

## Final Report

### “Gender Analysis Study for SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity”



June 2024

### SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity

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## Acronyms

BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BDHS	Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey
BDT	Bangladeshi Taka (Bangladeshi Currency)
BPS	Bangladesh Parliament Secretariat
BRDB	Bangladesh Rural Development Board
BSPs	Blue Star Service Providers
CBO	Community Based Organization
CG	Community Group
CMSME	Cottage, Micro, Small and medium Enterprise
CSBA	Community Skill Birth Attendant
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DSHE	Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education
ECOSOC	The Economic and Social Council of the UN
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FWV	Family Welfare Visitor
FYP	Five-Year Plan of Bangladesh Government
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
HPNSP	Health Population and Nutrition Sector Program
IDI	In-depth Interview
IGAs	Income Generation Activities
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
KII	Key Informant Interview
LGED	Local Government Engineering Department
LSP	Local Service Providers
NAEP	National Agricultural Extension Policy
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NFNSP	National Food and Nutrition Security Policy
NIPORT	National Institute of Population Research and Training
PCSBA	Private Community Skilled Birth Attendants
PEP	Poor and Extreme Poor
PLW	Pregnant-Lactating Women
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
SAA	Social Analysis and Action
SAAO	Sub Assistant Agriculture Officer
SACMO	Sub Assistant Community Medical Officer

SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SM	Seasonality Mapping
SSC	Secondary School Certificate
SVRS	Sample Vital Registration System
UDMC	Union Disaster Management Committee
UN	United Nations
UP	Union Parishad
VAW	Violence Against Women
VD	Venn Diagram
VDC	Village Development Committee
VGD	Vulnerable Group Development
VGF	Vulnerable Group Feeding
VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Association
WB	World Bank
WE	Women's Empowerment



## Executive Summary

Gender Equality (GE) and Women's Empowerment (WE) are the core elements of inclusive and sustainable development. Various international instruments, including the Charter of the United Nations and the 2030 Development Agenda, embody the global commitments on gender equality and women's rights. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women-CEDAW (1979) and Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) provide a global framework on eliminating discrimination against women and promoting women's empowerment. Gender equality and women's empowerment are also integrated elements of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a standalone goal (Goal 5) on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls. Bangladesh also upholds a strong commitment to gender equality and women's rights. The Constitution of Bangladesh, as well as key planning documents of the government, reflects such commitments. Despite international and state efforts, equality has not been achieved as planned and professed. Given the context, integrating gender perspectives and including targeted interventions for women and men to address gender-based discrimination and inequalities is essential for any development interventions to ensure that both women and men can benefit equally and equitably from the programmatic outputs.

A contribution to that aspect, the Strengthening Household Ability to Respond to Development Opportunities (SHOUHARDO) III Plus Activity is a two-year program (2022-2024) funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by [partner NGOs of] CARE Bangladesh. Aimed to deliver improved gender-equitable food and nutrition security and resilience for 168,521 Poor and Extreme Poor (PEP) households in the Char and Haor regions in Bangladesh until 2024, the Activity integrates gender, governance, disaster risk reduction (DRR), environment, and private sector as crosscutting components to maximize the program's impacts.

Considering that girls and women are at the core of SHOUHARDO III Plus's development agenda, CARE Bangladesh commissioned a gender analysis study to have an in-depth understanding on the gender relations in the program working areas. The study tried to identify the barriers that affect equitable relationships in both private and public spaces between men and women and to identify ways to ensure better engagement, enabling them to benefit equally and equitably from the program interventions.

The study used a conceptual framework, synchronized with the USAID's "Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment"—ADS 205 and CARE's Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Framework, and looked into gender roles, and division of labor; access to public spaces, services and opportunities; access and ownership of assets and resources; household decision-making; claiming rights and participation in public decision-making and prevalence of gender-based violence (GBV) in context of food security, agriculture and livelihood. In light of the conceptual framework, the study was conducted in Gaibandha, Jamalpur, Kishoreganj and Sunamganj districts following a purposive sampling method. The study applied qualitative methods, such as Document Review, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Key Informant Interview (KII) and In-depth Interview (IDI) for information collection. The exercise also used the Venn Diagram (VD), and Access and Control Profile as Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) to understand women's access in public spaces and access to different services and opportunities in agriculture, livelihoods, and nutrition.

The study finds that women play a primary role in domestic reproductive work in the study areas. However, the study indicates positive changes in sharing household works by men, practice of consuming additional and nutritious food, taking rest, and getting regular antenatal and postnatal check up by the pregnant and lactating women, as well as awareness on reproductive health rights

by the adolescent girls. Other important changes documented by the study include increased participation of women in household decision-making and practice of joint decision-making, increased access to services by both men and women, increased mobility of women outside the homestead periphery and reduced gender-based violence. The study also reveals a trend of change in self-esteem and confidence of women because of their financial strength, which is a result of the cumulative effects of various interventions of SHOUHARDO in different phases.

However, the study identifies various gender-specific barriers that prevent women from accessing services and opportunities. These are mobility restrictions, social norms, harassment in public places, and traditional household and care responsibilities of women. The study further reveals several interconnected barriers to women's lack of access and ownership to assets, such as a gender-biased inheritance system, traditional gender norms to give up women's share of inheritance to brothers, lack of women's engagement in income-earning activities, lack of adequate income to save and accumulate assets, limited awareness on the importance of asset ownership for women. Concerning women's participation in household decision-making, the common barriers as shared by the respondents are the traditional mindset of treating women as incapable of making decisions, undervaluing women's opinions, gaps in knowledge and awareness among women of their rights and capability, and hierarchical power structure where men are the head of the family.

Concerning GBV, despite the progress in reducing GBV incidents in the communities, the study finds that the prevalence of child marriage, dowry, and harassment of girls in public places are the remaining concerns in the communities. While the study acknowledges general awareness among the beneficiaries about rights and entitlements, there are gaps in knowledge and understanding of the root causes of violence against women. Furthermore, the study findings suggest that traditional mindsets and gender-stereotyped social norms and beliefs rooted in patriarchal systems are the underlying reasons that prevent women from enjoying equal rights and opportunities.

Nevertheless, the study considers that a strong foundation has been laid in the areas of gender equality, women's empowerment, and overall improvement of livelihood. However, further efforts are needed, particularly to address the root causes of gender inequality, such as patriarchal gender-biased social norms.

Therefore, guided by the findings, the study team developed two sets of recommendations: i) For the existing SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity and ii) For any new Activity or programs that target Char and Haor areas. The recommendations for the SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity are to explore the opportunities to increase women LSPs with skill and income opportunities to play a more vital role in Program outcome; facilitate further institutionalizing of VSLAs in the form of corrective groups; review and reshuffle girls' forums when peer leaders drop/ new members join; and more training or refresher course for the girls' forum and Male Champions. And, considering that traditional mindsets and gender-stereotyped social norms and beliefs rooted in patriarchal systems are at the core of all barriers that prevent women from enjoying equal rights and opportunities, the study recommends targeted interventions to change the patriarchal mindset of the community women and men while designing any new Activity or program targeting Char and Haor areas.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

This introductory chapter provides a global and country context on gender equality and women's empowerment and a brief overview of the SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity. This chapter also includes the rationale and objectives of the gender analysis study.

### 1.1 Background

Gender equality and women's empowerment are vital factors in sustainable and inclusive development. Gender Equality (GE) refers to equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities for women and men and girls and boys. It implies that the interests, needs, and priorities of both women and men are duly acknowledged, and recognize the diversity of different groups of women and men (Supples et al., 2024). Women's Empowerment (WE), as related to gender equality, is described as the process by which women become aware of gender-based unequal power relationships and take control over their lives, acquiring the ability to make strategic choices (UNCSW, 2002; UNESCWA, 2021). According to the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), women's empowerment encompasses five fundamental components. These components include women's self-esteem, their autonomy in decision-making, their availability of opportunities and resources, their capacity to exercise self-governance within and beyond the domestic sphere, and their ability to influence societal transformations aimed at establishing a fairer social and economic framework at both national and global levels. Gender discrimination is another important term that refers to any kind of bias or prejudice that prevents people of a certain gender from fully realizing, experiencing, or expressing their human rights (Salvini, 2014).

Gender equality and women's empowerment are critical but complex issues influenced by various historical, social, and cultural elements, including patriarchal legacies, social norms, and cultural practices. Only because of gender identity women have been denied the opportunity to participate in politics, the workforce, and education. For example, women in the United States were not entitled to vote until 1920. Historical evidence of inequality against women in social and economic lives is found in the background of the women's rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s, happening largely in the USA (Oswald, 2023). Women in Europe also had to struggle for many years for right to vote, and many European countries granted women's full suffrage in the early 1900s (Rubio-Marín, 2014). Even today, women continue to face barriers in getting education and employment, and they are frequently paid less than men for doing the same job (Oswald, 2023). Even in extreme cases, women are denied the right to live (Dilli, 2015). Underrepresentation of women in leadership positions, poverty and limited economic opportunities, discrimination and inequality in the workplace, imbalance in unpaid caregiving, social norms and cultural practices, inadequate funding for gender equality initiatives, barriers to the law and its lax enforcement, violence against women and girls, and inadequate access to education and health care are the biggest hurdles for women in the present world ("The 11 Biggest Hurdles for Women's Equality by 2030", 2023).

However, consistent efforts have been made by the United Nations (UN) and other development agencies to advance gender equality and foster women's empowerment. The UN Charter 1945 reaffirmed faith in the equal rights of men and women in its preamble. Consequently, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women-CEDAW (1979) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) provided a global framework for eliminating discrimination against women and promoting women's empowerment. Gender equality and women's empowerment are also an integrated element of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a standalone goal (Goal 5) on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.

