some extra-ordinary instances which indeed impede the growth of the migrants towards becoming successful entrepreneurs. For example, *Shamsul Haq* was twice downgraded with his business due to theft. Before his accident, as he was doing some extra hour job, could actually save some money and manage to start a restaurant business in a potentially good location in *Khulna*. As his days were going along well with business running smoothly, at one night his shop was ransacked and he lost everything. Later he had the accident and could never really recover. *Panna Miah*, on the other hand has a somewhat different yet tragic experience. He himself was also on the verge of a new supply business and actually could afford to make a good capital to invest; as he was telling me, *On one occasion, when I paid a lot of money as advance bills to a number of my labourers (working for me), the workers took the money and fled...they never came back...*This way, *Panna Miah* lost his money and his faith on trusting people. This came as a mental wound which never healed for him and he would never really think of another business ever since.

13. Grass-root local government institution in Urban Bangladesh; the constituency is a portion of the city council jurisdiction, which is called a *Ward*, while the elected public representative for the constituency is known as *Councillor*

4.3.3.2 Physical and mental dimensions of poverty

Regarding physical assets, the findings concerning my interviewed households are pretty straightforward. Whether it is *absolute* or *relative* poverty, everybody believes it is the lack of job and physical assets clearly make up for the difference between them with a rich person. For all of the respondents, job is the biggest and most important indicator of poverty. It actually refers to a status that makes all the difference. It is the indicator for income (i.e. consumption), indicator of social class and strata, it brings in honour and dignity, and it shows what one actually is. Therefore, the lack of job or accessibility to it, above all, is considered detrimental to overall *well-being*. In this regard, *Abul Hossain* was telling me...*where there is a job...there is money...*then he asked me back, *can you deny this?* Nevertheless, most of the migrant households actually believe that joblessness is the most important factor that brought them to the city apart from everything else. One of the respondents (*Mosharraff*) was actually referring to the rural times and telling me, (*I call myself better off comparing to some other in the village*) *because I had some works to do...though not much but I had at least some income...those people actually begged.*

Besides this, presence of physical assets is also very important. For instance, almost half of the respondents told me as they feel that land is an essential indicator for poverty. According to them, it is the precondition for calling someone poor or not as the extreme poor does not possess any. This was revealed when I asked them *whom do you consider rich in your neighbourhood*. As they all answered, a few other riches-indicator also came up that includes the size and quality of house, possession of cars or fishing boat, ownership of shops in the market, having own business or having more than one breadwinner in the family. During my stay at these households, it really amazed me to find out why these people only physical assets as the single most important indicator. The houses I visited, the conditions are really poor as all of them are basically located in low lying areas with polluted water around (figures 4.4 and 4.5 below). They have separated kitchens and toilets outside the house and in fact shared with other tenants. But most striking of all is the absence of any real asset inside their house. Only one house has a television (*Abdul Hakim*) and two (*Shamsul Haq* and *Abul Hossain*) has ceiling fans. All they possess is a small number of old furniture (like bed and wardrobe) to their disposal; this is no wonder, this lack of assets makes all these poor migrants consider physical asset over anything else.



Figure 4.4: Showing *Shamsul Haq*'s house; notice unhygienic condition around house
Source: Author



Figure 4.5: Showing *Abul Hossain*'s house; notice the construction material and overall condition; standing is the family
Source: Author

Interestingly, I found two different opinions regarding *what makes someone poor*; in this, *Shamsul Haq* was telling me, *For me, people with education are actually rich...I feel this because an educated person can choose between professions...he can judge what is good and what is not good (for him)...you can lose all your money and assets in minutes but you cannot lose education as such.* It is he who also considers health as a one of the most important elements. Being a physically challenged person himself, he realizes the need for a good health for a sustained income and growth in life. Of course, most of the respondents talked about the importance of being in good health since they spend a considerable share of their monthly income for buying medicine only. To be true, everybody got really emotional while they were talking about how much they have to spend over medicine and how much they lag in spending the real amount required for a good medication.

I also found out that the income levels (and also consumption of certain items) for this group of respondents are also important indicators of poverty. The average income, as I calculated is between 4,500 Taka to 6,000 Taka per household per month which is in fact, 65 USD to 85 USD. Considering the UN's 1 USD per person per day as being the indicator for absolute poverty, it is not really much especially when it is the average household income for a household of 2 to 3 persons. In addition to the income side, it is really sad to find out how little they consume and how much they have to adapt to the price hike every day. Most of the families I interviewed (except for *Abul Hossain*), I found them consume items like beef or chicken once or twice a year! Even being in a country like Bangladesh, where fish still is more like a staple food, these households cannot afford them more than once or twice a week. They do not consume milk, cannot afford flour and hardly affords seasonal fruit (even local products like *Mango, Pineapple* or *Jackfruit*). Although it is difficult to measure poverty, yet it is surmisable by looking at this picture that has just been drawn.

Poverty is also a mental phenomenon; while describing the current situation, when the helplessness was being expressed in their own words, many of the respondents actually wept before me, which, at times made me a little bit emotional as well. For example, *Liton* was describing his situation and his incapability to purchase, *I cannot even buy a Hilsa fish for my parents...I know how much they would have liked that...I don't have any work for several days now...what can you do when you are born poor?* It was the same sense of disparity that was coming out of *Panna Miah* as well, *Many people came after me (in the city) and doing very well...but I cannot even afford a good house myself, cannot also purchase little things...there is no guarantee for work tomorrow...I cannot afford to take a loan either...if I borrow from ASA (a local NGO) and cannot pay back in time, they will harass me...I don't want to lose my dignity either...how can I move out of this dilemma?*

Poverty also stems from the sense of *helplessness* as well. Amongst the respondents, the ones who are older and less healthy seem to be more vulnerable and depressed. With aging, their fear of reduced income and getting defenceless and susceptible to illness was also coming out as they spoke. It also indicates to growing uncertainty that has been resonant in everyone's voice as they spoke of the benefit of a permanent job. Apart from these, all of these respondents believe that poverty is directly related to the state of overall *well-being*. They feel that if someone is poor, he or she is surely not being well mentally. I will quote *Shamsul Haq* to finish off this section, *Give me a little bit of money or give me a chance to do a business (job)...this means a lot...this is all the peace of mind I require...*

4.3.3.3 Asset implementation in the city now

Education is the single most important yet widely missing component from everyone's livelihoods and their efforts for survival. Amongst all of them, *Liton* is the most educated breadwinner, who finished grade 8 and could not continue any longer to comfort his ailing father. It is perhaps due to that fact that he is younger than most other respondents and thus belongs to a further educated rural generation of Bangladesh. On the other hand, *Mosharraf's* wife is the most educated amongst the entire female population for these households, who could only finish the secondary school level before she was rather forced into marriage¹⁴. However, to compensate for the lack of education for the household members, many of the migrant households have a second income earner in the shape of their spouse. As most of the husbands having more technical skills (like experience to work as carpenter, master-mason or plumber¹⁵), the wives of these migrants' are found having working skill in producing handicrafts. There are also other two that I found, who work part time as maids in nearby neighbour's houses. Although the income generated by the second earner is not enough, but in terms of coping strategy, it is a quite significant phenomenon and a potential area to be supported to raise total household income through policy intervention.

In addition, health is also a matter of concern for all households as most of the households spend almost ten percent of their monthly income for medication purpose. Unexpected illness is common¹⁶ alongside long term illness and dependence of medicine as experienced by *Shamsul Haq* and *Mosharraf's* wife. Since a poor person like *Shamsul Haq* cannot possibly afford to skip work for an extensive period, interesting coping mechanisms have developed as he told me, *I work in contracts...I don't work as a day basis worker...for example, I ask for 5 days even if the work requires 2 days to finish...because I cannot work for 2 days at a stretch (due to my physical conditions), I divide the work and finish it depending on my physical condition...I also cannot take works which are higher up in second or third floor...Nevertheless, access to free government healthcare is also limited and all the migrants have bitter experiences regarding that. They don't really believe that there is any possibility of getting proper treatment in government hospitals (although things like child vaccination and free check-up for to-be mothers are regular). Because of lengthy process, migrants prefer private clinics or free treatment offered by some charitable hospitals instead. However, in case of emergency, they mostly prefer private clinics even though clinics are very expensive.*

Social relations and networks remain the most important and implemented resources as far as survival strategies for migrant households are concerned. From the day they moved into *Khulna* city, it has become the single most essential element of their livelihood. Although mostly concentrated horizontally within their own community, they maintain vertical relations as well with people from other social strata. People like clients (employer – whose work they do), contractors (whom they work for), and rich and elite (like political leaders) in the neighbourhood are also very important for them. In fact, all of the households have mentioned that they want to keep up good relationship with these people, even if they don't like them all. For them, it depends on a lot of factors, as *Abdul Hakim* told me, *Good relation*

14. A girl's age is still considered to be an important factor for marriage especially in less educated Bangladeshi society

15. *Liton* and *Mosharraf* being much newer to city are still working as day labourers and not really excelled in learning more high-paid, less-laborious trades as the more earlier migrants; but during the conversation, they expressed their interest and keenness in learning more technical works in shortest possible time

16. Before I came back to Rotterdam from my field trip, one evening *Panna Miah* came to me asking if I know anyone of the clinic, where his brother has just been admitted to due to some problems with his liver. Because the doctors asked for a lot of money, which he does not have, he was looking desperately for someone known to the clinic who can request the doctors for a reduced fees. He looked pale and totally out of sorts. It was his younger brother (migrated alongside him in the first place) who works as a night guard in a jute mill. Although the brother has a different family now, the burden is all *Panna Miah's* since he is the elder here. These are the kinds of uncertainty the poor often has to cope with

means good behaviour while Mosharraf added...*you need to have a permanent address, you need to spend a lot of time to build on trust and solidarity...* I found all of the respondents being confident of the good relation they have with neighbours. The scores using a ranking tool is also well above average as these people ranked themselves. All these respondents thus believe this social relationship helps them borrowing money during emergency (like medical), provides them employment (most of the job offers come through previous clients and co-workers), or gets them out of trouble or potential violence when needed. For example, all of the surveyed households buy household stuff in credit at least twice a week from the neighbourhood grocery. This relation is important since they can borrow in those days which they don't find a job to attend to. Similarly it is a must to visit the tea stall next to the grocery since there will be the colleagues discussing various issues including potential offer and opportunity for a job next day. The similar things also happen to woman when they gather and gossip.

