

REFLECTIONS ON THE INTERVENTION FOR MANU CHING MARMA

Shree Q2 Research on Extreme Poverty in Bangladesh			
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Interviewee name	Manu Ching Marma	<u>Sex</u> Female	<u>Age</u> 44
			<u>Ethnicity/Religion</u> Marma Adivasi/ Buddhist
Union, Upazilla and Zilla	Before the Intervention: 2no. Kuhlalong union, Bandarban sadar upazila of Bandarban Hill District	End of ROI (1) 2 no. Kuhlalong union, Bandarban sadar upazila of Bandarban Hill District	End of ROI (2) 2 no. Kuhlalong union, Bandarban sadar upazila of Bandarban Hill District
Dates of Interview	June 18, 2015		
Well-being Status	Working extreme poor (2)	Moderate Poor (3)	Moderate Poor (3)
Livelihoods before and after the intervention	1. Jum cultivation 2. Daily labour	<u>Manu Ching</u> 1. Plough ( plain) land and Jum cultivation 2. Daily labour 3. Selling wine  <u>Husband</u> 1. <i>Jhum</i> and Plough(plain land) cultivation, 2. Daily labour	<u>Manu Ching</u> 1. Wet rice cultivation 2. Jhum cultivation 3. Selling of rice wine 4. Day labour 5. Pig and chicken rearing  <u>Husband</u> 1. Jhum cultivation 2. Plain land cultivation 3. Bamboo harvesting
Productive Asset or IGA owned working capital	None	1. Chickens 2. 2 Pigs 3. Lease in plain land for ploughing 4. Working capital-BDT 15000 cash in hand 5. Turmeric seeds 80 kg.	1. Land access 2. Pig 3. Chicken 4. Stored rice and turmeric seeds 5. Savings
Marital status and household composition	Married  Daughter - 17 Daughter age - 12 Son age- 7	Husband - age 45  Daughter age 18 – helping parents Daughter age- 13, studying class 3 Son age- 8, studying at class 1	Husband-age 47 Daughter age 20 – helping parents Daughter age- 15, studying class 5 Son age- 10, studying at class 3
Keywords	Reduced access to forestland, reduced income opportunities, asset erosion, savings and hired plain land.		

## INTRODUCTION

The report intends to cover Manu's family household resilience after project intervention. Now the family has moderate household resilience capacity particularly based on their income, productive assets, income opportunities, savings, land access, hazards and shocks faced in the last year. Both social and economic conditions have been improved compared to the previous reflections on intervention survey. Manu's family is able to lease in land for cultivation of wet-rice as well as enlisted Government safety nets programme-VGD. Now her family has chickens, pigs and turmeric seeds as productive assets. Most importantly children go to school regularly and take 3 meals per day accompanied with vegetables, fish/meat/eggs once a week. The previous reflection on intervention has been found at [www.shreee.org](http://www.shreee.org).

### **Recent turning points in the life of respondent in the last year**

The main turning point of their household improvement was the land access for shifting cultivation as well as lease in land for wet-rice cultivation. Manu's family was not able to access forest land for the last year; however current year they are able to lease in plain land for cultivation of wet rice as well as hilly land for cultivation of Jhum. This land access enabled them for expansion of income generating opportunities and mitigating the mental hazards for example finding of land for cultivation. Although they lost significant amount of productive assets-pigs and chicken however they recovered it through taking loans from the village savings and loan accounts.

## 1. WELLBEING STATUS AT ENDLINE

Manu's well-being status remains moderate poor but slightly improved their household resilience capacity. Asset erosion and reluctant to forest land access for jhum cultivation were the main reasons to stay same livelihood status. Apart from these, Manu's family was able to lease in plough land for cultivation of wet-rice. On the other hand, her family enlisted at the VGD programme which enables positives trends of the household. Her daughter has been joined in the household works as well as income generating activities and increase family income. More importantly, family took 3 meals per with accompanied with green vegetables, fish/meat/eggs once a week. Moreover, children go to school regularly.