Bangladesh also upholds a strong commitment to gender equality and women's rights. The Constitution of Bangladesh guarantees equal rights, equal opportunities, and non-discrimination (The Constitution of Bangladesh. Art. 19 and Art.28). The Eighth Five-Year Plan of the country (2020-2025) considers gender equality as key to overcoming the barrier of economic growth, poverty reduction and social development. Besides, Bangladesh has a specific policy named the National Women Development Policy 2011 to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. Despite having legal and policy frameworks, including the constitutional guarantee of equal rights, opportunity and non-discrimination, women in Bangladesh experience systematic discrimination and violence in almost every sphere of life. The challenges faced by rural women in Bangladesh include low payment for the same work; physical and mental violence against women; lack of sufficient educational facilities; social norms and rules; physical harassment in the working place; low availability of nutritional food for women; early marriage and lack of gender education ([Asaduzzaman, et al., 2015](#)). Women living in Char and Haor areas experience socio-economic disadvantages ([Reza, 2020; Abir, 2023](#)). The majority of women in chars have little education, and they are underpaid when they work outside the home. They have fewer career alternatives than men do, and they hardly ever find employment utilizing new technologies ([Zaman & Alam, 2021](#)).

Given the context, CARE Bangladesh is implementing Strengthening Household Ability to Respond to Development Opportunities (SHOUHARDO) III Plus Activity, a two-year program (2022-2024) funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The program aims to deliver improved gender-equitable food and nutrition security and resilience for 168,521 Poor and Extreme Poor (PEP) households in the Char and Haor regions in Bangladesh until 2024.

The SHOUHARDO III Plus program adopts a comprehensive approach to integrating gender-sensitive practices throughout its interventions to ensure the equitable addressing of women's distinct needs and priorities. This includes facilitating women's involvement in community decision-making processes, facilitating their access to maternal and child health services, and endorsing initiatives aimed at combating gender-based violence (GBV) ([USAID, 2021](#)). Additionally, through targeted capacity-building endeavors and awareness-raising campaigns, the program endeavors to challenge entrenched gender norms and stereotypes that hinder women's pathways to empowerment ([USAID, 2021](#)). By mobilizing men and community leaders as allies in the pursuit of gender equality, SHOUHARDO III Plus endeavors to cultivate a more conducive environment for women's empowerment and societal transformation ([USAID, 2021](#)).

Given that girls and women are at the core of SHOUHARDO III Plus's development agenda, the SHOUHARDO III Plus program has proactively monitored the situation of girls and women at home,

their workload, GBV, income options, market access, use of technology, and coping mechanisms from their perspectives. However, the program found that the socio-cultural setting of rural Bangladesh poses difficulties for girls and women to navigate their lives, and the added pressure of the pandemic has been observed nationally to make it worse in the past years. There is also a dearth of understanding of the role of boys and men in relation to GBV and Women's Empowerment in the intervention areas. In such a scenario, the SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity aimed to conduct a gender analysis to have an in-depth understanding of the gender relations in the program working areas, identify the barriers to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, and design/redesign interventions to address the gender-specific barriers and promote women's empowerment through the program interventions.

## **1.2 Purpose and Objectives of the Gender Analysis**

Overall objective of the gender analysis is to identify the constraints/barriers that affect equitable relationships in both private and public spaces between men and women and to identify ways to ensure better engagement of men and women enabling that both women and men benefit from the program interventions equally and equitably.

### **Specific objectives:**

- Identify the differing needs, roles, interests, opportunities, barriers, and experiences of women and men, boys and girls in household livelihoods.
- Identify the root cause of unequal power structure and gender-based discrimination that prevails in the families, societies, and the communities at large.
- Provide an overview of the existing gender constraints, emerging changes, and the pace of those changes and their implications for development outcomes in the SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity.
- Suggest a strategic roadmap of key activities under each purpose and approach that will provide the basis for successful gender integration, outlining key inputs and activities as well as expected outputs, outcomes, and impacts of the gender integration.
- Formulate recommendations of specific actions that may be beyond program capacity or may need multiple actors and or higher-level actions to address gender equality.



## Chapter 2: Methodology

This section describes the conceptual framework and methodological approach used for gender analysis. It also includes the ethical considerations applied in carrying out field data collection and the limitations of the exercise.

### 2.1 Study area

The study was carried out in four selected districts of Char and Haor, namely Gaibandha, Jamalpur, Kishoreganj and Sunamganj, using the purposive sampling method. The sampling ensured coverage of both the Char and Haor regions with the scope of providing a reflection on the different geographic locations with differences in an economic and socio-cultural context. The study covered two selected Upazilas under each district, namely Fulchhari and Saghati Upazilas in Gaibandha, Islampur and Bakshiganj Upazilas in Jamalpur, Austagram and Mithamoin Upazilas in Kishoreganj, and Tahirpur and Dowarabazar Upazilas in Sunamganj. And data has been collected from the two different villages from two different unions.

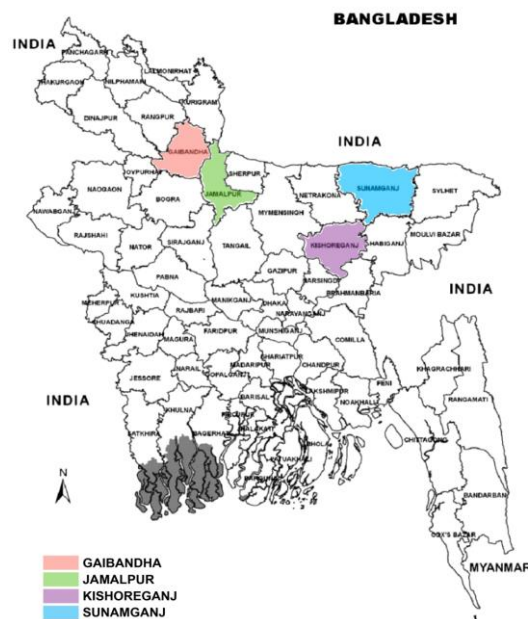


Figure 1: Study area map

### 2.2 Methodological approach

To achieve the objectives of this study, a comprehensive methodology was adopted for each of the activities, e.g., document review, strong team mobilization, and data collection. All the relevant information was collected using a qualitative approach. To simplify and analyze information, this study used the conceptual framework synchronized with USAID's "Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment"—ADS 205 and CARE's Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Framework. The CARE's Good Practices Framework on Gender Analysis and the USAID Guidelines also inform this conceptual framework for Gender Analysis. This framework guided the entire analysis including the design of the data collection tools, data analysis, and reporting.

As shown in the diagram, the analysis looked into the following interconnected areas, such as gender roles, and division of labor; access to public spaces, services, and opportunities; access and ownership of assets and resources; household decision-making; claiming rights and participation in public decision-making and prevalence of gender-based violence in the context of food security, agriculture, and livelihood. Each area of inquiry cuts across CARE's women's empowerment domains of agency, structures, and relations, and findings under each area of inquiry have been analyzed in light of these domains as relevant. The final phase of the analysis included the identification of practical and strategic gender issues to formulate recommendations. The analysis focused on the issues that affect equitable access to income for women and men and gender-equitable nutrition and food security, particularly on the nutritional status of children under five years of age, pregnant and lactating women, and adolescent girls.

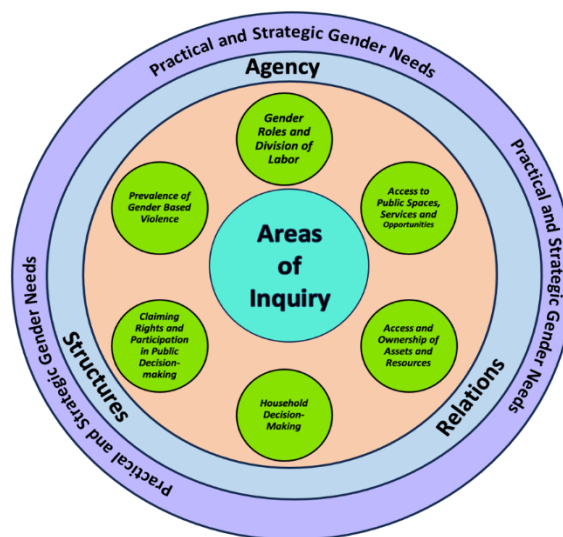
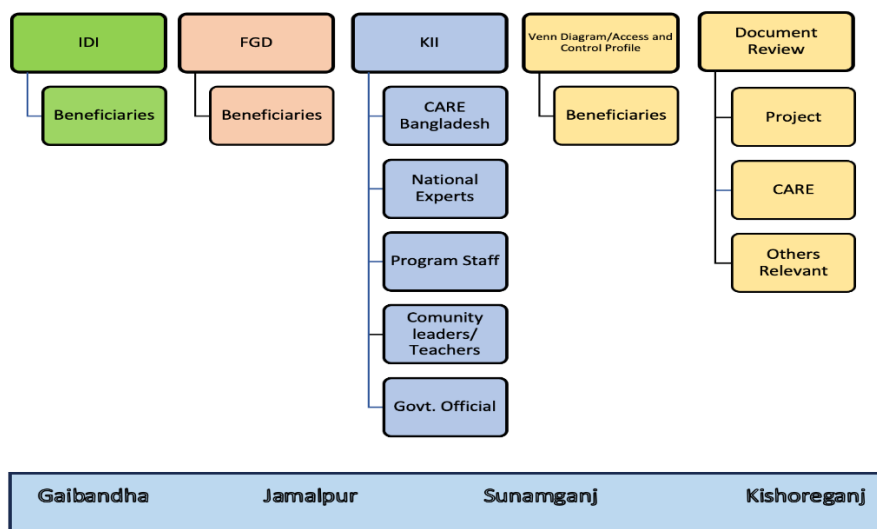


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework for Gender Analysis

In light of the conceptual framework, this gender analysis study applied qualitative methods, such as Document Review, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Key Informant Interview (KII) and In-depth Interview (IDI) for information collection. The exercise also used the Venn Diagram (VD) and Access and Control Profile as Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) to understand the access of women in public spaces, and access to different assets and resources.