Additionally, some of the migrants also believe it is necessary to keep in good contact with political leaders as well. When asked, *Mosharraf* promptly replied, *It is important because they have connections (with powerful people)...if police harass you, you have nowhere to go than the political leaders...only they can get you out of police trouble...* Although discontent with the efforts of the *Councillor*, most of the migrants believe it is the *Councillor* and the other political leaders who “*understand things better*”. *Abdul Hakim* said, *I myself know a few political leaders who for me are important because I got a number of my commissions and contracts through them; when asked why, he replied, It is them who everybody counts and wants to keep relation with...even the government officials do that...this is why they know a lot of people...*

I discovered a significant gap between the income and expenditure of the migrant households. It has been found that the amount of money these households earn and the amount needed for the moderate operation of the family are quite distant from each other. For most of the families, their earnings remain three-fourth of the total. So there is always a gap and there are always adjustments efforts to cope with the shortage. For example, as the price of flour increased, most of the families stopped consuming of *Roti*. *Abul Hossain* was telling me, *I could not buy any mango this year yet...this has become difficult for me for last 3-4 years since my income dropped...* Similarly, *Abdul Hakim* told me, *My grandson has been asking for a jackfruit for a few weeks...if I buy a jackfruit for 100 Taka, which is half of my income for a day, how I can buy rice for the day?* In addition, to adjust to long term income reduction or inflation, these households have to curtail costs for clothing, for fish and other protein items.

However, none of these families have any savings or investment whatsoever. I found two families who intend to save casually within the household but cannot really get benefit from it since one way or another, the savings is eventually eaten up during some unwanted events. Therefore, in comparison with rural times, the situation is much vulnerable since most of these households possessed some poultry/livestock and trees that they could sell in times of need¹⁷. They used to have their own vegetable gardens as well. But the city does not offer these benefits since everything has to be bought here. As a result, to cope with sudden events (like medical emergency, unexpected arrival of guests or buy a gift for attending a marriage ceremony); borrowing in various forms remains the most sorted means. Nevertheless, borrowing is not always possible and easy as I explained in the earlier section.

17. *Abdul Hakim* used to possess 15-20 goats which he sold for his own treatment when he became ill due to *Hepatitis*. *Liton* also had a cow which he thought (as a savings) he can use during his sisters marriage. He also sold a number of trees when his father became ill

These households live amongst a bare minimum of luxury and household commodities. They cannot afford gas or electricity for cooking, most of them cannot afford even a fan or a TV, they have almost absolutely no furniture bought from the market, no radio or refrigerator, none have a mobile phone, and not even a bicycle. I asked them about jewellery, whether they have any or not; most replied that they had some, which they had to sell in previous occasions in dire emergency situations.

Physical assets are directly related with the availability of financial assets. Only one of the migrant households actually could manage a small piece of land (*Abul Hossain - 3 Katha*) after being in *Khulna* for more than two decades. It also belongs to his wife, who is still paying monthly premiums for it to a Christian Missionary. However, they have their own house (made with bamboo and reed; figure 4.5) on their own piece of land with their sons living adjacently. They also have a tenant here, from whom they raise 450 Taka per month as rent. Except from this one, all the others live in rented houses with shared kitchen and toilet facilities, paying a large portion of their earnings for house rent. These houses, where they live, are actually low lying areas with dirty water around and usually inundates even after a moderate rainfall. Of course, living in these houses cut down overhead expenses while access to safe water and urban services like concrete roads, remain faraway wishes.

4.3.3.4 Phase 3 analysis: rural versus urban

Asset management: For most of the migrant households, skills in specific sectors have definitely developed compared to rural times. Back home, most of them tried all sorts of occupations, which now is replaced by specialization on an explicit area. *You cannot grow doing all kinds of stuff in the city...city means quality...you need to learn something and (you need to) learn that well and fast...When I came to Khulna, I spent hours in a carpentry shop when I used to be free of work...I noticed how they make a bed out of raw wooden logs...I noticed everything that happened around me...this way, I even learnt how to build a house...This was Abdul Hakim describing his formative days. But as this specialization provides them their means for living, at the same time it also confines them into a single profession, which, without proper education and training, they could not really excel over the years. Thus skills remained the same, the knowledge did not really enhanced and competition in the market has become manifold. And once they upgraded themselves to a certain expert level amongst all the other labourers, they cannot also lower themselves down and do certain other jobs that might hamper their dignity. Therefore, even having skills and entrepreneurial qualities, the migrants still experience severe jobless patches. And in addition, their second generation are not also educated enough to do some *white collar* jobs either. In that sense, it is questionable *whether their situation, in comparison to home, did really change or not.**

I found all the households talking highly about the benefits of better association (thus social networks) that is available in the city. Probably this is the sector that has changed significantly (and may be the stand out asset of all) than rural times. *Shamsul Haq* was telling me, *Khulna (the city situation) offers better opportunities since concentration of money (income opportunity) is much higher here and you can access to various income sources if you know many people...It is also important to get closer to educated and decent people...I always try to make friends especially with them...it (making friends) offers you a good learning experience...It is also this 'knowing as many people' which helps getting access to jobs, find a job, get out of troubles (e.g. borrowing in dire needs) and so on. Although this 'knowing' worked similarly in rural times, it is the diversification of income sources and options that make the city a unique place to live. And in the presence of various social domains (like neighbourhoods, workplaces, workers' associations, friends, relatives, clients,*

neighbourhood elites etc.), all of these social contacts really makes up a special position that help these people cope with the city situations better.

The psychological state, as it has been found, is 'not so strong' for the first generation migrants. For people like *Abul Hossain* or *Abdul Hakim*, who are in the latter half of their lives, or people like *Shamsul Haq*, who is ailing for years, the mental capital is very low. Because of their growing age or physical incapability, and also because of the ever-changing city context, it has been difficult for them to cope with this dynamics and to their words they are *losing hope each passing day*. Similarly, the decline in real income (due to inflation), reduced buying capacity, splitting up of their children from joint family, the sharp difference between various social classes, harassments and insecurity in workplace, lack of savings, and lack of adequate physical assets – everything as such has been pointed out as things of worry whenever I raised these issues. I found two families who could not dare taking another child due to their limited income, which for them, has always remained a constant source of agony. I found *Panna Miah*, who once invested all his savings into a business and lost everything in the process, from which he never quite recovered and he could not trust anyone ever since. It is only the two younger households (*Liton* and *Mosharraaf*), who seemed a bit more positive and optimistic amongst all the respondents. However, this city situation thus generates severe hopelessness and uncertainty amongst many of these households. Back home, the mental status was different as they could consider city as a place for solution for all kinds of troubles. Once here now, these families seriously suffer from a choice because they have nowhere else to go. No wonder why almost all of these migrant people consider going back again!

The city offers a much better information-base for all, if compared to rural times. For instance, the city has a labour pool (locally called as *labour-market*), a certain place in the city where all kinds of labourers gather early in the morning. *Mosharraaf* told me...*If there is no previous contact made by any employer the previous day, I go there early in the morning and wait for someone to come and pick me up for the day or two...* However, there is also the benefit of various social networks in the city, through which these people often get commissions. In fact, this network works as the most dependable and frequent source of information for a job. In addition, with the development of technology (like mobile phones), things got easier for many of these people. Although none of them possessing any, they can use it in a cheap price from nearby shops to contact or to be contacted in times of need. This is indeed one of the most significant differences now with rural times. Nevertheless, one thing did not really change, which is the access to formal information database (like labour laws, regulations etc.). Owing much to the centralized system of governance (which also did not really change itself over the years), the accessibility, transparency and accountability remained the same and so did the overall politico-bureaucratic culture.

None of the migrants and the other members of the households are directly related to any political party or any such association. They did not even show any enthusiasm for politics either. It never was and not even now, an issue for any of the respondents. Of course, they have expressed their concerns for freedom of speech, fair elections and their preferred quality for a public representative. The good thing, what they all spoken of, is that the quality (educational mostly) of political leaders, which is certainly better here in the city than rural areas. However, these people are still dissatisfied with the political culture of nepotism and corruption, which they believe did not change any bit as *Abul Hossain* was describing his situation...*I don't think he (the ward councillor) likes me...it is probably I did not vote for him in the last elections...I went to him to register my name to the "pensioners' list"...the councillor told me I am not eligible for that...I know he selected many of his favoured*

(people), who are much younger than me... Interestingly, even having disliking for them, half of the respondents admitted that they feel it is important to maintain good relationships with political leaders and activists since these politicians constitute the centre of all networks. For them, it is a very important asset to live with; I found these people wilfully maintaining this connection as part of their livelihood strategy. However, they also admit that with our political culture, participation and thus access to information remains a distant dream.

The city is an expensive place to live. Although, comparing to *home*, the income has been increased in monetary terms for all the migrants, but so has the expenditure. As a result, the real income declined with a serious decline in purchasing power. And with this, any sort of savings has become impossible for all. As none of these migrants or their spouses is employed in the formal sector, they do not have a chance either to receive any post-retirement benefit. Thus, without any savings whatsoever, having no investments and eligibility for pension or any government incentives, the financial status for all these households looks truly vulnerable. Moreover, they cannot access to any easier credit facility either, which they can resort to during an emergency. This is not at all different or sometimes even worse to some extent from rural times. For example, all these households had some kinds of savings back then in forms of poultry, livestock or even trees on homesteads, which could be sold or used in times of need. In addition, rural life also provided some free elements which people didn't have to buy. Firewood was usually collected from nearby forests while fishes were available in the pond or in the river. In times of house re-construction, people would have contributed a bamboo or two because there were good social relations. In any case, there were additional financial assets (or income earning sources) back home, which this city situation does not allow or cannot provide.

Living in a city offers accessibility to basic urban services (water, sewerage, electricity, roads etc.) that could be identified as positive changes when compared to rural times. The migrants seem content with all these and also speak of access to healthcare and better education for children. Nevertheless, the good services also cost money and access to good healthcare and better education always demands for a lot of it, which the migrants never had. Even in the presence of government healthcare services (almost free hospital facility – not adequate though) or free education (free primary education and free education for girls up to higher secondary level), these still proves to be expensive for most of the migrant families. *Shamsul Haq* was sharing his story, *(After my accident) when I was taken to Sadar Hospital (the biggest government owned hospital in the city), I was left out like that for hours before a doctor finally arrived and admitted me...later my wife continued to ask the nurses for (free) medicine as they never gave any...they kept telling her that there is not enough medicine in the reserves...we did not believe them...Had I been treated immediately and treated well, I would not have turned into a cripple...however, from then on, we stopped going to government hospitals...* Therefore, it is needless to explain that the options have certainly increased in the city while the accessibility and means did not.

Livelihood strategies in the city: The urban scenario is dominated mostly by man-made challenges as compared to rural coastal context, which are perhaps more vulnerable to natural factors. Although natural and man-made factors are very much intertwined in the coast, there is also a clear dependence on natural resources by the population there, which makes even the man-made factors vulnerable to natural forces (section 4.3.1.2). However, in the city situation, the biggest problem still remains the number of jobless days in a month, the most common of problems regarding rural lives as well, only the reasons behind joblessness altered a bit. Although there is still seasonality prevailing in the city, it is the competition in

finding a job that seems to be higher, even in the presence of a much bigger job market than rural areas. And without any further advancement in ‘once acquired’ skills and lack of education, growing commodity price (especially staple food) seems to affect the purchasing capacity of the migrants as effective income remained the same if not declined. *Panna Miah* was saying, *I could buy more stuff five years ago and could even save some money at the end of a month...now my income is raised (in monetary terms) while I can hardly buy half of that stuff I used to do five years ago...please don't ask me about my savings these days...*

I found most of the migrants planning in a ‘partial’ and ‘once at a time’ approach ahead of their lives. And even if some of them have any plan whatsoever about their future, it seems more like ‘a saddle without a horse’, plans without effective means (mostly physical resources like money and land) to carry them out. I found the younger people like *Mosharraf*, *Shamsul Haq* and *Liton* having some piecemeal plans, while a clear lack of aspirations was evident amongst the older respondents. Even *Abdul Hakim*, once a successful fishing-boat owner back home (we can recall how he planned, took loan from a bank to buy his boat) and a self-made carpenter in the city, does not have any plan for his future now. He sounds worn out when I asked him, *I don't think much these days...I have a few clients who provides me with jobs...my income is still sufficient for me and my wife...now I don't want anything more...I am just waiting for almighty to take me away...*The reality for *Panna Miah*, *Mosharraf* and *Shamsul Haq* is a bit different although the elements of helplessness remain similar. They think about their children’s education and marriage, while cannot afford to save any; they sometimes even struggle to pay for school fees. Everybody had plans to start off business on their own during rural times; while in the city, some of them tried a few endeavours themselves and they still have such plans but cannot execute them since the status of resources (possession, accessibility) remained unchanged.