**QUALITATIVE MONITORING OF SHREE INTERVENTIONS: CMS5 INTERVENTION TRACKING- ROI  
(2)**

Indicator	Just before the Shree intervention	End of ROI (1)	End of ROI (2)
<u>Well-being category of</u> Socially designated Head male Spouse Female Daughter Daughter Son	Extreme working poor  Extreme working poor  Look after the younger sister and brother  Studying in School Studying in School	Moderate poverty  Moderate poverty  Helping the parents for cultivation  Studying in School Studying in School	Moderate poverty  Moderate poverty  Helping the parents for cultivation  Studying in School Studying in School
Diets*	Three meals, reduced to two meals in lean period. Including leafy vegetables and fruit, fish once a month if they had enough Money.	Three meals per day accompanied by green vegetables and fruit. Fish/egg/meat once fortnightly	They took 3 meals in a day accompanied with green vegetables, fish/meat/eggs once a week.
<u>Household Livelihoods ranked in terms of contribution to that years' income :</u>	Income 1. <i>Jhum</i> cultivation 2. Day labour	Income 1. <i>Jhum</i> cultivation especially large scale Turmeric cultivation 2. Plain land cultivation 3. Day labour 4. Poultry rearing 5. Pigs rearing 6. selling rice wine	Income 1. Wet rice cultivation 2. <i>Jhum</i> cultivation 3. Selling of rice wine 4. Day labour 5. pig and chicken rearing
Spouse (Husband)	<i>Jhum</i> cultivation and labour	1. <i>Jhum</i> cultivation 2. Day labour 3. Plain land cultivation	1. <i>Jhum</i> cultivation 2. Plain land cultivation 3. Bamboo harvesting
Daughter age 17	Not working	Helping the parents for cultivation	Helping the parents for cultivation
Daughter age 13	Studying class 2	Studying class 3	Studying class 4
Son age 8	Studying class 1	Studying class 2	Studying class 3
<u>Productive assets ranked in terms of value (and key owner)</u>	N/A	1. Pigs (wife) 2. Chickens (wife) 3. Stored Rice and Turmeric seeds for future cultivation	6. Land access 7. Pig 8. Chicken 9. Stored rice and turmeric seeds
<u>House and homestead:</u> Ownership or tenure and condition of house.	Own house but no government registration, bamboo made house, roof covered with sun grass and tin.	Own house, no permanent legal rights of the land, bamboo made house, roof covered with fully GI sheet.	Own house, no permanent legal rights of the land, bamboo made house, roof covered with fully GI sheet.

**2. IDENTIFICATION OF VULNERABILITY SOURCES AND LEVEL OF EXPOSURE TO/PREPAREDNESS FOR HAZARDS**

### **Away from Jhum cultivation due to land access**

Manu's family was unable to cultivate Jhum crops due to lack of available hilly land. They often cultivated Jhum crops in the forest land which is restricted by law. On the other hand traditional land access is also very limited due to unavailability of land for Jhum cultivation in their locality. It is mentionable that Manu's husband was arrested by forest department official due to cultivation of government forests land and had to pay money to bail. About 25% of total land area was covered by forest department known as reserve forest which is restricted by Bangladesh forest laws to the local community people without permission. So, it is common dispute over forest resources between forest department and local community people in the Chittagong hill tracts.

### **Lease in land for wet rice cultivation**

As Manu's family reluctant to get access to forest land, they were looking for plough land for wet rice cultivation. They were able to lease in plough land about 40 decimals for wet-rice cultivation. About 5000 Taka was spent to lease the land for one year. About 77% of total land in the Chittagong Hill tracts are undulating hilly, 20% water bodies and only 3% are plain land which is suitable for plough cultivation.

### **Loss of mobile phone hamper for product marketing**

Manu's husband owned a mobile phone to communicate with daughter and son who reside in Bandarban sadar town for study purposes as well as communication. However, he lost mobile phone while walking and hampered for communication like product marketing and children communication. Luckily, her husband got a mobile phone from his friends.

### **Children education and admitted in local school**

Manu's children have been continuing school regularly. However her son came in the house from Bandarban town and continues schooling from the house to nearby school. On the other hand, her daughter admitted at a hostel in Bandarban town to continue school. Manu's family has to spend 15000 Taka per year for daughter education purpose. Previously her children lived their aunt house and went to school. Now their aunt has been repaired the house and will be no space to live in.

It is well documented that Chittagong Hill Tracts is one of the deprived regions in Bangladesh in term public services like school, sanitary and electricity services due to hilly terrain. The school dropout rate is also higher in the Chittagong Hill Tracts compared to rest of the parts of Bangladesh.

### **Bought solar panel for children education→mobile charge**

Manu's family bought a solar panel from the Grameen Shakti for the well being of the household. They have to 17000 Taka as 12 month installment. The reason was to minimize fuel cost, mobile charge cost as well as children education. For example, they need 2 liters of Kerosin (fuel) about 200 Taka per month for the household purposes and 150 taka for mobile charge in the market. Now they charge mobile in the household with the help of solar.