## 2.2. Primary data collection

A total of 32 FGDs, 24 IDIs, 41 KIIs, 8 VDs and 8 Access and Control Profile has been conducted using predesigned checklist set. The study consulted with 548 respondents, of which 301 are women and 247 men, comprising pregnant and lactating women (PLW), Husbands of the PLW, Community groups, Village Development Committees, Local /religious leaders/teachers, Program staff, relevant government and private stakeholders, and national level experts.



*Figure 3: Methodological Approach of the Gender Analysis*

## 2.2 Document review

In addition to primary data collection, the study reviewed different pertinent documents, including planning documents for the SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity, previous gender analysis reports, and other research reports on the SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity. The study team also reviewed other relevant policy documents, such as the National Women Development Policy of 2011, the country's Constitution, the laws and policies on food security and agriculture, and other available research reports and newspaper articles as significant components of the analysis. Additionally, significant scholarly works and peer-reviewed articles have been reviewed in the relevant area. These include works on gender aspects of Char and Haor areas, and findings from CARE Bangladesh's reports from previous analysis and assessments. A detailed list of the reference documents has been added to this report.

## 2.3 Data collection process

A detailed data collection matrix and design matrix have been developed following the conceptual framework mentioned above, which includes key study questions under each area of inquiry as core elements of gender equality and women's empowerment, which have been annexed to this report (Annex I). Data collection tools were developed in close consultation with CARE Bangladesh, and a one-day orientation was organized to orient the research team about the study objectives and the entire data collection process, including the ethical aspects of the data collection.

## 2.4 Data analysis and management

The data collection team took notes and recorded the discussion with the prior informed consent of the study participants. The team then prepared transcription of the responses of the participants in Bangla with a special focus on the study questions as the primary dataset of the study. All the



collected data were then summarized in English according to the study objectives and relevant sub-thematic areas following the conceptual framework. All the data were managed and analyzed manually, and with prior review of existing secondary sources, the dimension and critical areas were analyzed following the agreed conceptual framework and using different analysis approaches, such as context analysis and narrative analysis. Responses from each respondent group (type of stakeholders interviewed) and locality (geographical area) were categorized as possible, and triangulation was made between the data from different respondents and sources to enhance the validity of the findings.

**Ethical considerations:** The exercise ensured compliance with basic ethical principles, such as voluntary and informed participation of the respondents, confidentiality, and anonymity. The study also ensured compliance with do no harm principle so that the respondents did not experience any harm because of their participation in the study. Ethical issues regarding gender sensitivity, child protection, and respect for cultural diversity were maintained in all stages of the assignment, and collection of information from adolescents were particularly handled with care.

**Quality assurance:** To ensure that data collection tools adequately include the issues covered by the scope of the study, the data collection plan including checklists and guidelines were developed, and finalized through a participatory process and in consultation with SHOUHARDO III Plus team. The core consultant team itself was directly involved in each step of data collection and analysis to ensure the quality, and accuracy of collected data.

## 2.5 Study limitations

The study team encountered some practical limiting factors that affected the field data collection work to some extent, as mentioned below.

- The data collection schedule also clashed with the SSC examination that posed a challenge in ensuring participation of the adolescent boys and girls on time, and had to delay in starting the discussion.
- In the FGDs with adolescent boys and girls, young respondents were often reluctant to speak up, and could not provide enough information about the program as they had only attended a few sessions. Besides, participation of greater number of respondents than planned was a constraint, as it is quite hard to manage focused discussion with a large group. However, the study team allowed all the respondents present at the spot to speak as a gesture of showing respect and valuing their presence and time.

## Chapter 3: Key Findings

This chapter presents the findings from the study organized under different subsections. The first subsection provides an overview of the broader context of gender equality and women's empowerment in Bangladesh, informed by the review of secondary documents. The second subsection highlights the findings on the scenario of gender equality in the context of SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity and presents data and analysis on each area of study inquiry. This chapter also contains sections on the good practices developed by SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity in reducing GBV, promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

### **3.1 Broader context of gender equality and women's empowerment in Bangladesh and SHOU III Plus areas**

This sub-section provides an overview of gender equality and women's empowerment in Bangladesh by reviewing secondary documents. It highlights the scenario in different interconnected areas, such as gender roles, and division of labor; access to public spaces, services and opportunities; access and ownership of assets and resources; household decision-making; participation in public decision-making and prevalence of gender-based violence. Besides, this sub-section also provides an overview of the legal and policy framework of Bangladesh relating to gender equality and women's empowerment.

#### ***Legal and policy framework of Bangladesh***

The Constitution of Bangladesh, the supreme law of the country guarantees equality of all citizens. The Constitution also embodies explicit provisions on gender equality and women's empowerment (The Constitution of Bangladesh, Art 19 & Art 28). The National Women Development Policy (2011) includes commitments to ensure full and equal opportunity for women in health, education, training, lifelong education (continuing education), technical education, income-generating training, information and technology etc. and ensure the rights to wealth and resources earned through income, succession, loan/credit, land, and market management as essential aspects of economic empowerment of women.

The policy commitments and strategies on gender equality and women's economic empowerment are also included in the other sectoral policies, such as the National Agricultural Extension Policy (NAEP) 2020, National Agricultural Policy (2018), and National Food and Nutrition Security Policy (2020). The country has also different laws to address gender-based violence, such as the Prevention of Repression against Women and Children Act 2000 (amended in 2003), the Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act 2012, the Pornography Control Act, 2012, the Child Marriage Restraint Act 2017 and the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2010, amongst others. Besides, the Government of Bangladesh has also developed several action plans, namely the National Action Plan for the Implementation of Women Development Policy 2013, the National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women and Children 2018-2030, and the National Action Plan to End Child Marriage 2018-2030.

Despite Bangladesh has strong legal and policy instruments promoting gender equality and women's rights, there are inconsistencies and contradictions between different laws ([Yasmin, 2020](#)). Family matters related to marriage, divorce, maintenance, custody of children, guardianship, inheritance, etc., governed under various Personal Laws, are discriminatory to women despite the constitutional guarantee of equal rights ([BLAST, n.d.](#)). Furthermore, women face challenges in accessing justice for various reasons, such as inadequate or discriminatory legal frameworks, complexity of legal systems, lack of information and knowledge, and awareness of rights, lack of sensitivity among the personnel involved in delivering justice ([Naznin, 2021](#)).

## **Gender Roles and Division of Labor**

Women in Bangladesh historically have been performing traditional roles in household tasks and caring for the elderly and children. According to the Preliminary Report on Time Use Survey (TUS) 2021 (BBS, 2023), men spend around 1.6 hours a day in domestic and care work while women do that for 11.7 hours, which is nearly half of the day. According to a report of the Participatory Gender Analysis of SHOUHARDO III conducted in Gaibandha and Kishoreganj in 2016 (CARE Bangladesh, n.d.), there prevails concept of ideal man and woman in the community, where men are expected to earn income for family among others, and women to take care of home staying within households. Another recent CARE study conducted in the Char and Haor areas found women managing household tasks and men working outside (CARE Bangladesh, 2022).

Societal norms define women's role in caring for the home, their husbands, children, and the elderly (Solotaroff et al., 2019). However, women's household and/or care work remains unrecognized and unaccounted for due to gender-biased norms, and therefore women engaging in income-generating activities in addition to their traditional role of caregiving suffer from time poverty (Nazneen, 2017). A report on adolescent health and wellbeing survey (ICDDR, 2021), mentions that women are responsible for household responsibilities and taking care of the family and children, even if they work outside the home. According to a write up on gendered livelihood strategies of char dwellers of Rangpur (Chowdhury, 2022), women's options for diverse livelihood are limited to stereotypical gender role, keeping a balance between productive and reproductive roles. However, positive trends in this regard have been recorded in an adaptive management report of SHOUHARDO III Activity (CARE Bangladesh, n.d.) where increased participation of men is found in their respective household chores. According to this report, 86.2 percent of surveyed women received assistance from their husbands with household chores in FY22, as compared to 36.9 in FY16.

As far as the practice of food intake is concerned, harmful social and gender norms also affect food intake practices and health issues of women. Women and girls often eat less and last, with 45.70 percent of women of reproductive age with anemia (UN Women, 2020). The Gender Analysis of SHOUHARDO III Activity conducted in Gaibandha and Kishoreganj in 2016 (CARE Bangladesh, n.d.) also disclosed similar findings. The report described that men and boys are given priority in household food distribution and women and girls eat last. The study also indicated a lack of opportunity for pregnant and lactating women to take additional supplementary food. However, the findings of SHOUHARDO III; Impact Evaluation; Adaptive Management report of CARE Bangladesh (CARE Bangladesh, n.d.) found improvements in women's dietary diversity in their work areas compared to baseline value. This has also been confirmed in the PARTICIPANT BASED SURVEY (PaBS) final report (CARE Bangladesh, 2023), as the report disclosed that 76.9 percent of pregnant women got care support (day-time rest, extra food) in its working areas.

## **Access to services and opportunities**

Despite progress in areas of education, health, and employment, there are gender-based gaps and challenges in navigating public spaces and accessing different services and opportunities. The BBS (2022) report, though, reveals an increased rate of labor force participation of women to 42.67 percent, from 36.3 percent in 2016-17; this is still very low compared to that of men with 79.71%.