Daily wage remains the primary source of income for rural migrants in the city; although for most of them, things were different back home as they worked for other people (agricultural workers, fisherman) on a seasonal basis and were paid seasonally. As the migrants admitted, the current method of payment and number of working days are much better comparing to seasonal ones. Most of them say that the pay at the end of the season was often delayed or sometimes even eaten up by the land-owner. When asked why, a FGD responded (*Swapan Haolader*) in *Patharghata* told me...*we have to borrow from land-owners (whom we are contracted to) to sustain during the dull period...and during harvest, when we are supposed to get our share of the rice (from the produced crop), the Mahajan deducts the quantity of rice equivalent to our borrowed amount (plus interest)...it often happens that we don't get any rice at all and even remain indebted to him...however, the following year, we have to work for free to pay off the debt...*However, if compared with the last days of rural times, the situation of migrants’ has certainly improved as the livelihood approach probably has uplifted from ‘survival’ to ‘coping’. *Shamsul Haq* was describing, *it is of course much better than rural days...at least I can work 3-4 days a week and manage two square meals a day...and in case I need something or cannot manage a work any day, I can borrow from the nearby grocery or even from my neighbour....thanks God we don't have to eat sea-weeds (instead or rice) anymore...*Nevertheless, borrowing used to be (and still remains) the sole source, a quite habitual trait, for making up for the income gap, to ‘cope up with’ jobless days or to withstand sudden shocks.

Liton explained to me about the typical strategies taken in rural life to ‘cope with’ sudden shocks...*back home I used to have some savings...I managed to buy a cow (from my savings) that I thought I would present my sister at her wedding...we had some poultry, so we did not*

*have to borrow in case some relatives visited our house suddenly (we could use the eggs, meat)...my father planted a number of mahogany trees from which I had to sell a few to pay for father's medical expenses when he got ill last year...we never had to buy fish or vegetable from market...we only had to buy rice for the whole year (after we lost our land due to erosion)...While looking at this, I suddenly came to realize how much a rural homestead supports livelihoods in comparison to urban houses. The possession of land and proximity to natural watersheds thus make all the difference in rural livelihood strategies and help minimize shocks and stresses. There is no place for a cow or poultry in an urban slum let alone trees. It is unthinkable to have any commodity for free from the urban market. All these people do in times of shocks is to borrow from persons at a very high interest rate (of course there was borrowing in rural life but not on every instance someone has to borrow as in urban lives). And without any insurance or savings, people like *Shamsul Haq*, out of desperation, has to take up means like selling his blood to pay for the medical bills.*

Urban situations demand for financial resources (thus *financial capital*) more than anything else. People with physical resources, secured sources of income, and professions with potentials to grow – every such element thus helps reduce chances for being vulnerable to urban dynamics and to the ever changing urban market. These case studies reveal, although a necessity, rural situations require financial resources only in some specific times. Someone can spend a few days, relying only on the context itself. As most of the respondents do not possess any such financial means now, they are most vulnerable to urban situation, may be, at times, more than the rural times. However, as far as urban coping strategies are concerned, most people rely heavily on their vertical and horizontal relations with clientele and co-workers respectively. *I used to have friends back home who were mostly people whom we grew up with...there were our neighbours as well, from whom we often borrowed and also lend to...Abdul Hakim was telling me...now (the role of) neighbours are similar but friends really turned into someone who will provide you with jobs, will call on you to let you know about other sources of job or sometimes help you meet new people...these are friends (co-workers) whom we work with...in addition, there are many clients (people for whom they work) who will even lend you a big amount of money in case of your emergency...once I got ill and one such client donated me 5,000 Taka for my treatment....I cannot forget that...This is how migrants feel their horizontal and vertical social networks makes them better equipped for the city since while in villages, there was only horizontal network working for them. Indeed social capital is an important part of rural lives, but as far as job opportunity and financial supports (like income) are concerned, it never proved so 'big' when compared with urban times.*

5.1 Introduction

This chapter responds to the key inquiries raised by the primary research question in Chapter 1. In doing so, section 5.2 provides brief insights regarding the sub-research questions developed in Chapter 3. As outlined in Chapter 2 and Chapter 4, these three questions chronologically address the three distinct phases of migrants' lives and throws light on their livelihood strategies for each phase. And as this section attempts to do so, it follows the SLF. Regarding these findings, however, a debate attempts to answer the primary research question in the next section. The final three sections then go on with a few policy suggestions, followed by a statement of accomplishments and possible areas for further study respectively.

5.2 Livelihood strategies - from rural to urban

People's livelihoods in the coast: Rural coastal lives mostly pivot around livelihood strategies that embrace agriculture (other allied activities like fishing, fish supply etc.) as 'the' means to pursue livelihood objectives. As found here, most rural occupations are directly and indirectly dependent upon natural (re)resources and almost everyone's life is immediately affected, as this natural resource-base is altered. Such is the sensitive relation (and may be over-dependence) that exist between rural livelihoods and nature, which in turn, impacts job safety, income maximization (the even flow of income) and food security. To my understanding, these are all key components of rural people's livelihood objectives. As this study suggests, the natural resource base, in general, used to be affected by a combination of *man-made* and *natural* factors when the primary respondents lived in villages. And as decades went by, as testified by all secondary and FGD respondents, nothing really changed as rural vulnerability context remained almost the same. There are still jobless and hungry periods during rainy seasons, return from agriculture and fishing is constantly declining, there is continuing erosion and even bigger cyclones hit them periodically, and people still die in the sea to looters and storms. Additionally, people still cannot participate in institutional decision-making processes, the governance is very much centralized and urbanization is consistently taking away the development focus from rural areas. Of course it is true that new established road networks provide a faster communication with the city and potentials for alternative non-agricultural occupations thus grew these days. And there are also primary healthcare and education are made free now with NGOs assisting more than ever. But considering all, it still makes me ask myself, *Are all developments truly benefitting and accessible for the extremely challenged people, who remain at society's bottom layer?*

Rural people in the coast, as said earlier, depend mostly on natural resources for their livelihoods. Possession of physical assets (land) thus seriously benefits the coping strategies of the rural people. As evident, having a piece of land means a place to live, partial or full food security and household sources of income, which, at times proves essential for coping with certain livelihood shocks and stresses. In addition, to get access to financial assets, the ability to labour (like agricultural labour, fisherman and petty traders) remains the primary means, as productive education is still unattained by many. As these are all very sturdy people, both mentally and physically, and also as the rural coastal context demands for sturdiness, especially the male amongst the households start searching for livelihood options from a very early age. And in this, they deploy their most important asset, the human capital – their ability to labour. However, households or people lacking any of these assets struggle with livelihoods as some of them taking up migration (seasonal or permanent) as a coping or survival strategy.

Migration-preparedness and livelihood strategies: Generally, rural living means *constrained* livelihoods that do not leave its inhabitants with much option to prosper, opposing to what urban situations do. Owing much to the context, rural areas provide a limited variety of occupations to chance for diversified economic activities. Thus livelihoods remain limited to a few sectors (like predominantly agrarian coastal society), while the return, for most of the people also remain limited. As I found here, the livelihood outcomes like income is therefore hard to grow. As this society is so closed, only a few people (like *Mahajan* and people with house and cultivable land) can afford to call themselves rich while the remaining rest forms the ‘underprivileged’ layer in the society. It is from this layer migration (similar to this research) stems from. Migration as such, thus forms a decisive part of these people’s survival strategy. And as far as these migrants are concerned, their livelihood objectives just before leaving, mostly remained to get out of immediate poverty (food shortage, lack of income) and secure an income. During (and also before) this time, the rural context proved inept to provide sufficient jobs, natural (also man-made; like looting) hazards were takings their tolls and seasonality became a never ending cycle. I found people became desperate to find a source for even small sums of money (to pay off bank debt, start own business etc.) before taking a final decision of moving out. I found most of the migrants coming to the city virtually bare handed – possessing nothing but the clothing they were wearing. Probably this ‘nothingness’ helped migrants take such drastic decisions in the end.

Be it *forced* or *voluntary*, the most important asset deployed during migration period is their information (thus social) capital. I found none amongst these people who did not have any previous notion about *Khulna* (and about other cities also). The positive information (about job market, quality of life etc.), in combination with the proximity of *Khulna* to *home*, made them choose *Khulna* as the final destination instead of all. However, this *well maintained* network with city relatives and friends also suggests of a continuing rural-urban interaction that portrays the dependence of rural over urban from very early days. In fact, their social capital also helped these potential migrants travel to the city, settle down and even find a job there. As I found, some of them had plans made up years before their final move. Nevertheless, depending on the evidences, there are also differences between these two categories. The *voluntary* migrants are found to be taking a better preparation before moving out as their counterparts were unable to do so. This additional time also helped the *voluntary* people to accumulate a fair amount of financial means to use later. And as it turned out, all households primarily relied on their human capabilities (previous skill, ability to labour, entrepreneurial qualities and willingness to learn) and considered it will be useful in the city.

Migrants’ livelihoods in the city: Most of all, *Khulna* is located in the context of a developing country; and to make matters worse, it is not even a capital city that usually gets the lion’s share of the development focus. It is therefore expected that the migrant labourers in Dhaka city are likely to earn more than the labourers in *Khulna* through additional and better job opportunities (Afsar 2000). It is also quite rational that the concentration of major economic activities will be in Dhaka than in *Khulna* due to the highly centralized national development policy. However, I start with job opportunities here as all the migrant respondents identified it to be their number one livelihood objective in the city, which they always struggle to get access to. Apart from this, while being in the city, the other objectives include increased *well-being* through income maximization and grow as an entrepreneur. But in addition to lack of job opportunities, urban context also comprises of insecurity of getting a job, safety (from health hazard and violence), bribery, irregular payment, fluctuation in pay (a kind of exploitation), competition for getting a job, and seasonal patches of joblessness. Although urban context provides better education and healthcare opportunities and other

services and amenities compared to rural times, it is again the question of affordability and accessibility that appears before anything else. Looking at the surveyed households, I can certainly tell that all these facilities and amenities remain far beyond the reach of these certain class of people. In addition, urban institutional culture is characterized by nepotism and biasness. None of the respondents trusts their local public representative and believes he will be of no use in times of need. They can neither participate in decision-making forums nor are they ever called for such forums. Even if they seek for any assistance or demands for anything rightful (like registering a name in a pensioners' list), they experienced rejection.