#### **Savings at VSL group accounts but irregular**

Manu has been continuing savings at Village savings and loan (VSL) account. But she was unable to say exact information about savings at VSL. But she said VSL had a significant effect on their livelihood. For example, she took loan 2000 Tk from the VSL during the cultivation season for buying the fertilizers. However, she also took loan 2000 Taka from the moneylender for their daughter educational purposes particularly hostel fee.

#### **Asset erosion due to disease**

Manu's family lost significant asset due to disease especially poultry in the last year. About 40 numbers of chickens (equivalent to 5000-6000 BDT) were died off due to infectious disease of *Ranikhet*. Poultry disease is very common in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. As Manu's family lives about 20 Kilometer away from the district livestocks office, she was unable to vaccinate in due time.

#### **Selling of rice wine and got additional income**

Manu has been selling rice wine for the well being of the household where she earns about 700-1000 Taka per month. This is the common scenario in some part of Chittagong Hill Tracts rural areas that ethnic community people are habituated to drink rice wine. Selling of rice wine is one of the additional incomes for the extreme poor ethnic minority.

#### **Enlisted VGD programme**

Manu's family has been enlisted VGD programme where they receive 30 kg of rice per month. The local union parishad enlisted their family for the programme and they did not pay any money to enroll this programme. This is the positive upward mobility of Manu's family for the food security where they were reluctant to Jhum cultivation from the forest department.

#### **Bamboo harvesting for additional income**

Forest resources/natural resources play an important role in household's income in rural Chittagong Hill Tracts community people. For example, they receive firewood, household's construction material as well as foods from the forests. Her husband went to forest for bamboo harvesting as an additional income. He received about 5000-6000 Taka by selling

the bamboo in local market. On the other hand, Manu goes to forest for collecting firewood and other non-timber forest products for the households.

#### **Continued wage labour for income and daughter helped for household's works**

Manu's family has been continuing wage labour along with farming for the well-being of the family. Now working capacity has been increased in the households after joining daughter households works. They spend most of the times in income generating activities and increase their household's income.

#### **Forest land access for cultivation of Jhum**

Last year Manu's family was unable to manage traditional jhum land for cultivation of Jhum due to lack of land. On the other hand, forest department also restricted to the community people to cultivate Jhum crops in the forest land. However, they are able to manage forest land for Jhum cultivation with mutual understanding of forest department officials in the current year. Each family had to pay 1000 Taka to the forests department official for access the land to cultivate Jhum crops.

### **3. PROGNOSIS FOR FUTURE RESILIENCE**

#### **Damage of Jhum crops by wild animals/heavy rainfall**

Manu's family has been experiencing crop damaged by wild elephant in the field. Rainfall will be a factor to reduce the crop production. Although their family has less preventive measure to protect the crops from the heavy rain, however they will decrease the crop lost by wild elephant through community actions at night in the field. This is the common scenario of human and wild elephant conflict in the Chittagong Hill Tracts especially rural/remote areas.

#### **Land access for Jhum cultivation**

Although Manu's family did not have permanent land access for cultivation Jhum due to lack of traditional land access, however Manu's family was able to get access forest land for Jhum cultivation through negotiation with forest staff. This year they got land access provided lump-sum amount of money to forest staffs so that they has been planning savings more for future land access. It is mentionable that they can produce varieties of crop in the

Jhum field for example rice, chili, pumpkin, cucumber, maize, bringal, potato, arum, cassava, bean, turmeric and varieties of leafy vegetables in a single field.

### **Long term children education**

We found that children went to regularly staying their aunt's house in Bandarban town. Now her daughter admitted into the hostel for studying in Bandarban and her son came in the house and admitted in the primary school. Manu often struggle to provide hostel and tuition fee regularly for daughter. On the other hand, her son has been received low quality education compared to previous school. It was found that Bandarban is the highest school children drop-out rates among the three hill district. Lack of financial capability, distance house to school and children engaged in different income generating activities are the main reasons.

### **Mitigating monthly solar installments**

Although Manu's family bought solar panel to minimize the fuel cost as well as children education, however her husband has been felt anxious to pay monthly solar installments during the lean periods (April to August). Manu's said that she has been savings from income from selling rice wine so that they can pay in due time.