Women engaged in agriculture remain in a disadvantageous position due to deprivation in land ownership, wage discrimination, and non-recognition of unpaid work, despite that women constitute nearly 65% of the farm labor force in Bangladesh (*Chakma and Ruba, 2021*).

With regard to gender gaps in accessing services, the Gender analysis report of SHOUHARDO III (*CARE Bangladesh, n.d.*), highlighted that women face different challenges in accessing services from different government offices and the Union Parishad. These are ill-treatment by the service providers, corruption, and fear of sexual abuse at the UP level. Men in char areas do not easily accept women's mobility, and women usually do not go outside for work without permission. On the other hand, women in Haor areas have more mobility. Nonetheless, patriarchal norms continue to obstruct women's mobility and access to services in both Char and Haor communities (*CARE Bangladesh, 2022*).

According to Chowdhury (2022), in general, in the char areas [of Rangpur], women's mobility for livelihood are controlled compared to men. (*Hanchett, 2022*) shared that access to markets is a serious obstacle to women's economic advancement because of purdah norms. Also, self-imposed norms are practiced by women. For example, the study found that in Gaibandha District, widows and women without male "guardians" were needed to do their own shopping, but "shame" prevented them from visiting regional markets.

The gender Budget Report of the Government of Bangladesh (2023) highlighted different challenges for women in agriculture, such as lack of access to agricultural inputs, training, and low-interest agricultural credit facilities for women who are involved in agriculture, and problems in marketing of agricultural products due to lack of practical knowledge about the market system. Similarly, the findings of SHOUHARDO III; Impact Evaluation; Adaptive Management report of CARE Bangladesh (*CARE Bangladesh, n.d.*) shared large gender gaps in the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices persisting in its working areas. The most noticeable gaps in adoption between male and female farmers were on sustainable agricultural and crop practices and improved storage practices, with the share of female farmers adopting these practices on average, being 43 percentage points lower than male farmers.

### **Access- to and ownership of assets and resources**

Gender inequality also persists in access to or control over productive assets, resources, services, skills, financial services, and other economic opportunities. Women hold only 20-30 percent of total wealth in Bangladesh, and the number of men landowners is six times higher than women landowners in the country, according to an Oxfam report (*"Land Ownership", 2019*). Only 13 percent of rural women report owning, solely or jointly, agricultural land. Compared to men, women often own assets of smaller value, such as livestock, making them more vulnerable than men (*Solotaroff et al., 2019*). A CARE Bangladesh gender analysis report referred to in the above sections (*CARE Bangladesh, n.d.*) also indicated gaps between men and women in access to and control over household and community resources. According to the analysis, women's control of assets is only limited to a few household items including poultry, sewing machine furniture, tube-well, and jewelry.

Moreover, a wide gender gap is prevalent concerning women's access to ICT and financial inclusion in Bangladesh. Bangladesh Sample Vital Statistics 2023 (BBS, 2023), disclosed gender gaps in the use of mobile phones, which is nationally 86.5 % for men aged 15 years and above against 62.8% for women, and this gap is wider in rural areas. In rural areas, 85.3 % of men use mobile phones, against 58.6% of women. According to the same source, 58% of men use the Internet against 42.6% of women, 32.1% of men have bank account ownership against 24.8% of women, and 61.2% of men have mobile financial service (MFS) account ownership against 35.4% of women.

### **Participation in the decision-making process**

Similar to other domains, there are still gaps in women's participation in personal and public spheres. There are 20 women directly elected in the current parliament which is 6.6% of total directly elected parliamentarians. And, there are total 20% women in the current 12th parliament including the 50 reserved seats for women (Tasneem, 2024). According to Bangladesh SDGs Progress Report 2022, at present, 20.86 per cent of national parliament members are women, and the proportion of seats held by women in local governments is 23.1 in 2021, slightly declining from 25.21 per cent in 2018. There is a poor representation of women in different political parties. According to media sources, the percentage of women in the Central Committee of the Bangladesh Awami League (AL) is 23 per cent, while the percentage in the Central Committee of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) is 13 per cent (Ahamad, 2023).

During the general election in 2024, the Awami League nominated 20 women candidates for the national polls. Jatiya Party, Bangladesh Congress, and National People's Party nominated nine candidates each. Total nominations of women candidates for this general election were only 5 percent of the total 1,895 candidates competing for the 300 parliamentary seats across Bangladesh (Lipi, 2023).

The Participatory Gender Analysis of SHOUHARDO III in 2016, (CARE Bangladesh, n.d.) disclosed women's participation in different community forums, such as savings groups, school committees, VDC, etc. However, there is no participation of women in committees for mosques, madrassas, and graveyard development mainly due to tradition and social norms. With regard to household-level decision-making, the analysis found that women from male-headed households lack decision-making power on the use of household income, personal purchases or purchase of household food items etc. whereas women in female-headed households indicated having sole decision-making authority over many household decisions and greater responsibility for a range of income-generating activities. The analysis also indicates that women lack decision-making power to access the market and sell or buy the agricultural products and other productive assets.

However, the CARE Bangladesh's report on the SHOUHARDO III Interventions, (CARE Bangladesh, 2022) noted progress on women's decision making due to their contribution to family expenses. They are now involved in important family decisions such as purchasing livestock, selling produce, choosing schools for the children, and many other issues. Similarly, the PARTICIPANT BASED SURVEY (PaBS) 2023, Final Report (CARE Bangladesh, 2023) also recorded progress on women's participation in decision making at the household levels in its working areas. Also, this report found that women now decide on the use of contraceptives, move to shelters, and some even participate in local arbitration, social issues and NGO activities.



### **Prevalence of gender-based violence**

Women face violence both inside and outside of the home, including child marriage, dowry-related violence, acid violence, death, rape, rape followed by death, forced or induced abortion, forced prostitution, sexual harassment, violence at the workplace and trafficking etc (Ara, 2020). *BBS Survey (2023)* shows a rising trend of child marriages over the past three years, the survey disclosed, at least 41.6 percent girls were married in 2023 before 18 years of age, 40.9 percent of women were married before turning 18 in 2022, which was 32.4 percent in 2021, and 31.3 percent in 2020. The survey also found that 8.2 percent of young women had gotten married before they were 15. Early marriage is more common in rural areas than in urban areas. The documentation of Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), a leading human right organization in Bangladesh, reveals a grave scenario of different forms of violence against women. The organization documented 284 incidents of domestic violence, 574 rape, 129 attempts to rape, and 142 sexual harassments against women in 2023 (ASK, 2023).

Women with diverse intersecting identities experience violence and discrimination to varying degrees. Women from various marginalized population groups, such as those who reside in rural locations like Char and Haor, are more vulnerable to violence and prejudice based on their gender identity. *Hanchett (2022)* highlighted the prevalence of dowry, child marriage and other gender-based violence in Char areas. The Participatory Gender Analysis report of SHOUHARDO III, (CARE Bangladesh, n.d.) also documented prevalence of different forms of gender-based violence, such as physical violence, psychological, economic; sexual violence and child marriages.

However, according to the CARE Bangladesh Report (CARE Bangladesh, 2022), the frequency and consistency of physical, verbal, and mental gender-based violence has reduced to some extent in Char and Haor areas. The report further noted prevalence of dowry, but in a new form—giving expensive gifts.

### **3.2 Scenario of gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity**

#### **Gender roles and division of labor**

The study team looked into the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and at community to understand the prevailing gender roles and division of labor, differing needs and aspirations of women and men, changes in recent years, and identify the factors that contributed to such changes.

The study found all respondents unanimously sharing that women play primary roles in domestic reproductive works, like taking care of children and the elderly, doing household chores like cooking, fetching water, cleaning the house, etc. Besides, men and women groups also shared that women are more or less engaged in rearing cattle, and poultry, gathering fodder for cattle, homestead gardening, etc. Conversely, men perform the main role as the breadwinners of the family and are engaged in income-generating work that includes agricultural work, fishing, small business, riding rickshaw vans, working in brick kilns, or as day laborers, etc. Girls in the FGDs in both Char and Haor areas mentioned of helping their mother in cooking, mopping, taking care of the elderly, cleaning the house, washing dishes, and doing the mother's work when she is sick or not at home. The study also found

some cases in both Char and Haor areas where boys shared that they help their mother with household work, which indicates that they are applying what they learned from the training sessions of the SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity. This indicates that usually youth follow the trend they see in the family: girls help in mothers' work, and boys are more into fathers' role and outdoor assistance. However, men in FGDs in both Char and Haor areas mentioned of helping women in household works and looking after children at home. Also, a case was found where women are engaged in works traditionally seen as men's work. For example, two poor women (widows) in Tahirpur, Sunamganj reared 200 cows in the village, which is traditionally men's jobs.

### ***Involvement of women and men in livelihood activities***

When it comes to involvement in livelihood activities, the study found that both women and men of SHOUHARDO III Plus beneficiaries are involved in multiple livelihood activities, for example- men in agricultural work, working in brick kilns, driving etc. and women are in tailoring, selling cloths and/or surplus of harvest from homestead garden, cattle or poultry produce. The study also found women beneficiaries saving money through the VSLAs. These altogether contribute to family income and savings, and make them resilient in overcoming any crisis in general; particularly for women to have self-confidence and self-worth and to be valued in the family and in the society, and increased participation in household decision-making. In this connection, women in Gaibandha and Sunamganj shared that they save money together and can take loan in their crisis period.