Most of the respondents actually talked about the benefit of being physically fit. As these people are mainly engaged in labour intensive sectors, they pretty much understand the importance of being in good health. It is the human capital that earns them their livelihoods. This is also why they spend a major share of their earnings in medication only. However, the most important for urban areas is the possession of financial assets through a regular paid job. This is what every poor household lacks. Owing to the ever-changing nature of urban market (due to inflation mostly), there always remains a gap between household consumption (and sudden needs) and the income. In most cases, the overall household income remains the combination of efforts of more than one member. It also is a problem that none of these households have any kind of savings whatsoever (not in any bank or any formal organization, not to co-operatives, and not even occasional household savings). These people do not also possess any physical assets (like gold or household accessories) that they can use in case of emergency. Therefore, to make over this gap, borrowing remains the most essential mechanism, which also speaks for the good social network (thus capital) all these households possess. Even the newest case amongst the respondents, who came to *Khulna* less than a year ago, could actually manage a number of friends that would lend him money and other household commodities in times of need. However, speaking of *social capital*, it is the single most important asset as far as migrants' coping strategy in the city is concerned. I found these people accessing and acquiring their every livelihoods needs through a very good management of this asset. Apart from borrowing, *social capital* also helps them buy stuff in credit (from grocery/dispensary), find a job, meet new people (thus potential employers), and even get someone out of police trouble for instance.

5.3 Challenges in rural life and migration motives: *how far they influence city living*

The rural coast with its manifold challenges makes migrants desperate people, prepared to do any sort of job and engage into any endeavour they possibly can. And this people remain the same even when they come in to the city. Deep down, all the migrant households demonstrate the sturdiness and enthusiasm of an entrepreneur – taking up all possible challenges to make their way into the urban context. And possibly, this trait owe to their rural background, where they were brought up and had to constantly fight against *natural* and *man-made* odds to make a living, where income was not very easy at all and where they had to be keen to make up for the physical assets they never possessed. However, majority of the migrants came into the city after only being provided with information (for the rest, ample information and even assurance for a place to live) by friends and kin. *Khulna*, for most, was the primary destination in mind, since it was nearest to home, they knew some countrymen here and also they heard good things about it as far as managing a job was concerned. Most of the migrants were not prepared very well, because there was never really a plan for moving out. The collection of information was more like a background work, and rest was dependent on 'fate' mostly. All they had were confidence and desperation since they did not have any other choice. Once in *Khulna*, they lived in whatever they could afford, tried every job that came their way, worked almost all sectors that involves physical labour, tried to make friends with

everyone possible and some of them (the elder ones) finally specialized themselves in some professions that city situations demand. But on the other hand, they still like to live close by with relatives, share and exchange commodities with neighbours and friends, does not really appreciate the importance of education, does not think seriously about savings, still avoids (and probably lacks confidence) participation in institutions and does not feel that any association always beneficial rather having none. If asked, I would say these are still 'country people' with rather 'pastoral heads' on their shoulders.

The *rural* has been found within the realm of *urban* through this research. I say so as I discovered how much these migrants still belong to their places of origin, how much they miss the country lives, and also how much some of them still gravely considers going back as an option to cope with their current livelihood challenges. There was only one (*Abul Hossain*) amongst all who does not want to go back hence visits the place of origin as I remember him...*I go home every once in a while and I feel them (the countrymen) with my heart...after Sidr, I collected donations (clothing, money and rice) and went there (Patharghata) as soon as I could...I helped bury more than 100 dead-bodies there....* However, all of them have visitors from rural areas and they all become visitors themselves as they pay visits to rural folks in occasions. Interestingly, this depicts a sustaining correlation, a form of rural urban interaction that persists between Bangladeshi towns and villages. And although it is true for my research that people do not benefit in monetary terms from this interaction, yet it is a certain mental attachment that nobody can possibly deny. This attachment, in reality, always portrays a sense of belonging with their places of origin. Country people, living in the city for almost three decades could not even get out of this contemplation. May be this also reveals an interdependence between the city and the country. And probably this ever-going relation is best portrayed by the acts of seasonal migrants in the city who come and go depending on their needs in times of crisis; thus it has become a rather positive symbiotic relation as both city and country are mutually benefitted. And as communications flourishing and technological progress (telecommunication revolution in Bangladesh – one of the world's fastest growing markets for cell-phone operation) is high, this probably marks the beginning of the era when migration will increase even more (may be in many different forms), with migrants starting to contribute to city (and rural) economies to a much greater extent.

Nevertheless, the urban situation poses great challenge to the livelihoods of the destitute. Things get more complicated as the fast changing city situation presents itself with additional shocks (e.g. sudden increase in costs of staple food due to inflation, accident in workplace etc.), let alone persisting trends (e.g. lack of job opportunity) and seasonality (e.g. jobless periods in rainy season). Especially in a place like a city, where everything has to be purchased with cash, this situation is tricky which demands for creative solutions to cope with. And as I have noticed, to cope with these, with the absence of any savings, borrowing (or any form of credit) remains the most sorted strategy for all. It can be of short or long term or take the form of an *advance* from potential employers. In addition to borrowing, *social capital* help a great deal as all these workers start to seek for job (and manages as well!) through these previously known co-workers, friends, clients or neighbours. Social networks also help to take a loan from bank (or a person), to settle conflicts/disputes, to reach political elites, to negotiate deals with clients and contractors, to get access to government (even NGO) institutions like hospitals or schools, to get rid of police harassment, and even to find a suitable spouse for children. Respondents admitted during interviews that they deliberately maintain strategic relations with such people and does not want to give up on that. This is why all of them are well behaved, good listeners and accommodative people. Without the possession of *physical* or *financial capital*, these two truly helps coping in the city situation.

When looked from aside, the impressions regarding the migrant households' asset management capabilities appear promising. Specialized professions, own (mostly rented) places to live, reduced environmental vulnerability, improved clientele and friendship, proximity to urban services and amenities – altogether, these speak in favour of their uplifted ways of life. It seems these households are very efficient managers of their scarce resources as they came a long way in comparison to where they started as city dwellers. Of course, it is creative to learn about a certain trade by noticing others doing that or adapting to new professions and challenges if they appear. It is also creative (and efficient) to involve more than one member into income earning activities and especially when these extra earners can do that by remaining within the households (thus take care of the children). It is equally ingenious for a crippled person to take up work in contracts and finish it according to his own abilities thus losing neither the job nor the income. But from a closer look, things do not seem very promising. The discussions in Chapter 4 revealed the kind of miseries and insecurities that remain part of the everyday life for all these migrants. Although the examples seem promising and show glimpses of creativity, yet for me, this is creativity for mere survival, not really meant for a transition from poverty to prosperity. Creativity, as in this bits and pieces, hardly ensures a meagre living because it does not follow a planned course. Creativity, thus, without contribution for a positive change is not creativity at all.

Between rural and urban times, there are also certain similarities in *vulnerability context*. The migrants' claim...*nothing has really changed concerning our lives (than rural times)*, therefore demands investigation. Probably this is due to the *asset portfolios* being largely the same (no real accumulation of financial and physical assets whatsoever) with similar livelihood strategies still being persistent. Although the city situation offers better facilities and amenities, better job market and employment opportunities, none could really benefit from that. In fact, for some, the situation deteriorated for the last decade or so, as they lost some form of their savings due to different incidents during that period. However, this unchanged (and often worsening) situation made me realize that a number of similar vulnerability elements still persist in a city as they used to be in rural areas. Lack of accessibility to quality educational facilities, affordability for expensive healthcare services (due to low quality government healthcare facilities), lack of adequate income (hence for savings, paying for physical assets such as land or house), increased jobless days (due to non-permanent, informal nature of jobs; also increased competition), lengthy jobless patches due to seasonality, no effective raise in income, no reasonable credit facilities, exclusion from political decision-making process, subject to discrimination by elites – everything resemble the rural times. With the absence of cyclones or erosions, these challenges often prove much greater to cope with since there is no chance for a *relief* anymore in times of desperation.

The migrants' livelihoods (and the approaches they take to achieve that) as I depicted in previous discussions and arguments, perfectly outlines a model for *survival economy*. It brings along with it short-term and makeshift solutions (like borrowing from *Mahajan* at a very high interest rate) for immediate problems that comes in the way. As a coping strategy, makeshift solutions could work magic while for a long term livelihoods strategy, it could only add to the miseries of the already burdened livelihoods of the migrants. And as the livelihood strategies mostly pivot around these immediate measures, and all their resources are thus used up, not much scope remains for them in the end to take other initiatives (e.g. make some alternative investments or get trained for further education or for more beneficial jobs). *Survival economy* thus does not allow poor beyond a certain level. It forms a loop, and does not allow time spending for any other initiatives (because time means money means food). Thus chasing for income becomes the primary concern that allows nothing but a mere

living. And as these occupations (for the migrants) were also taken up earlier in their lives as part of their survival strategies, being trapped into a loop, they could not really excel and move further forward without proper education and training. For example, one can become a plumbing contractor and take up contracts for a whole building even if he starts his life as a plumber – all it needs is some basic educational qualifications to train himself and a little bit of capital for start with. In effect, these migrant professionals are now challenged by other people with greater skills and training, and sometimes also with greater educational qualities. *Survival economy* thus impedes personal skill development, holds down chances for maximization of income and impedes transition to a further social-financial level. And with growing age, this also remains an element of misery for most.

Amongst all the negatives and sorry tales regarding coastal migrants' livelihoods, there are also a number of bright sides that needs a mention. While searching for optimistic instances and features, I found every one of the migrants still interested and enthusiastic for doing any productive work. I found almost all of them expressing their intensions for starting a business venture on their own if they can afford some kind of starting capital. They seemed keen to listening, and any suggestions, trainings or education if they are offered with. Even the most physically challenged and almost crippled respondent was eager for a change; even he still thinks of beginning from the scratch once again. The elder respondents showed similar enthusiasms as did the younger ones. The female responded quite earnestly in comparison to male members, when I asked if they want to do something on their own (as some of them still operate as part time workers for handicrafts; they are actually second wage earners for the households). Besides, all the households maintain very good social relation with both vertical (clients, elites, politicians) and horizontal (co-workers, neighbours) levels. As they said, it provides them the *chances for better association (with educated/learned people)* and a better *know-how* about their jobs and their surroundings. For me, this alliance is what makes their business easier and their livelihoods sustainable within all the complexities and troubles of urban life. In comparison to rural times, options for higher education are also better available in the city and primary healthcare (and other counselling services) is free and accessible. Probably this is what makes all of these households keep their family size small and take family planning measures as part of their coping strategy.