### **Finding a bridegroom for elder daughter**

Manu's family has already been concerned about their elder daughter marriage. Now she is about 20 years old. Very few women remain unmarried in that village like her daughter age. Early marriage is prominent in the rural Marma society. Most importantly, majority of the couples were married without consent of parent's opinion. As a result couples were fled away from their house to marry off. Manu's family prefers to arrange marriage ceremony as well as they have full concerned of the daughter marriage. On the hand, finding a bridegroom is also difficult tasks for their family because her daughter education. Her elder daughter remains illiterate due to extreme poverty in earlier married life. Apart from these, they will look for a bridegroom to marry off their daughter.

### **Productive assets erosion**

Manu has been lost significant amount of productive assets particularly pigs and chickens due to infectious diseases. However, she was able to buy chickens and pig through their family income. She would sell the pigs and chickens before disease spread in their locality.

### **Application of fertilizers in due time in their wet-rice cultivation**

Manu's family had experienced delay application of fertilizers in their crop field due to financial crisis. As a result they received low production what they expected. Now they have

been savings money to buy fertilizers in due time to get optimum production from their crop field. They are planning to take loan from the VSL account during the crisis period to mitigate.

### Dreams and aspirations for the future

Primarily children education up to Higher Secondary School level (HSC) is the first dream of their family so that children could get a job. Further they will consider higher education based on children results and family economic conditions. On other hand, they would try to buy a plain land for long term income opportunities as well as food security. In addition, they will rear more livestock's for increasing household assets including cow.

### Capacity to cope with future hazard/shock/event

Manu had experienced several hazards and shocks before and after intervention of the project. They have moderate capacity to cope with future hazard/shocks due to their income opportunities. Manu's family will face following hazards, shocks and events in their household.

Types of hazards	Likelihood/Frequency*	Impact*	Strategy used to avoid/moderate impact
Death of pig	High	High	Sell in advance before disease outbreaks
Damaged crops by wild animals	Medium	Medium	Night duty at the crop field
Poultry disease	high	High	Sell in advance before disease outbreaks
Land access for jhum cultivation	Medium	Medium	Negotiate with forest departments and give money for cultivation
Water crisis	High	medium	Long distances
Heavy rain	High	Medium	Well-drainage systems

\*high, moderate, low

## 4. ANALYSIS

### Manu's households' well-being ascents and descents

Manu's family well-being status has been increased when they enlisted VGD programme. Since then they were able to work in the field with less stress. On the other hand her daughter joined their works so that working capital has been increased in the households. Their well being status was reduced slightly when they were reluctant to land access by forest

department for cultivation of Jhum crops in the upland. In addition chickens and pigs were died due to infectious diseases and lost income.

### Household resilience of Manu's family

Manu's have moderate well-being resilience as they have no permanent productive land. Although they were able to lease in plough land for wet rice cultivation from the Bengali people, however the price of lease in land has been increasing day by day. On the other hand access to forest land for cultivation of turmeric, ginger and upland rice is also irregular due to forest department restriction. Moreover, they have savings in the village savings and loan association where they save money and take out loan. At present, they have 3 working members in the household and able to afford 3 meals a day accompanied with green vegetables, fish/meat/egg once a week. Two other children go to school regularly. More importantly, Manu's family enlisted VGD programme where they got 30 kg of rice per month for the household consumption. Enlisting VGD programme enables to concentrate other income generating activities.

### Vulnerability within the households

Both Manu and her husband work together for the well-being of the family. They have mutual understanding about income generating activities and children education. Although her elder daughter helps their income generating activities as well as households work, however, Manu and her husband feel worry about daughter marriage who is above 18 years old. When asked about daughter marriage, they gently said that they are looking for a bridegroom for their daughter. If found a suitable bridegroom they will arrange a marriage ceremony. In the life histories very few beneficiaries (in Marma community) were found arrangement of formal marriage ceremony. Majority of the Marma community people got married by fleeing away without parents' opinion.

### SWOT analysis of Manu's family

<p><b>Strength</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working efficiency</li> <li>• Negotiation power-land access</li> <li>• Savings</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No permanent productive land</li> <li>• Low investment behaviors</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children education</li> <li>• Diversified income opportunities</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seize by forest department</li> <li>• Crop damaged by wild animals</li> </ul>

**NGO Intervention effect on Manu's family**

There were significant impacts on Manu's family livelihood status. Although they still remain moderate poor, however they have gathered knowledge and informed about investment and savings. Both Manu and her husband have been increased negotiation capability so that they are able to manage lease in land for income generating activities as well as food security. More importantly they have great ambition to continue children education. Now children go to school regularly.