It is worth mentioning, the study found a clear distinction between the types of income generating work for women and men, as women's income-generating activities are mainly home-based works, such as homestead gardening, and tailoring. The study reaffirms the findings of the Gender Analysis Study SHOUHARDO III as well as the macro scenario of gender division of labor in household tasks, as well as segregation of labor within the paid work. However, the study found the women LSPs in different areas are providing services as PCSBA, Sanchay Sathi, Vaccinator etc. According to CARE Bangladesh documentation, there are currently 795 women LSPs in SHOUHARDO III Plus working areas out of a total of 2352 LSPs facilitated by the project. The study respondents recognized their services as beneficial to the community, and their activities are well accepted in both Char and Haor areas. In view of a man in Sunamganj, "There is a woman LSP in our village who works as a vaccinator. All accepts her activities positively."

The study found that women are also involved in crop production; particularly they undertake all post-harvesting activities, such as husking, drying, processing, and preservation. Agricultural Extension Officer in Jamalpur confirmed this and said that in reality both women and men together do agricultural work, women may not engage in field-based works, but they remain involved in harvesting and post-harvesting works. This is to be mentioned that the SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity also trained program participants on homestead production where 90% of them are women. This allowed them to meet the family's needs and the surplus added additional income for her family. Many of the women adopted homestead production, poultry rearing, or duck farming. However, women are not usually expected or allowed to work in agricultural fields or outside home unless with their husbands or other male family members as helpers; or as day laborers for weeding, harvesting crops, or lighter tasks. This was echoed by a woman in Islampur, Jamalpur during an IDI, as she said, *"Women here do not work that much in the agricultural field; they only sow the seeds. Men plough the land. Men do the heavy work; women do the light work."*

The exception to common trend was noted, where FGD respondents in both Char and Haor areas informed that single mothers work in agricultural fields when in need; women laborers are engaged when there are labor crises, and wages are high for male laborers, and when there are emergencies like the probability of washing away of the crops due to floods. Also, a woman in Sunamganj mentioned the case of women-headed households, saying that women who do not have husbands must do their own work, and no one prevents them.

### ***Different needs and interests of women and men***

With regard to the needs of women and men, the study respondents shared that women have specific practical needs than men, such as the requirement of additional supplementary food for women and adolescent girls, facilities for menstrual health and hygiene management, toilet facilities at public places, etc.

Deeply influenced by gender-biased norms and beliefs, women and men also have different interests and aspirations on livelihood. The findings revealed that women are more interested in tailoring, embroidery work, home-based small business, cattle and vegetable growing, etc. Contrarily, men are interested in outgoing work, driving, house wiring, mobile repairing, etc. For their work, women need seeds, fertilizer, and technical knowledge on homestead gardening and marketing their produce, whereas men need inputs and knowledge on field-level agricultural production. As an exception, one woman in Gaibandha viewed that there is a need for increased employment for women outside of the home. There will be no progress being confined to home.

Regarding equal wages for women and men laborers in agriculture, while few respondents denied the existence of gender-based wage discrimination, the majority of the respondents in all study areas (both women and men) admitted the existing unequal wages for women and men. This is also affirmed by a CARE study ([CARE Bangladesh, 2022](#)). (The common causes of lower wages for women laborers as shared by the respondents are- women are weak; women do lighter works; women can't bargain, dire need of work etc. The wage disparity is also mention in Jamalpur, where boys said that women earn half the wages of men. If men get 500 taka daily, women get 250 taka. They get less as they are compelled to work. So, employers pay less.

The prevailing gender stereotypes found in the study are briefly presented below. The opinions came from both Char and Haor areas.

Prevailing gender stereotypes
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- Women are weak
- Women cannot take decisions
- Women are subordinate to men
- Women cannot do equal works as men
- Men can beat wives; since they provide maintenance
- Young women are impatient

Box 1: *Prevailing gender stereotypes*

### **Positive changes in sharing household works and nutritional practices**

Nonetheless, the study found positive changes in both Char and Haor areas in sharing household works, and in food and nutrition practices amongst the beneficiary groups. Both female and male respondents in IDIs, FGDs, and interviews with community leaders disclosed that now men also perform household tasks and care work, such as fetching water, washing dishes, bathing children, looking after children, etc. They claimed that such changes are the cumulative effects of SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity and previous phases of the SHOUHARDO program, such as meetings with the men and boys groups, couple dialogues, joint meetings with sister-in-law and mothers-in-law, and opportunities for women to involve in livelihood activities, and homestead gardening.

Notwithstanding the changes, women still handle the majority of caregiving and household duties. In the view of the female respondents in Sunamganj, men now, on average, spend 1-2 hours in a day in household work, whereas women spend almost all the day in household work. Women in FGD in Gaibandha said that we, women, do two shares, and men do one share of the total household work. In this regard, one respondent (woman, in Gaibandha) in an IDI said that women undertake 60-70 percent of household responsibilities. Another IDI participant (woman) in Sunamganj said that she has to do more physical labor, and cannot take rest. Yet, women respondents in general take it as a good start.

However, there has not been much changes in the proposition that 'household works are the women's job'. Both male and female respondents were found to be very used to and accepting it as normal that they (women) have to equally manage all the household work and other work involving visiting public spaces and doing income-generating work.

Nevertheless, the study indicated increased awareness of the nutritional needs of pregnant and lactating mothers and adolescent girls among both women and men beneficiaries as shared during FGDs, and IDIs with PLW and their husbands. Many respondents could specifically mention the need to take iron tablets and folic acids in adolescent girls and the requirements for four times checkups and two hours of rest for pregnant women. The study respondents overwhelmingly admitted the changes in the nutritional intake by the pregnant and lactating women, with some exceptions where respondents shared that though they now rear poultry and cattle, they cannot always consume them. Women respondents in Sunamganj shared that now husbands and mothers-in-law proactively ask pregnant and lactating mothers to take more food and forbid doing heavy work for pregnant women.

During an IDI, a man in Sunamganj said, “During pregnancy, girls become physically and mentally weak, so they need extra care. My family and I helped my wife when she was pregnant. I arranged nutritious food for her. I have taken care not to let her do the heavy work.”

However, some respondents in FGDs and KIs shared stigma around adolescent to discuss reproductive health issues and elderly women opposing for going through check-up during pregnancy and for institutional delivery. Highlighting the contributions of SHOUHARDO, the respondents mentioned different SHOUHARDO activities, such as training and awareness sessions, as the factors for changes in their knowledge and awareness on nutritional needs. However, their experience is that economic hardship and price hike of essential commodities make it difficult to translate the learning into practice. For example, in view of a female FGD participant in Jamalpur, ‘though we grow vegetables, produce eggs; we give the children first, and then we also have to sell.’ Also, there are still gaps in awareness and sensitivity about the nutritional needs and care of pregnant women, children, and adolescent girls, particularly among the non-beneficiaries of the SHOUHARDO program.

### **3.2.2 Access to public spaces, services, and opportunities**

The gender analysis study attempted to understand the experiences of women and men in navigating different public spaces and accessing different services and opportunities as an important domain of women’s empowerment. Through FGDs with men, women, boys, and girls, and in PRA of the Venn diagram, the study found both women and men visiting the local market, dispensaries, schools, madrasas, hospitals, agriculture office, livestock office, fisheries office, bank, and local NGO offices located at the village, union, upazila and district levels. The places to visit in the Char and Haor areas appeared to be similar.

The respondents from both women and men categories shared that they now have better access to different offices including UP, livestock hospital, agriculture office, community clinics, etc. as also has been revealed in Participant Based Survey (PaBS) 2023 conducted by the SHOUHARDO III Plus program. They further shared that they now have the courage to speak up, and VDC members and SHOUHARDO staff members help, provide information, and connect with the respective offices.

The VD exercises revealed that women frequently visit nearby places to avail of services at the village or at the union level, rather than Upazila and district level. Women usually go to public places to access health services, and men go to access agricultural services. According to KIs with government officials from the agriculture department in Char areas, few women come to agriculture offices at upazila level. They usually take services from the field-level extension officers.

However, social support networks, such as VDCs, LSPs of different categories like Vaccinators, PCSBSA, Seed Agent, Sanchay Sathi and Vegetables Collectors nowadays facilitate easy access to different services on maternal and child health, agriculture production and marketing, livestock and poultry rearing. While facilitating FGD in Jamalpur, women respondents said that the seed agent sells good quality seeds, and there is a collector in their area who collects the vegetables. So, women don’t need to go to market for sale. Similar views were shared by the women in Sunamganj. According to them, it is easier to obtain various services locally through LSPs like PCSBA, Seed Agent,

Vaccinator, and Sanchay Sathi rather than visiting union and upazila offices. However, the respondents in some areas felt the need for more LSPs in their areas, such as men in Austagram shared the lack of LSPs in seed selling in their area. On the other hand, during an IDI, a female respondent in Jamalpur shared that there are fewer female LSPs than male LSPs in their areas.

**On the use of technology by women and adoption of sustainable agriculture,** the study found that women now use advanced technology like mobile phones, improved varieties of seeds, agriculture inputs, organic fertilizers, modern technology for watering plants, using pesticides, etc. They know about modern agricultural technologies like planting vegetables in seedbeds, using high-yielding varieties, and early varieties, using integrated pest management techniques, adequate pesticide and fertilizer management, etc. Now, they are also familiar with using different mobile applications like Fosholi, Krishoker Janala, Daktar Apa, and other applications. The study also found women who are comparatively well-off are using gas stoves, ceiling fans, fridges, etc., at home. On the other hand, men use modern technology like power tillers, pesticides, good quality seeds, and cultivation methods in agriculture.