5.4 Suggestions

Although the primary objective of this research is not to provide any policy recommendation, these suggestions still indicate to a set of do's and don'ts, a sort of insights required before actually designing a policy framework regarding this particular area of study. I wish these suggestions will help set some priority issues to tackle the vulnerability factors prevailing in rural coastal areas of Bangladesh. Altogether, these could help eliminate (or at least reduce) the vulnerability regarding migrants' livelihoods before and after migration.

- A special research cell (government, non-government, or in combination) is needed to study rural coastal areas in particular as no such cell exists in Bangladesh till date; the exclusive nature of coastal areas' issues is thus to be understood and potentials have to be explored
- The national land policy (regarding ownership and redistribution, relocation for the impoverished, conflict resolution etc.) needs to be prioritized, and should be made explicit and realistic as land is determined as the number one constituent for rural people's *well-being*
- Development focus has to be on sustainable agricultural sector (it is still the number one employment sector in Bangladesh) as the current global food crisis is likely to worsen in coming years. A mechanism should also be devised to engage the landless into this sector, which is likely to enable people to be employed at their *home*. And even if these people are required for the city's economy, they are a must for rural economy to sustain

- The focus for any policy should be the challenged; the aim should be to ensure benefits for the challenged and the destitute. Group insurance, any kind of social safety net/self-help or co-operative/participatory mechanism should be devised to minimize poor people's livelihood shocks and uncertainties; shocks/uncertainties are the prime reasons that spawn livelihood vulnerability
- Investment has to be made before, not after the natural disaster because the similar amount can help build a prior resistance to livelihood vulnerability; thus it can only be termed as *sustainable*

5.5 Additional contributions from the research

This research comprises of two significant areas of study. The primary intension of this research therefore, was to study livelihoods (thus livelihood strategies) while the subjects to that were the rural coastal migrants (thus migration from rural-coastal areas). To talk about the achievements of this research hence bring along with it the discussions regarding these two theoretical areas. Migration as a well-recognized phenomenon in today's world is addressed in numerous studies worldwide thereby making it a rather familiar topic for the research table. However, there are still things to be explored and issues to be debated as findings from this research suggest. As migration remains an accepted and continual livelihood strategy especially for the rural destitute and poor, it so demands constant study and upgradation of knowledge-base depending on the variety of information acquired through various works. Studies like this will not only add to the existing understanding, but will also provide unique livelihood tales regarding specific contexts as every context is unique with every unique migration attempt. Nevertheless, as sections 5.2 and 5.3 reveal a number of facts regarding the migrants' livelihood strategies, the following paragraphs reflect only on three key theoretical areas regarding migrants, migration motives and the SLF respectively.

Forced or voluntary - the debate persists: It has been rather elusive for me to decide *whom to tag as a forced migrant and whom as voluntary*. As far as this research is concerned, all migrants seem to be *forced* at start. There were limits (of being *forced*) indeed and levels of forces at best, which migrant households had to undergo before leaving home finally. And it is also true that the levels mostly comprise of more than one factor. My understanding from this whole exercise thus remains that every such permanent migration attempt (and the seasonal attempts as well) from the rural coasts of Bangladesh is more *forced* (and less *voluntary*). I found nobody really like to leave *home* forever as it seems that none has any previous eagerness to migrate. I noticed all migration decisions starting from the intensions of fulfilling basic needs (secure a permanent job, food security etc. – not reasons like migration for higher education) or from being deprived of basic human needs (sudden loss of occupation, lose of dignity etc.). The migration only takes place as one of these elements becomes unavailable or inaccessible from rural people's livelihoods (for both *man-made* and *natural* reasons). However, there is perhaps always a choice as well, to respond to certain circumstances (Kolmannskog 2008: 11), which also speaks for the existence of *voluntary* decision-making for the rural coastal people. Therefore, the fuzzy boundary between *forced* and *voluntary* persists, as I resort to the familiar device of the continuum (Turton 2003: 8-9).

Environmental migration - truth or myth: Apparently it seems that environment provides the final blow for many of the migrants' livelihoods by making them assets-less in a very quick time. Certainly, it cannot be denied that natural shocks like cyclones or long term trends like erosion do not play a role here. But given the facts, it is also clear that a rather 'slippery' ground is also been on the process of preparation from a much earlier time, may be for years, which eventually makes people vulnerable to any circumstances, be that *natural* or *man-made*. Travelling a bit behind in time makes it clearer that for all the migrants, a better job opportunity, a permanent place to live, a piece of cultivable land or access to credit would

have proven enough to made them stay. These people did not have enough savings at any point of time and were living without any real assets to their disposal; they were virtually living on the edge, on a point of brink. These were all mentally and physically capable people, even being devastated by natural hazards, were searching for job options and looking forward to doing something on their own to make a living and thus stay on. Given these, it is very difficult to reach the verdict; it is hard to conclude, to what extent environmental or natural causes can only be blamed for forcing migration from the coast. For me, environment above all provides the paired thrust for the *man-made* reasons; it could be the nails on the coffin at best. My investigation, therefore, makes me conclude in the same line of arguments as **Black et al (2008: 18)** that empirical studies into the relationship between climate-related environmental events and migration are few...the assumption that climate-related shocks and stresses lead inevitably to migration in a linear way is (therefore) not supported by empirical investigation. Depending on my findings and the definitions from literature review, I would rather call these people as *environmentally displaced personnel*, than anything else.

SLF – usefulness and further potentials: The framework, with its adaptable methodical guidelines proved sufficient, as far as the biographic-ethnographic approach for this research is concerned. An in-depth investigation during the fieldwork was possible due to the framework’s inherent variables and further elaborations (that was incorporated in chapter 2). Of course, before the fieldwork there were doubts about the outcome using this framework and also about its appropriateness for a biographic-ethnographic approach as most of the prior case studies revealed that SLF is mostly meant for household surveys through structured questionnaire. For me, SLF should be tried more with approaches like this current research and an explicit mention and incorporation of the set of variables (as in the critique on Chapter 2) is required for further comprehensiveness of the framework.

5.6 Areas of further study

The following topics should be considered as essential study areas/aspects to be further investigated. As this study reveals, these are important for going deep into this issue regarding rural migrants’ livelihoods strategy and vulnerability altogether. These are important as different people have distinctive experiences and distinctive needs – thus distinctive ways of life; may be this way, a greater understanding of issues could be possible.

- Preparation of a quantitative database on rural coastal areas of Bangladesh (demographic information, migration information, destination, nature of problems in hierarchical order etc.)
- Conduct a similar qualitative research with a lot larger sample size and with a more comprehensive study area (including purposively selected coastal areas which send migrants to cities). Such a study will enable diversified information and help identify any difference between migration motives from different places; it will thus address diversified livelihood strategies
- Determine the exact nature of environmental threats and prepare a prediction (may be a simulation model) about what might happen to rural livelihoods in case of forthcoming environmental changes and measure out the exact nature and amount of threat in that
- Detailed study on rural *vulnerability context* prior to migration studies
- In-depth study on rural coastal housing, and examine about any ideal model for sustainable households (and may be take lessons from that to develop a home based economy)
- Observe the exact nature of rural urban interaction in the context of a Bangladeshi society with a focus on cost-benefit analysis regarding rural lives
- A comparative study regarding livelihoods between two cities with different socio-economic characteristics (like *Khulna* and *Dhaka*)
- A comparative regarding livelihoods of the well doers and poor of the migrants in the city, to find out the differences between strategies and assets/capitals

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Annexes

Reasons	Floating Population in Dhaka ¹		Demra Bstuhara Camp ²		Squatter Settlement in Dhaka ³		Process of slums and squatter location ⁴		Slums of Dhaka Metropolitan Area ⁵		Demra and Dattapara Bastuhara Camp ⁶		Total			
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%		
ECONOMIC REASONS													5769	55.4		
Landless and poverty	-	-	215	47.8	-	-	55	18.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Unemployment/Poverty	-	-	-	-	-	-	115	38.3	5	2.5	2207	42.5	-	-	-	
Economic crisis	-	-	-	-	110	38.2	-	-	126	63.0	-	-	-	-	-	
Job/earning opportunities	-	-	38	8.4	55	19.1	15	5.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Seeking job (unemployed)	2640	66.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Business reasons	54	1.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Getting charity	120	3.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Selling(Loss) property	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	1.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
ENVIRONMENTAL CAUSES																
Natural Hazards																
Mostly river bank erosion	195	4.9	173	38.4	77	26.7	50	16.7	9	4.5	2271	43.8	2775	26.6	951	9.1
PERSONAL/FAMILY REASONS																
Loses of husband	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	2.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Family feud	246	6.2	-	-	-	-	10	3.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dissolution of family	48	1.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	32	16.0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dependents	608	15.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SOCIO POLITICAL REASONS															81	0.8
Social Factors																
Brought by relative	-	-	20	4.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Village politics	-	-	-	-	18	6.2	-	-	19	9.5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Communal riot	-	-	-	-	4	1.4	1	0.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
OTHER REASONS	60	1.5	-	-	24	8.3	15	5.0	9	4.5	213	13.7	821	7.9	-	-
NOT STATED	-	-	4	0.9	-	-	8	2.7	-	-	-	-	12	0.1	-	-
TOTAL	3980	100.0	450	100.0	288	100.0	300	100.0	200	100.0	5191	100.0	104	100.0		

Table 1: Reasons for migration to Dhaka city (Islam 1999: 11)

Income Source	Rural				Urban			
	Share in Total Income (%)		Gini/Concentration Ratio		Share in Total Income (%)		Gini/Concentration Ratio	
	1991/92	2000	1991/92	2000	1991/92	2000	1991/92	2000
1. Farm Income	41.48	20.92	0.33	0.35	6.09	2.41	0.12	0.22
Crop	...	16.01	...	0.35	...	1.75	...	0.20
Livestock	...	1.47	...	0.24	...	0.23	...	0.05
Fisheries	...	1.62	...	0.40	...	0.20	...	0.59
Forestry	...	1.83	...	0.37	...	0.23	...	0.19
2. Wage Income	21.42	31.17	0.10	0.21	36.55	38.03	0.28	0.31
Casual Agriculture	10.86	10.29	(0.11)	(0.15)	3.25	0.89	(0.03)	(0.25)
Casual Non-agriculture	4.23	7.33	0.14	0.07	10.01	8.03	0.09	(0.18)
Salaried (Non-agriculture)	6.32	13.55	0.45	0.55	23.29	29.11	0.40	0.46
3. Non-farm Enterprises	15.33	20.24	0.22	0.48	28.42	28.84	0.31	0.50
4. Property Income from Land	0.89	3.41	0.55	0.56	3.76	1.59	0.64	0.51
5. Transfer and Remittances	10.90	12.17	0.36	0.55	9.27	10.10	0.43	0.62
6. Rental Value of Housing	7.74	5.29	0.35	0.33	9.19	12.77	0.43	0.58
7. Miscellaneous Income	2.29	6.79	0.37	0.27	6.72	6.26	0.42	0.42
Total	100.0	100.0	0.28	0.36	100.0	100.0	0.32	0.44

Table 2: Changes in inequality of income sources in rural and urban areas (Osmani *et al* 2003 as in ADB-GoJ 2004: 16)

Reform Content	Phase 1 (1972-75)	Phase 2 (1976-90)	Phase 3 (1991-02)
Trade	Severe trade controls on both exports and imports, including NTBs and heavy duties, often prohibitive.; fixed exchange rate system, with considerable over-valuation.	Initial phase of trade reforms with some relaxation of NTBs and tariff barriers; creation of enabling "free trade" environment for garments sector (bonded warehouses, duty-free inputs, etc)	Substantial liberalization of trade and investment, market orientation, and opening up with large reduction in NTBs and average tariffs; shift from fixed to moderately flexible exchange rate system.
Goods Sectors	Massive nationalization of major industrial enterprises; price controls; control of agriculture inputs and marketing..	Initial period of de-nationalization, de-regulation and removal of price controls; significant liberalization of agriculture sector – input and output markets.	Further progress with privatization of manufacturing enterprises; initiation of deregulation measures to improve the investment climate for private enterprises.
Services Sectors	Nationalization of most services including banking, infrastructure and even trading; administered prices.	Initial period of encouraging private sector in banking and other services; rent and price controls lifted substantially; state trading abolished, with one exception, TCB, for imports of sugar, fertilizer and rice.	Further progress with policies to support private investment in banking and infrastructure; power generation, telecommunications, opened to private investors.

Table 3: Bangladesh Policy Regime Summary 1972-2002 (Ahmed and Sattar 2004: 11)

Occupation	Rural			Urban		
	Head-count Index (%)	Percent of Population	Percent of Poor	Head-count Index (%)	Percent of Population	Percent of Poor
Casual Wage Labor	74.9	33	46	66.9	20	36
Salaried Employment	35.1	9	6	24.1	30	20
Self-employment: Non-agriculture	44.6	18	15	32.2	32	28
Self-employment: Agriculture	43.3	31	25	47.9	5	7
Unemployed/Not Working	42.9	10	8	25.9	13	9
Total	53.0	100	100	36.6	100	100

Table 4: Poverty Incidence by Occupation of Household Head, 2000 (ADB-GoJ 2004: 24)

	City Population Rank (2000)	Population (2000)	Population (1990)	Population (1980)	Population (1970)	Annual Growth (1970-2000)
Dhaka	1	12300	6619	3248	1474	7.1%
Chittagong	2	3581	2265	1333	693	5.5%
Khulna	3	1426	972	622	310	5.1%
Rajshahi	4	1016	517	238	105	7.6%

Table 5: Population growth in four major cities in Bangladesh (WB 2007: 34)

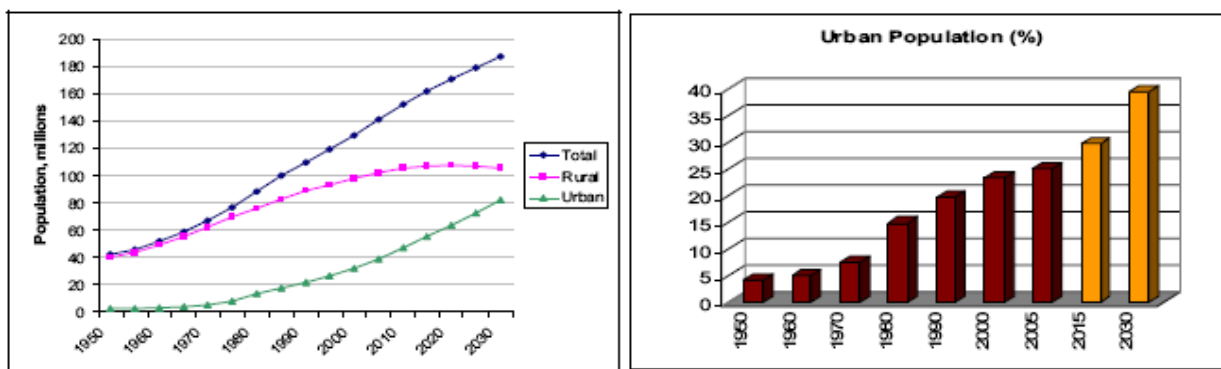


Figure 1: Urbanization in Bangladesh (WB 2007: 34)

Status of employment	Bangladesh			Urban			Rural		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Employee	13.7	13.8	13.4	23.7	24.4	21.6	10.5	10.5	10.5
Employer	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.1
Self-employed	44.8	50.6	24.5	41.2	47.1	21.6	45.9	51.6	25.5
Day laborers	20.0	22.9	9.6	15.6	17.3	10.1	21.4	24.7	9.5
Unpaid family worker	18.4	9.9	48.0	15.0	7.6	39.3	19.4	10.6	51.0
Domestic worker	0.6	0.1	2.5	1.1	0.1	4.3	0.5	0.1	1.8
Apprentice	0.9	1.0	0.6	1.3	1.3	1.2	0.8	0.9	0.4
Others	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.1	1.1	1.1

Table 6: Employed person by status of employment, gender and sector (WB 2007: 77)

	2003 Data (thousands)				Change between 2000 and 2003 (thousands)			
	Total	Informal Sector	Private Formal Sector	Govt. Sector	Total	Informal Sector	Private Formal Sector	Govt. Sector
Total	44322	35078	7368	1877	5343	5749	14	-419
Agriculture, Forest & Fisheries	22931	21714	1163	54	3146	3085	172	-111
Industry	4030	1748	1956	326	493	154	516	-177
Construction	1541	1290	202	49	446	624	-141	-37
Services	15327	10172	3531	1625	1258	1886	-533	-94

Table 7: Formal and informal sector employment of labour force by sector (WB 2007: 80)

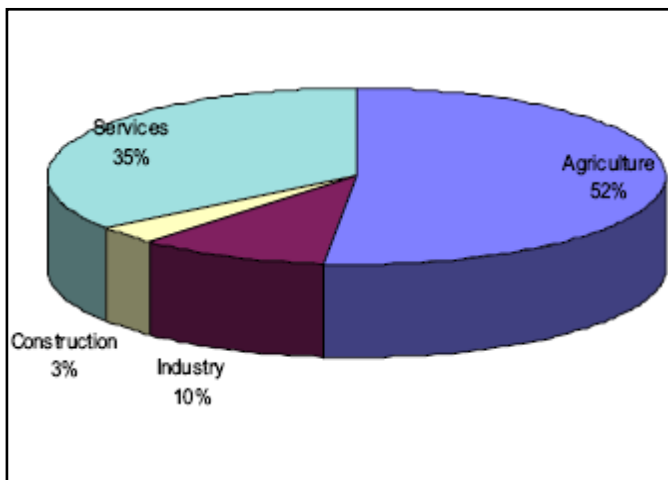


Figure 2: Distribution of employment by broad sector, 2003 (WB 2007: 75)

Date		Maximum Wind speed (km/hr)	Storm Surge height (Metre)
30 October	1960	211	4.6-6.1
30 May	1961	160	6.1-8.8
28 May	1963	203	4.2-5.2
11 May	1965	160	6.1-7.6
15 December	1965	211	4.6-6.1
1 November	1966	146	4.6-9.1
23 October	1970	163	3.0-4.9
12 November	1970	224	6.1-9.1
25 May	1985	154	3.0-4.9
29 November	1988	160	3.0-4.0
29 April	1991	225	6.0-7.5
2 May	1994	210	2.0-3.0
25 November	1995	140	2.0-3.0
19 May	1997	220	3.1-4.2

Table 8: Some examples of major cyclones that hit Bangladesh coast (1960-1997) (UNEP 2007: 99)

Head of stayed-back relatives	Relation with the migrants	Interview taken on
Abdul Jalil	Distant relative of Abul Hossain	06.07.08
Abdul Latif	Brother of Abdul Hakim	06.07.08
Nur Islam	Brother in law of Shamsul Haq	06.07.08
Abdul Rahim	Cousin of Mosharraf	07.07.08
Hemayet Faraji	Elder brother of Panna Miah	07.07.08
Ismail Sikder	Uncle of Liton	08.07.08

Table 9: Showing details about the secondary respondents (rural coastal inhabitants-relatives of migrants of *Khulna* city) (Author)

Core information	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Piloting – visit selected households	■	■		
Testing/adjusting questionnaire/sch.	■	■		
Discussions with research assistants	■	■	■	■
Household survey (urban)		■	■	■
Household survey (rural)		■	■	■
Data documentation and feedback		■	■	■
Complementary visit (urban)				■
Complementary visit (rural-one area)				■
Data compilation				■
Triangulation (use secondary source)				■

Table 10: Showing the time-planning for the field-work (Author)

Questionnaire for household survey
Household livelihood strategies of the coastal migrant

This questionnaire is part of an academic work, which aims at gaining comprehensive understanding of the livelihoods of families who migrated to *Khulna* city from _____ village and are now living in _____. The researcher assures that the respondent will be kept anonymous, and the results will be used solely for the purposes of this academic research. Thank you for your cooperation.

Basic information	Description		
Number of questionnaire			
Date of interview			
Duration	From	To	
Name of respondent			
Country of origin			
Sex of respondent (M/F)	Male	Female	
Duration (Kh/Tp)			
Religious affiliation			
Address of respondent			
Name of enumerator(s)			

Assets/capitals	Colour code and question numbers
Human	
Social	
Financial	
Physical	
Natural	

A. In what ways, people's livelihoods are challenged by natural and man-made factors in the coast?

- Trends (long-term micro- economic context)
- Shocks (natural, man-made)
- Seasonality (recurrent events)
- Institutional environment
- Livelihood assets/capitals
- (HHQ, PR tools)

B. To what extent does migration-preparedness vary between forced and voluntary households and how this variation may have consequences for migrants' livelihood strategies?

- Situation (s) influencing Migration
- Preparation time and destination
- Adjustment to asset portfolio
- Sequencing of asset portfolio

C. Compared with rural times, what are the assumed differences (and similarities) in migrants' livelihood strategies now?

- Trends (long-term micro- economic context)
- Shocks (natural, man-made)
- Seasonality (recurrent events)
- Institutional environment
- Livelihood assets/capitals

Q.A. In what ways, people's livelihoods are challenged by natural and man-made factors in the coast?