The study respondents shared that the provision of LSPs, like vaccinators, seed sellers, and ICT champions, various trainings organized by the Department of Agriculture, etc., contributed hugely to enabling women to use technology in their work. Women respondents spontaneously shared about using different hotline numbers and even phone numbers of local agriculture extension officers to get information and advice. During a KII discussion, Upazila Livestock Officer in Islampur, Jamalpur, shared that now, women also call us for information on livestock issues. Women respondents in both Char and Haor areas shared about smartphone apps that benefit them. Though all do not have smartphones, they get information and assistance in solving agricultural problems through neighbors and ICT champions which demonstrates the usefulness of introducing ICT support for the project participants.

Likewise, one PCSBA in Dowarabazar shared her view about the benefit of using technology, saying that **'After joining KUZA, an online learning platform facilitated by SHOUHRDO III Plus, I can now identify the gaps in my business. I now know how to do things better. I learned that there is the need for planning to do business.'**

### **3.2.3 Access and ownership of assets and resources**

The participants of Access and Control Profile (PRA) exercises mentioned markets, schools, hospitals, mosques, madrasas, and so on as community resources, and cows, goats, chickens, furniture, TVs, fridges, land, and trees as family resources. They identified and stated that women own jewelry, sewing machines, chickens, ducks, etc., whereas men own the land, houses, livestock, and other fixed assets. The study respondents from all four locations revealed similar findings on ownership of assets and resources. Women in Jamalpur shared that husband and son are the owners of land property; women are the owners of poultry and livestock; when husbands are away, women become owners temporarily. Similarly, FGD participants' (boys) in Austagram shared that men are

the owners of the family assets, yet women usually control the domestic assets like chickens and ducks.

The study found that ownership and access to assets and resources are very much associated with the division of labor and roles and responsibilities. For instance, as the study revealed, women own gold ornaments, and sewing machines whereas men own land, livestock, etc. However, jewelry, the women 'own' are gifts from father or in-law families and is used in times of need of the family, as some mentioned in mixed group discussions at PRA. The study, however, revealed that in a few cases, land is purchased in the name of women depending on the wish of the husband. FGD of men in Austagram shared that though very less in numbers, some men purchase land in their wives' names.

Despite the ownership of men to valuable assets like land and homestead, several women respondents in FGDs and IDIs shared that both women and men equally access the family assets, and their husbands discuss with them about important issues regarding, usage, sale, and management of the assets. This positive trend of joint access and control has also been indicated in the exercises on access and control profile that indicates the outcome of SHOUHARDO III Plus interventions in the community.

### 3.2.4 Participation in household decision-making

With response to the question on household decision-making, overwhelming responses from FGDs, IDIs and KIIs with the community respondents revealed that both women and men discuss and takes decisions on family matters. Common responses from the different stakeholders inform that now husband and wife take decisions jointly, and in cases where elderly members are in the family, they take part in family decision-making. The study indicates the practice of joint decision making in the areas of income, expenditure, family planning, children's education, medical costs, food distribution, and crop cultivation. An IDI respondent (man) in Kishoreganj said, 'we take decisions on family matters jointly', similarly another man in Gaibandha shared, 'my wife and I together take decisions on important family matters'. However, some men and boys shared that men as the head of the family take decisions, though issues are discussed with women. An IDI respondent (man) in Gaibandha said, 'men take decisions on income-expenditure issues, but women are asked for opinions.'

The study noted positive changes where women take part in family decision-makings as also highlighted above. The study also found that the scope has been increased for women to share views and opinions on the issues considered to be the men's agenda like land, bid purchase, and selling of assets, though ultimately men take decisions. This has been echoed in the opinion of a woman in Jamalpur; she said, 'taking decisions by men is good. I give advice. So, he becomes happy.'

According to the respondents, increased participation of women in household decision-making has been possible due to various activities of NGOs, particularly the SHOUHARDO Program. More importantly, women respondents shared that they now earn money and brought prosperity to the family by earning money, so their views are valued in the family.

### **3.2.5 Awareness of rights and participation in public decision-making**

With regard to awareness of rights, the study found various responses indicating both practical and strategic needs of individuals. The boys and girls mentioned the set of issues, which are relevant for their growth and development. These include right to education, health, nutritious food, shelter, recreation, and right to express opinion. During some of the FGDs with girls and boys, it is found that the activities and involvement with SHOUHARDO has created their awareness of rights. On the other hand, men's ideas of rights are very broad and connected to strategic needs, such as right to vote, right to protest etc. Women's responses to their ideas about rights are very detailed and specific to their particular situations. They mentioned the right to equal treatment (non-discrimination), the right to property, right to take decision etc.

#### **Women's participation in different public forum**

The decision-making forums in the community mentioned at different discussions are Shanchay Shathi, LSP, Youth Group, Disaster Management Committee, School Committee, VSLA, VDC, Women groups, Girls' Forum. Also, there are Bazar Committee, Mosque Committee, Community Clinic Committee, Madrassa Committee, adolescent groups, UP, etc., for taking decisions on public interest.

Women respondents in the FGDs mentioned that women participate in most of the committees in the community, except in mosques, temples and bazaar. According to a woman in Kishoreganj, there are less women in leadership of different public committees; women are not in the committees for mosques and temples. However, there are women in leadership positions in VDC and VSLAs. Moreover, there are women's participation in all groups facilitated by SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity. The study found some very vocal women acting as VDC leaders, and Shanchay Sathis. These leaders are accepted in general by the community members. As the respondents shared, some women from VDCs are already in different standing committees of UP. However, according to men's view, the participation of women is much less; also, though some officially hold positions, they do exert not much influence. Also, the women's groups inform that women's participation in village mediation is absent.

#### **Enabling factors for women's participation in public decision making**

The enabling factors for the positive changes seen around women's participation in public decision-making forums are the mobilization of the community groups and women's inclusion in these groups; training and other support provided from SHOUHARDO. It was obvious that women's mobility through LSPs and the forums, the income—whatever the amount they make, and the men's motivation from specific involvements in SHOUHARDO has made positive changes in the area of women's involvement in public decision-making forums.

#### **Community perception of women's participation in public decision-making**

When it comes to community perception of women's participation in public decision making, there is an overall improvement. In general, people accept the changes and feel good, as these are beneficial. However, some men take women's participation in public forum negatively. Some women shared

that few people in the community say bad words about women participating in different public bodies. Some criticize lending money with interest, and says, women moving around is a sin. Men respondents in Jamalpur said that there is less participation of women in the public forums. We give less importance to women's views. However, praising women's role, men in Sunamganj shared different views. In their views, women are cordial, and they play better role in different public forums.

### 3.2.6 Prevalence of gender-based violence (GBV)

This section tried to capture the perception of the respondents about GBV including the causes and consequences; and current scenario of different types of GBV; and available mechanisms to report, respond, and prevent GBV in the study areas.

With regard to the question on the understanding of GBV, the women and male respondents generally mentioned the following: fighting between and among spouses, mothers-in-law, abusive comments, physical and mental abuse, disrespecting women, ignorance of opinions, preventing going out, ceasing to speak, claiming dowry, child marriage, and emotional abuse. They also referred to not providing food/maintenance, beating by husband, mental abuse by husband and in-laws, treating wife as domestic help, keeping wife under constant pressure, economic abuse, harassment, and polygamy as the GBV. During FGD, the adolescent girls in Gaibandha also shared about child abuse by uncles and grandfathers as gender-based violence.

The study found that all categories of respondents (women, men, boys and girls) are well aware of the immediate causes and consequences of different forms of GBV. The common causes of GBV, as shared by different categories of respondents, are- financial crisis, addiction among men, treating women as weak, the poor financial status of the father's family, moral decay due to financial starvation, considering girls as a burden for the family, dowry, child marriage, etc. In view of the respondents, child marriage, dowry, and polygamy lead to fights and chaos in the family.

The study finds a decreasing trend in GBV, as almost all the respondents in the study areas responded that the rate of GBV has reduced now. Economic solvency of the people and greater knowledge and awareness of the consequences of GBV have been shared as the two major contributing factors to the reduction of GBV. However, despite saying that child marriage has been reduced, the respondents shared the prevalence of child marriage, dowry and sexual harassment in public places as ongoing concerns in their communities.

As also highlighted previously, though child marriage has decreased substantially, it is still prevalent. And discussions with various respondents suggest that the prevalence of child marriage is higher in Char than in Haor. Discussion with both boys and girls in Jamalpur areas makes it evident that the girls are married off before the age of 18 years in Char areas.

A KII respondent (teacher) in Shaghta, Gaibandha said, “Child marriage still exists. I remember when the girls were admitted in the sixth standard, there were 130 girl students in that batch. Today, I came to the farewell and found 26 girl candidates for SSC exam. Most of them are already married off. It happens every year.”

Conversely, the respondents in Sunamganj vehemently denied the occurrences of child marriages in their areas, indicating the lower incidence of child marriage in Haor areas. During FGD, girls in



Dowarabazar, Sunamganj shared that, girls in these communities typically get married between the ages of 18 and 20. Also, boys in Mithamoin, Kishoreganj shared that, along with the UP representatives and VDC members, they protest child marriages at the very planning stage.

However, respondents in both Char and Haor areas mentioned that child marriage now takes place secretly, taking bride to another village, arranging false birth certificates, and court marriages (affidavits by the lawyers), elopement (love affair marriage), where underage boys and girls get married by themselves.

Regarding dowry, the respondents primarily expressed two different types of opinions: first, that dowry still exists in its original form when the groom party demands a certain amount as a condition of marriage; second, that the daughters' parents give gifts to their daughters because it is important for the daughters' happiness and family's reputation. The study reaffirms the already established fact that both dowry and child marriage has taken a cultural root in Bangladesh. A beneficiary of SHOUHARDO shared that she is saving money for the marriage of her granddaughter. While asking why she needs money for marriage, she continued by saying that dowry is very common here; even if the boy is a van driver, they demand 2 lakh takas. During an FGD, men in Kishoreganj viewed that no one will marry girls without dowry. Sometimes, they give dowry secretly. Parents take loans to pay dowry because girls cannot be kept at home.