Vulnerability context, structure and processes, assets

1. Please indicate the type of challenges faced by your family in the following time periods (use codes in the answer box; **S** for trends, shocks and seasonality and **I** for structures and processes). For rural participants, only the first column applies:

N	Man-made factors	a. During village living	b. Now
1	Dispossession of land (landlessness)		
2	Conflict with govt. bodies regarding land ownership		
3	Conflict with relatives regarding land ownership		
4	Subject to political rivalry		
5	Subject to violence		
6	Increase in tax		
7	Civil/criminal case against family member(s)		
8	Imprisonment of breadwinner (or other members)		
9	Unexpected death/illness of breadwinner		
10	Unexpected death/illness of other members		
11	Reduction in income		
12	Rising cost of production		
13	Rising cost of household commodities		
14	Lose of job		
15	Seasonal employment problem		
16	(Re)construction of house		
17	Sudden expenses (marriage, gift)		
18	Being robbed/stolen		
19	Seasonal fluctuation in crop (product) prices		
20	Death of livestock/poultry/fish		
21	Access to credit or savings schemes		
22	Medical assistance/healthcare		
23	Market (to sell produces nearby)		
24	Information		
25	Bribery/gift to officials (police/land officers or else)		
26	Discrimination for children/woman		
27	Change in technology (mobile phone/agri. Instr.)		
N	Natural factors	a. During village living	b. Now
1	Cyclone		
2	Flooding/inundation		
3	Salinity in arable land		
4	Draught/lack of rain		
5	Rising water level		
6	Riverbank erosion		
7	(Irregular) shift of season		

2. PR tools: (a) *Timeline* (please draw a yearly diagram showing the *good* and *bad* periods in an average year)
 (b) *Timeline* (please draw a diagram showing the *good* and *bad* times for last 10 years)
 (c) *Wealth ranking* (please rank in a 0-10 scale, where you put yourself relative to your neighbours)

3. Do you feel that in the past 5 years, your household's:

N	Issues	a. Income situation in general	b. Life (well-being) in general
1	Improved a lot		
2	Fairly improved		
3	Remained the same		
4	Somewhat deteriorated		
5	Considerably deteriorated		
6	No idea		
7	I refuse to respond		

4. What do think why other people/households back home, did not migrate?

5. Please specify the most need for cash income in a year, if there is any (mention reasons)?

a. Not any specific duration b. Specific duration (_____)

6. Please specify the duration(s) for hungry period, if there is any (mention reasons)?

a. Not any specific duration b. Specific duration (_____)

7. Did you ever face trouble with paying bills/taxes?

a. Yes b. No c. I don't want to answer

8. How do you use to manage jobs?

a. Personal contacts b. Through associations c. Through neighbours d. Through friends e. Others_____

9. What were your perceived problem(s) to find that job?

a. Lack of education b. Lack of knowing people c. Information d. Lack of skill e.

10. Do you ever feel helpless, deprived or not listened-to? Could you explain why and when?

11. What is the meaning of *well-being* for you?

12. On a scale of *0-10*, where *0* = it does not make an issue for my family and *10* = it is a major issue for my family, please rank the different aspects of your livelihoods:

1	Lack of food (mainly staple food)	
2	Financial issues (lack of sufficient money)	
3	Employment	
4	Land ownership and tenure security	
5	Healthcare	
6	Safety/sense of security and well-being	
7	Natural hazards	

Institutional environment (institutions, policies, processes)

13. Who was most important of persons/organizations 5 years ago and now?

N	Description	a. 5 years or before	b. Now
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

14. PR tools: (a) *Social map* (please draw a diagram showing services and infrastructures you have access to or not)
 (b) *Venn diagram* (please draw a diagram showing your relation to different Government and NGOs)
 (c) *SWOL analysis* (Please evaluate of an activity, including its Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Limitations)
15. Have you been ever called for any problem-solving or decision-making forums from the *union council*?
 a. Yes b. No c. I don't feel like participating d. I don't need to participate e.
16. Were you used to be member(s) in any social organization (other than job)?
 a. Neighbourhood organization b. Religious organization c. NGO d. Political party
 e. Voluntary organization f. Civil society g. Medical organization h.
17. What kind of help did you get from them?
 a. Monetary b. Medical c. Sense of security d. Mental/psychological e.
18. How often you turn to your relatives (in *Khulna* city) for money?
 a. Monthly b. Yearly c. Seasonally d. Yearly e. Occasionally f. Do not seek help from them
19. Why do you turn to your relatives (in *Khulna* city)?
 a. Accidental costs b. Regular costs b. Make them invest c. Benefit thorough their investment f. Others___
20. Please complete this statement: *I think my relatives...*
 a. Are friendly b. Does not believe like I do c. Will help me in my *bad* times
 d. Will lend me money in time of my needs e. Others_____
21. Please respond to this statement: *I feel relaxed since I have relatives in the city; they will support me in my troubles by giving me...*
 a. Money b. Mental support c. Material support e. Assistance to migrate if I need to
 f. Do not like to respond g. Others_____
22. Please respond to this statement: *election times are good because we get _____ benefits*
 a. Monetary b. Personal relation c. Material d. Food e. Political f. Do not like to respond
23. Are you affiliated with any political party now?
 a. Yes b. No c. Neutral d. Do not like to respond to this
24. What are your criteria to vote for someone (if criterion has been changed, please specify why)?
 a. Ethnicity b. Religion c. Commitment d. Personal characteristics e. Others_____
25. How do you convey your needs/demands to *union council*?
26. What are their problems?
 a. Accessibility b. Transparency c. Nepotism d. Too much politicized e. Corruption f. Do not like to respond
 g. Others_____
27. Where, do you think, Central Government must focus in future?
28. What kinds of taxes you use to pay?
 a. Land tax b. Income tax c. Community tax (_____) d. Others_____
29. Did you take any loan from any (person/bank)?
 a. Bank/NGO b. Place of occupation c. Friends d. Family e. No
30. Do you think anyone else gets more privilege getting loans from banks?
 a. Yes b. No c. Neutral d. Do not like to respond to this
31. Do you borrow money for any following reasons?
 a. Buy food b. Medical emergency b. Education c. Investment d. Repay debt f. Others_____
32. Whom do you turn to now, in case you need emergency fund?
 a. Bank/NGO b. Neighbours c. Friends d. Family e. Cooperative f. Others_____

Q_B. To what extent does migration-preparedness vary between forced and voluntary households and how this variation may have consequences for migrants' livelihood strategies?

Migrations decision-making, preparedness, assets

- 33. Give one reason why you had to migrate?
- 34. Who decided? Who came first?
- 35. Can you explain the situation, telling us what happened? What led to these consequences?

36. What did you actually require to stay back; what would have made you stay?

N	Assets	
	Human	
	Social	
	Financial	
	Physical	
	Natural	

37. What were the other reasons you had for migration? (mark the primary reason here alongside others)

N	Reasons	a. Yes; b. No	Please rank (use numbers)
1	Dream to live in a city		
2	For the sake of urban services		
3	Education (and better future) of children		
4	Earn more money		
5	Get out of poverty		
6	Political pressure		
7	Natural disaster destroying everything		
8	Friends and families living in <i>Khulna</i>		
9	Many other were leaving		
10	Other conflicts		
11	Agriculture was not benefiting enough		
12	Lost land		

38. Was this your first attempt out of home? Or you had previous experiences regarding other forms of movement? How?

39. Were you prepared for moving to the city?

40. If the answer is yes, could you please tell what you possessed that you thought would be useful? (from higher to lower)

N	Assets	
	Human	
	Social	
	Financial	
	Physical	
	Natural	

41. How long you have been willing to migrate? What were the reasons?

42. With the given situation, what do you think are the most important resources for living in the city?

N	Assets	
	Human	
	Social	
	Financial	
	Physical	
	Natural	

43. Who came first to the city? Why?

44. What were your perceived problem(s) to find a job in the city now?

45. For you, what are the most important resources for doing well and prosper in a city?

N	Assets	
	Human	
	Social	
	Financial	
	Physical	
	Natural	

46. Did your previous expertise influence your decision-making about migration? If, how?

47. What quality of the family you considered most would be helpful before coming to *Khulna*?

- a. Education b. Friends/relatives living here c. No. of working member d.

48. Was there anyone from whom the family used to take advice often?

- a. Neighbour b. Relative c. Friend d. Colleague e.

49. Who were most important persons/organizations before migration? Explain why? Give example.

N	Person/organization	Reasons why

50. Do you ever think of going back to village?

51. If yes, please specify why?

52. Name two things in villages which are not better compared to *Khulna*?

53. If you are given a chance to go back, will you take that?

54. Why or why not?

55. Did you know anyone in *Khulna* before coming? If so, in which way you were helped?

a. Monetary b. Inspirational c. Accommodation d. Advisory e. Other _____

56. Do you have any connection with family or friends back home? If so, in which form... please testify the statements:

N	Statements	a. Yes b. No
1	I have land back home (arable/household)	
2	I still get agricultural products (rice, coconut etc) from back home	
3	I get money selling products	
4	I share land with my relatives	
5	I invest in my land (or other business) back home	
6	I visit home in special occasions (like <i>Eid</i>)	
7	I visit home because I have friends/relatives there	
8	I visit home because I have my land/asset there – I fear if I don't visit, I will be dispossessed	
9	I would have invested more if I had more money	

57. Do you have to bear costs for anything back home? Give examples.

58. How often you visit them and why?

59. Do they visit you? In which circumstances? Please exemplify.

60. Now, which persons/organizations/groups help you in what way? (could you provide ranks?)

Rank	Persons/organization	Human (education, skill, health), Information (access to know-how)	Social (networks, relations), Mental (well-being), Political (networks)	Financial (income, expenditure, savings)	Physical (ownership, accessibility of physical assets)	Natural (overall physical environment)
	Relatives					
	Friends					
	Neighbours					
	City corporation					
	NGO					
	CBO					
	Religious institution					

61. How do you manage when the following happens? Please answer mentioning the following criterion:

- Who will come forward first?
- Whom do you expect to come?
- What persons would you call for help?
- Who will give/lend you money?
- Who will give you other accessories in credit?

N	Factors	
1	Lose of job	
2	Unexpected death/illness of breadwinner	

3	Civil/ criminal case against family member(s)	
4	Conflict with relatives regarding land ownership	
5	Subject to political rivalry/ violence	
6	Sudden expenses (marriage, gift)	
7	(Re)- construction/ of house	
8	Flooding/ inundation	

62. Have you ever faced a cyclone during village living? Can you remember how many times?

63. What was the worst experience? Can you describe the amount of destruction that affected your household most?

64. What is your educational ambition for your children?
65. What will be your advice to your children about where to start in life?
66. What kind of marriage you expect for your children?
67. Please identify the sectors of your family's overall advancements in last 5 years.
a. Income b. Education c. Making friends d. Good job placement e. Other_____
68. Do you ever consider going back to your place of origin? If yes, under what circumstances you want to do so?
69. What are the problems you are likely to face?
70. Do you ever regret that you migrated in the first place? If yes, why?
71. And if no, what is so good about city life? Or getting out of home?
72. Do you know anyone here who has regrets migrating? Can you tell why?

73. Do you still feel helplessness, being deprived or not being listened-to? Why?

74. Do you regret any investment/expenditure?

75. Are you, or any member of your household, planning to migrate elsewhere? Why?

76. Do you know anyone (relative, friend) who is planning to come to *Khulna*? Do you help them? How?

77. Do you know anyone here who plans to return home?

78. Do you believe that finding a job means knowing the right people? Or, it is education? Why?

Q.C. Compared with rural times, what are the assumed differences (and similarities) in migrants' livelihood strategies?

Vulnerability context, structure and processes, assets (used for comparing two different timelines)

Situation of household before migration

79. What was the sector of your employment back home?

a. Formal _____

b. Informal _____

80. How did you rank yourself in this poverty scale (0 = poorest; 10 = richest), before migration?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

81. Can you explain why?

82. If anyone did more than one job back home, why so?

83. If the level of education was unsatisfactory (if it is there), could you explain the reasons behind?

84. How did you manage medical and educational expenditure?

a. From family savings b. Government subsidy c. Take loan d.