Overall, the community people have knowledge on GBV, causes and consequences. Those associated with different forums facilitated by SHOUHARDO are more aware, and they take steps to protest and stop child marriage, and make people understand about dowry and other violence issues. And, in response to a question on reporting, response and prevention mechanisms, the study found different common reporting and response mechanisms used in the study areas, which include informing local UP representatives, local matabbars, calling 999 or 1090 hotline numbers, etc. In case of child marriage, they shared about reporting and response through engaging the Upazila Women Affairs Officer, etc. In extreme cases, they also shared about calling the police and resorting to a formal court system. The study also found accessing both government legal aid offices and non-government legal aid organizations like Friendship and BRAC. The study found that local VDC leaders play important role in reporting and responding to GBV cases, and in stopping child marriages. The respondents also recognized the role of the Girls' Forum and Male Champions in making community people aware on GBV issues, and on child marriages. While sharing the role of Male Champions, women in Kishoreganj said that Male Champions discuss about the importance of women's participation in decision making, consequences of GBV with the men and boys etc.

However, KIs with the project personnel in both Char and Haor areas informed that since Male Champions were selected during last phase, they attended trainings during that time. Though they get on job support from the field staff of the project, there were no opportunity for group interaction of the Male Champions since then. In some places, they are less motivated. Interaction with the field staff in Sunamganj shared that sometimes field staff is to facilitate the session instead of the Male Champions. Interviews with the project personnel at the field level also disclosed that in some cases, peer leaders of the Girl's Forum have dropped out, and thus new peer leaders need to be recruited and provided with training. The study found the Girls' Forum members in some places with low level of understanding about rights and motivation to run the Girls' Forum, where in some place's girls shared their role spontaneously, and aspired to include other girls in their forums.

### **3.3 Barriers of gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity**

This sub-section presents the findings of the study on the barriers and challenges to gender equality and women's empowerment. It organizes the findings under different domains, such as gender roles and division of labor, access to public services and opportunities, access and ownership to assets and resources, participation in decision-making and the elimination of GBV.

#### **3.3.1 Gender roles and division of labor**

As shared by both female and male respondents, the reasons for divisions of labor between women and men are long years of practice, societal expectations, social norms, social and religious barriers for women working outside, a mindset of viewing women as weak and capable of doing only the household work, and a lack of awareness. This reflection of the respondents suggests that traditional mindset and gender-stereotyped social norms and beliefs rooted in patriarchal systems are the main causes for the gender division of labor both in households and in paid jobs.

Not defying these standards is linked to peer pressure and a lack of awareness and sensitivity regarding gender equality. Girls in Sunamganj said that women work at home and men work outside because of long standing social customs. On the other hand, boys in Kishoreganj shared about social criticism faced by woman working outside.

#### **Involvement of women and men in livelihood activities**

Discussions with men and women informed that lack of land, capital, employment opportunities, lack of education, knowledge, skills, and communication systems are the common barriers for men and women to engage in livelihood activities in Char and Haor areas. However, women face additional barriers to engaging in livelihood activities, such as restricted mobility, lack of family support, social restriction and criticism to work outside, double pressure maintaining household works and childcare work or time poverty, risk of harassment/sexual harassment, religious conservativeness, etc. During the FGD session with men in Gaibandha, they mentioned that there is a challenge for women working in the agricultural fields or any other works outside home. Describing the social barriers, they shared that some people in the community will criticize the husband saying that his wife works in the field.

On the other hand, multiple challenges that women face while engaging in livelihood activities were evident during an IDI with a woman in Kishoreganj, who is involved in diverse livelihood activities, such as rearing chickens and ducks, tailoring, selling clothes, and cultivating vegetables. She highlighted the burden of the double role played by women. She said, 'It becomes difficult to go to buy clothes for the business keeping the baby unattended, and also get late in starting the business work due to household work.'

Several respondents from both Char and Haor areas identified the societally enforced standards of modesty for women and the inviolability of the dress code preventing women from doing certain tasks in farming. In their views, 'women can't sow the plants, cut the paddy plants, as the traditional method of cutting requires bowing down the body that infringes modesty/women's dress decorum.' During FGDs in Gaibandha, men said that sometimes religious views prevent women from participating in agriculture.

Though religious leaders who have attended meetings of SHOUHARDO are found to have somewhat positive attitudes about women's engagement in livelihood activities, religion plays an



important role in restraining women working outside. A religious leader at Bakshiganj, Jamalpur expressed his extreme regret about the negative consequences of women who earn money. In his view, **'women who work outside and earn money transcend their husband's power. Therefore, it is preferable not to do jobs by women if it results in disobeying husbands.'** Another religious leader in Gaibandha compared women with a tube inside a wheel demonstrating the patriarchal ideology of undermining women's distinct identity. In his view, **"The wheel of the car is the male, and the tube inside is the female. Now if the tube wants to come out above the wheel, what else to do? Let it come out."**

Religious barriers to women's mobility were also reflected during an interview with a religious leader in Kishoreganj. He said that Islam asks women to maintain veiling. In his view, women face criticism for not maintaining the veil. He further said that he advised women to obey their husbands and practice modesty.

**With regard to wage discrimination between women and men laborers in agriculture,** the common causes mentioned are, women are weak; women do light work, and get less wage; women lack bargaining capacity; dire need of work; etc. However, some women shared, we are thought to be weak, though in reality women work more. A Community Leader (Woman) in Austagram said, **'We don't get equal wage, despite we do same work parallel to men. Comparatively, women do not do less than men. However, wages are different. This is the custom'** As a reflection of patriarchal beliefs and exploitation of women, several respondents in both Char and Haor areas said that women get less wages because they are women.

### **3.3.2 Access to public spaces, services, and opportunities**

Study respondents shared different challenges and barriers for both women and men in accessing services from different government and non-government offices. These are distance, lack of communication and transport facilities, particularly during the monsoon, cost of transportation, inadequate services, and negligence by the service providers. Respondents in both Char and Haor areas shared about the non-responsiveness of the UP, corruption and nepotism as the barriers for accessing services from UP. The adolescent respondents shared that youth get less importance and sometimes need money in getting service from UP. The girls' group in Jamalpur also shared of long queue in Upazila hospitals and dirty toilets as the problems.

FGD participants (women) in Sunamganj shared that despite knowing, because of distance not fit for walking, high transportation cost for an engine boat, and other associated costs, they cannot send girls to the upazila and district to take part in the training organized by the Department of Women Affairs. It is not easy to communicate with different government, non-governmental, and private sector offices during the monsoon season in the Haor and Char area.

In addition to the barriers in general, women face particular gender-specific barriers to health and livelihood purposes, amongst others. These include religious conservativeness, societal disapproval of women's mobility, lack of safety and security, and fear of sexual violence, social gossiping, character assassination of women who go to public spaces, and difficulty in managing household works and childcare work, lack of public transport and unavailability of toilet facilities at public spaces etc. KII with the national level stakeholders, also shared similar views on women's challenges in navigating public spaces and highlighted that transport services are not gender responsive. There is a lack of

security in public places. Respondents also shared the risk of violence against women and girls during floods. During an IDI in Gaibandha, the woman respondent shared that young women are at risk of abuse when using toilets and bathrooms during floods.

While sharing barriers to access to services, a woman respondent in Sunamganj said, 'I went to the union office to enlist my name in learning tailoring but, I have not received any benefits so far. No permission is needed, but I need to manage time to go after family work according to convenience.'

In terms of religious conservativeness, the study indicated more prevalence of religious restriction on women's mobility and working outside in Char areas than Haor. Girls in Gaibandha shared that society considers that girls and women must maintain the veil. They will be spoiled if they go out of the home. Another man in Gaibandha said that men can wear any type of dress, but women have to wear religious dress. Men respondents in FGD in Gaibandha said that women now can go everywhere, but they should cover their bodies including their faces. Similar views were shared by men in Jamalpur. In their views, it is a sin as per Islamic Sharia to go outside without wearing a burka. On the other hand, a discussion with the project personnel in Kishoreganj indicated that religious conservativeness is less in Haor areas. Men respondents in Kishoreganj shared that women used to maintain veils in the past, but now they can go to different places when men are away, and religious restrictions on women's mobility are not that visible.

With regard to the services of female LSPs, though they do not face any such social barriers in providing services in the community, some respondents shared communication barriers for women LSPs. In view of a male LSP in Gaibandha, we all are LSPs, there is no difference in our work. We, both women and men do the same job. However, men can go anywhere anytime to provide services, but women cannot go alone any time. There was also mention of restrictions on women riding bicycles in need, limiting women's ability to move.

An IDI participant in Kishoreganj said that though there is no explicit restriction on women doing business at local markets, people will criticize if a woman runs business at a formal marketplace. This discourages women in involving business. Women in both Char and Haor areas highlighted the limitation of women's movement at night as a barrier. In view of women in Sunamganj, men can do business at night as well, but women must come back by evening, despite the fact that evening is the pick hour for business.

The study found somewhat different perceptions of men about women's access to services and opportunities. Some of the male respondents cannot see any challenge for women in going to public spaces and accessing services, whereas some view that women now get more services than men do. A man in Austagram, Kishoreganj made a striking comment, '**women going outside home is the idea of emptying the pockets of men.**' Some men also don't see the necessity for women going outside the home, as there are men who do the outside work for women. Men still perceive a negative mindset about women going to public places, indicating male supremacy over women and denial of women's agency and autonomy.