85. Could you tell us about the neighbourhood quality that you lived?

a. Presence of a certain religious group b. Presence of a certain ethnic group c. Rich
d. Poor e. Heterogeneous mix f.

86. What used to be the most important occasion back home?

N	Name	Description	Type (Religious/Social/Political)
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

87. What were the places you used to meet relatives, friends and neighbours?

N	Name	Description	Type (Religious/Social/Political)
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

88. Did you use to have any savings or investment?

N	Name	We used in case of	a. Yes; b. No
1	No savings		
2	Monthly savings in Bank		
3	Insurance		
4	Jewellery		
5	Land		
6	Building for rent		
7	Business in town		
8	Investment back home		

9	Pension fund		
10	Personal occasional savings		

89. How did you manage your house back home?
a. Rented b. Bought c. Allotted d. Inherited e.

Migration process and settling down in *Khulna*

90. Was *Khulna* the first place you came after leaving home? If not, please name the other places sequentially:

91. Why did you choose *Khulna* finally, not *Dhaka* (where everyone goes, with better opportunities)?

92. Who came first? Where did you spend your first day in *Khulna*? How long did you stay there?

93. Was this current slum the first place you came (if not, what was)?

94. What were your major criteria for choosing a place to live (please rank using numeric figures like 1, 2, 3...)?

N	Name	a. Yes; b. No	Rank
1	I used to know someone here		
2	Low house-rent		
3	Proximity to workplace		
4	Availability of urban services		
5	Availability of work nearby		
6	Less costly market nearby		

95. How many did you know in this neighbourhood when you reached here? How?

96. Where did you settle when first came in and how did you manage that (who informed you)?

97. What was your first major spending after coming to *Khulna*?

98. Did you start any saving/investment from the money you started earning from here?

99. What happened to physical assets back home, when you settled here?

- a. Sold b. Rented/leased c. Mortgaged d.

100. What was your first asset (house/land) here?

101. How did you manage to pay for that?

- a. Bought from savings b. Monthly premium c. Took lone d.

102. What did you feel the priority issues (problems/lacking/concerns) in your first neighbourhood?

Present status

N	a. Designation of family member	b. Age	c. Place of birth	d. Sex	e. Marital status	f. Presence of illness	g. Highest level of education	h. Current status	i. Employment status	j. Sector of employment	k. Occupation	l. Knowledge/skill/specialization
1												
2												
3												
4												
5												
6												
7												

Codes

- a. Family member: 1. Head of the household; 2. Spouse; 3. Daughter; 4. Son; 5. Parents; 6. In-laws; 6. Brother/sister; 7. Other (specify)
- b. Age: please write down the age (in years) for each family member (otherwise needs calculation)
- c. Place of birth (write the name of the village/district)
- d. Sex: 1. Male; 2. Female
- e. Marital status: 1. Married; 2. Single (never married); 3. Divorced; 4. Separated (not legally divorced); 5. widow(er)
- f. Presence of any illness? 1. Yes 2. No (please mention what kind of illness)
- g. Highest educational level attained: 1. Illiterate; 2. Primary; 3. Secondary; 4. Vocational; 5. College/University; 6. Any other
- h. Current status of education (whether continuing or not): 1. Yes 2. No
- i. Employment status: 1. Employed in the public sector; 2. Employed in the private sector; 3. Entrepreneur; 4. Unemployed, looking for a job; 5. Unemployed, not looking for a job; 6. Pensioner; 7. Student; 8. Other (please specify)
- j. Sector of employment: 1. Formal; 2. Informal; 3. Not applicable
- k. Current occupation: specific job/position/occupation of each employed member
- l. Any special knowledge/skill/specialization/training: 1. None; 2. Basic; 3. Good; 4. Very good

103. How would you rank yourself now in the poverty scale (0 = poorest; 10 = richest)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

104. How long you have been living in this area?

- a. Less than 1 year b. 1-3 year c. More than 5 year d. More than 10 years

105. Which of the following do you exchange with your neighbours when you/they need

- a. Cash b. Rice c. Cooking oil d. Utensils e. Others _____

106. Which of the following do you think are true concerning social relations in your neighbourhood?

N	Remarks	a. True; b. False	Why do you think so
1	If I need help, all my neighbours are there to help me		
2	Only few people in the neighbourhood will come forward		
3	I have only me to solve my problems		
4	People in the neighbourhood cannot be trusted		

107. Who is the most important person for your family (friends/relatives/ neighbours/officials)?

Please mention his/its relationship to you _____

Please explain his/its importance _____

108. Whom do you consider rich? Could you explain why?

109. Do you ever feel excluded or devoid of participation? When and why?

110. Do your children feel harassed or insulted in the neighbourhood? When?

111. Do you have any organization (in the city/neighbourhood)? If any, why do you feel you need it?

112. What is the neighbourhood/community organization you are member of?

113. Which social space you visit most frequently (mosque/church/restaurant/shop/club/pub/park)?

a. Mosque b. Restaurant c. Shop d. Club e. Park f. Sidewalk g. Child's school h. Others _____

114. What is the common activity (eating/hang-out /drinking/shopping) explains relationship with friends?

a. Eating/drinking b. Hang-out c. d. Shopping e.

115. Do you lend money or other belongings to anyone? Why or why not?

116. How often do you buy staff in credit from nearby shops?

a. Everyday b. Every week c. Occasionally d. Never borrow e. Others _____

117. Name a few families in the neighbourhood who you consider to be poorer than you?

118. What are your criteria for you to call him/someone poor?

N	Name	a. Yes; b. No	Rank
1	He does not have a good income		
2	Only one income earner in family		
3	Does not have any land/house		
4	Lives in a low quality house		
5	Lives in a poor district		
6	Cannot afford to eat well		
7	Have households possessions (TV etc)		

119. How would you rank your relationship with your neighbours? What is the meaning of good relation for you?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

120. How would you rank your relationship with people from other religions?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

121. Please remark on the following quotes:

N	Remarks	a. True; b. False	Why do you think so
1	The <i>Ward Commissioner</i> ¹ comes in good help in times of need		
2	There is no political rivalry in my ward		
3	Disputes are settled peacefully by political elites in the ward		
4	I can vote freely during national elections		
5	I know a few political leaders/workers		
6	I get help from oppositions, if ward commissioner fails to deliver		
7	I invite local political leaders in my family events (wedding etc)		
8	Politics is not for the poor		
9	It is a must to have political connections		
10	Politics is not good for the poor		

122. When you have any concerns/issues (at the community level) that need to be resolved, what do you do?

1. Urban local government representative in Bangladesh; constituencies are known as *Wards*

N	Acts	a. Yes; b. No
1	I talk with the other community members and we try to come up with a scheme	
2	I go and talk with the <i>Ward Commissioner</i>	
3	I go to the municipality (or the concerned office) to complain	
4	I go and meet local political leaders	
5	None of the above, I try to resolve the situation on my own	
6	I don't do anything; may be overlook	

123. Observation (take note/record quotes):

- Who visits the house during the survey period (relatives/neighbours)
- How frequent is the visit by outsiders on an average day
- What social norms are practiced within the household
- Customs, norms
- Mental status regarding stress, tension, joy and sorrow
- Idea about poverty, exclusion and community participation

124. Who manages the financial issues of the family

- a. Wife b. Husband c. Daughter d. Not specific e. No such management

125. What are the sources of income for the family?

N	Source	a. Yes	b. No
1	Wages/salaries		
2	Own business		
3	Pension		
4	Social assistance		
5	Casual/part-time work		
6	Day-labour		
7	Contribution from other members (wife)		
8	Contribution from children		
9	Remittances		
10	Income from rent		
11	Raise poultry/livestock		
11	Urban agriculture		

126. Please describe your expenditure in an average month

N	Source of expenditure per month	Summation/month	Amount in <i>Taka</i> ² /month
1	Food		
2	Clothing		
3	Education of children (or others)		
4	Electricity bill (winter/summer)		
5	Water bill (winter/summer)		
6	Energy for cooking (firewood etc)		
7	Transport		
8	Improvement/maintenance to house (yearly)		
9	House rent		
10	Medical expenses/monthly		
11	Mobile telephone		
12	Entertainment		
13	Ceremonies (occasional costs like marriage)/month		
	Total expenditure/month		

2. Bangladeshi monetary unit

127. What are the savings you have now?

N	Name	We used in case of	a. Yes; b. No
1	No savings		
2	Monthly savings in Bank		
3	Insurance		
4	Jewellery		
5	Land		
6	Building for rent		
7	Business in town		
8	Investment back home		
9	Pension fund		
10	Personal occasional savings		

128. Please indicate how often do you consume (and used to consume) the following:

N	Food item	a. How many times/week now	b. How many times/week before migration
1	Beef		
2	Lamb		
3	Chicken		
4	Fish		
5	Small shrimp		
6	Milk		
7	Seasonal fruits		
8	Vegetable		
9	Sweetmeat		
10	Rice		
11	Roti		
12	Ghee		

129. If you have any loan now, to whom do you owe to?

- a. Bank b. Neighbours c. Friends d. Family e. Cooperative f. NGO g.

130. Why do you take the loan?

- a. Medical emergency b. Education c. Investment d. Repay debt e.

131. What are the potential economic activities, you think should be developed in your area that will benefit you?

- a. Bank b. Shops c. Friends d. Family e. Cooperative f. NGO g.

132. What is the minimum amount of money a family (like yours) needs to satisfy its basic needs now?

133. Why do you think so?

134. Which one of the following equipment you own now compared to rural times:

N	Item	a. Yes; b. No	We acquired after settling to <i>Khulna</i> through...(a. bought it; b. gift; c. other)
1	Colour TV		
2	BW TV		
3	Mobile phone		
4	CD player		
5	Satellite dish connection		
6	Refrigerator		
7	Wood stove		
8	Electric stove		
9	Sewing machine		
10	Stereo		
11	Radio		
12	Bicycle		
13	Motorcycle		
14	Furniture bought from market		

135. Please indicate which of the following services you get?

N	Services	a. Yes; b. No	Frequency (a. daily, b. monthly, c. occasionally, d. never)
1	Water supply		
2	Electricity		
3	Government healthcare service		
4	Sewerage		
5	Solid waste collection		
6	Road maintenance/new const ⁿ		

136. How far is the drinking water source from house?

- a. > 1/2 km b. Within 1 km c. < 1 km but > 2 km d. < 2 km

137. Observation (note down/recording quotes):

- (a) Construction material
- (b) Number of rooms/spaces
- (c) Number of shared rooms/spaces
- (d) Status of maintenance
- (e) Access to services (sewer, water etc)
- (f) Overall impression/comments

138. What kind of environmental problem is common in your neighbourhood?

N	Services	a. Yes; b. No
1	Polluted water around	
2	Swamps around/subject to flooding	
3	Odour	
4	Air pollution (other reasons)	
5	Unhealthy condition	
6	Mosquito	

139. Did anyone from the household become subject to illness for the overall environmental condition around? If so, how?

140. What do you like best about the neighbourhood?

141. What are the things you miss mostly, in comparison to home?