Further on this, according to an IDI of HPLW in Austagram, Kishoreganj, women sell their produce at home; they do not need to go to the marketplace; if women need to buy or sell anything, men do it for women. Another man in Jamalpur said that we get the things for women, and in case they need to go to marketplaces, we take them with us. The study noted that women now go to the market to purchase things, which many referred to as an increase in women's mobility. Conversely, women selling stuff from a formal marketplace is still an alien concept, with some rare exceptions, particularly

when mobility restriction is relaxed for women-headed households, as shared by women beneficiaries in all four study areas.

### **Requirement of permission**

On the question of permission, with few exceptions, women and men respondents said that women need permission to go outside for any purpose. One woman beneficiary in Gaibandha shared, ‘no such permission is required. However, we share the information. Like my husband knows, I am now in the SHOUHARDO program. I tell them, so that they don’t worry.’ Few women in Haor areas also shared similar views. However, for others, husbands and mothers-in-law’s permission is needed.’ Both elderly and young women need permission for going outside, but young women and girls need permission more, particularly because of safety and security concerns as apprehension of harassment on the way or other places is one of their main concerns. According to few respondents, permission is relaxed for the elderly women. According to a woman in Jamalpur, women need permission from husband for going outside because husband is there as guardian.

Interestingly, none of the respondents from the beneficiary groups shared the requirement of permission for women as a barrier in going outside for different services; rather they view the current situation as better than earlier when SHOUHARDO first came in their communities. In their views, during the early years of SHOUHARDO interventions, husbands would not allow their wives to attend meetings. Now, their husbands allow them to go to different meetings.

One community leader (Man) in Sunamganj said that there is nothing wrong with taking permission. It is better to tell ahead where one is going. Women in our area take permission from the head of the family before going anywhere, be it office, court or hospital.

The study, however, noted some diverse views from the male respondents that indicates the persistent role of hierarchical power structure influenced by gender biased norms and patriarchal values is regulating women’s movement and access to services and opportunities. To quote responses of few men reflecting the patriarchal power dynamism, ‘**permission is needed. I will give permission after deciding both good and bad sides of the issue. I will not disallow first, but I have to understand**’; ‘**we do not allow women to go outside due to fear of social criticism**’. Similar to male respondents, women are also found in perceiving patriarchal values. During discussions, few women shared that it is an obligation to inform and take permission, it is about showing respect to husband, as the husband remains above head [as shadow or protection].

**Regarding the barriers faced by women in use of technology, and adoption of sustainable agricultural practices by women,** immediate responses of almost all the respondents were that women also can equally use technology, and no such barrier for them to use technology and adoption of the sustainable agriculture. However, further digging down during the conversation it revealed that lack of land property, lack of affordability to purchase equipment, such as android mobile, weeder, tractor; lack of interest as well as confidence of the women in using technologies; lack of knowledge and training about the advanced technology are the common barriers for women in using technology. Several KII respondents indicated the role of gender stereotyped beliefs about women’s

capability and social acceptance for women using technology, and absence of women friendly technology as the barriers for women in using technology. For example, it is believed that women are not physically and mentally capable of using power tiller, weeder etc. A woman in Jamalpur said that women can not apply fertilizer, men do this work better. Women cannot use heavy weight technology like Rice Thresher Machine as women do not have physical strength like men. Women in Gaibandha shared disapproval of the husband and flooding as the barriers for women in using technology.

However, the study found a close connection between use of technology and sustainable agricultural practices and the gendered division of labor and women's participation in household decision-making. For instance, women's engagement is predominantly in small scale homestead gardening. Several KII respondents in this connection shared that existing support systems are not favorable to women in agriculture. The system and services are not supportive for small-scale farming, for example- fertilizer with small packets are not available, though seeds are now available in small number, even there is not specified measurement for using fertilizers and pesticides for the small-scale farming, directed measurements are in decimal (sotangoso), said a KII respondent in Dhaka.

An FGD participant (woman) in Gaibandha shared, “The technology that is used in farming, such as rice threshing machines is available to the rich and not to the poor.”

### **3.3.3 Access and ownership of assets and resources**

The study revealed a number of interconnected barriers for women's lack of access and ownership to assets. These include gender-biased inheritance system, traditional gender norms to give up women's share of inheritance to brothers, lack of women's engagement in income-earning activities, lack of adequate income to save and accumulate assets, and limited awareness of the importance of asset ownership for women. Women respondents in Sunamganj shared that ‘though we save, savings are not enough for purchasing assets, and we save to spend on our children’. Other causes for women's lack of ownership to assets include limited property of natal families, practice of substituting women's share of inheritance with the wedding expenses and dowry, traditional norms of responsibility of the sons to take care of the parents in their old age, misconceptions of religious (Islamic) provisions. Several respondents viewed that women get less share as they inherit from both husband and father, and men inherit only from father, a misinformation about inheritance system in Muslim laws. A woman in Kishoreganj shared the discriminatory inheritance system under Hindu laws. In her view, women belonging to Hindu religion do not inherit from fathers' property, though they inherit from mother.

Despite knowing of equal rights, benefits, and strength of money, women generally are found less interested in ownership of the assets and resources. Still women tend to find their existence in the husband, in the children, instead of independent existence as individuals with distinct rights and opportunities. Men as well as women perceive that women lack knowledge and are not capable of understanding land ownership issues.

**A woman respondent in Jamalpur shared that, “Husband is our guardian, stay over our head/ is our shade. We don’t need more power. Let men be the owners of the things.”**

**In contrast, some women were found frustrated about the harsh reality of women’s lives. In view of a woman in Gaibandha, ‘It has been going on for ages. We want to be equal. We are also our father’s children, why should we get less?’**

### **3.3.4 Participation in household decision-making**

The common barriers, as shared by the respondents, are the traditional mindset of treating women as incapable of making decisions, undervaluing women’s opinions, lack of knowledge and awareness among women of their rights and capability, and hierarchical power structure where men are the head of the family. Women respondents shared that, men do not value women, women are viewed as less significant when it comes to making decisions and expressing opinions; they are perceived as weak and unappreciated; families often struggle with whether or not to accept female opinions due to lack of confidence on women’s capability of taking decisions. Women in Sunamganj shared that women are ill-prepared to do so; voicing opinion is a burden for women when making decisions apprehending that if the outcome of the decision is bad, then women will be blamed. These barriers to women’s participation in household decisions are deeply associated with the gender-biased patriarchal values where men are considered authority over women.

Boys in Jamalpur shared that women have less interest in family decision-making, and women belonging to educated families can exercise more rights in decision-making. On the other hand, boys in Kishoreganj shared that lack of involvement in income-generating activities and social customs are the two barriers to women’s participation in household decision-making. The most important barrier in women’s decision-making at the household level is her value, which can be raised with education and income, thought found in Jamalpur. During an IDI, one woman in Jamalpur (Bakhshiganj) emphasized the importance of education and economic self-reliance to enhance women’s status in the family and the community.

### **3.3.5 Awareness of rights and participation in public decision-making**

The study found gaps in knowledge and understanding of women’s rights and underlying causes of gender discrimination and deprivation of their rights. Women were found sharing contradictory views- like in contrast to views that we have equal rights, we are also human beings, they shared – that men have more rights; permission is needed for women to go outside, etc.

Barriers to women’s participation in public decision-making range from family restrictions to community restrictions. Family restrictions, women’s lack of interest, time constraints after taking care of all household matters, obstacles created by local male leaders, the belief that women are not needed there, the refusal of pious and religious people and Maulanas to accept women’s participation in public forums, and approval or disapproval from husbands, brothers, or sons to engage in public activities are some of the commonly mentioned barriers. Women in Gaibandha said, that sometimes husbands create barriers for women participating in public activities. On the other hand, a man in Jamalpur shared that women’s participations are not valued and sometimes they are criticized for

not veiling (wearing burka). Boys in Gaibandha viewed that men get priority in community activities; it is thought that men are more capable in doing politics.

On the other hand, future participation of women is barred because of many interconnected causes including demeaning attitude of the society towards girls; lack of incentives for the parents to invest on girls' education. Many girl children are dropped out from school due to various reasons like risk of sexual harassment and abuse; child marriage; child labor; and mobility restrictions.

### **3.3.6 Prevalence of gender-based violence**

Despite the progress in reducing GBV incidents, the study finds gaps in knowledge and awareness on the root causes of violence against women, and on comprehensive knowledge and sensitivity about women's rights and gender equality among both women and men. Gender stereotyped norms, patriarchal ideologies and hierarchical power dynamics with men having complete authority over all aspects of life are prevalent in the study areas. Several women during informal discussions expressed that husbands can beat wives, if things go wrong; husbands can beat since they are the food providers. There were also views among men belittling GBV incidents terming as tiny matters of family disputes. Besides, non-disclosure of the incidents of domestic violence by the victims or survivors due to social stigma associated with violence and harassment against women has also been mentioned as a barrier in addressing GBV.

On the duty bearers' side, lack of strict implementation of laws, corruption and irregularities of service delivery institutions, lack of sensitivity of the relevant service delivery personnel about women's rights and political nepotism, and bad influence of politics etc. have been mentioned by both women and men respondents in all working areas as the barriers in addressing GBV.

The study noted the trend of elopement of the underage boys and girls as shared by the respondents from all the study areas as a concern for child marriage. While eloping can be seen as the surface level cause of child marriage, the study finds the tendency of overlooking the root causes of elopement of underage boys and girls which is linked with the lack of knowledge and awareness among adolescent boys and girls about the sexual and reproductive health rights and about the state laws on marriage. A report on youth consultation on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) needs (RHRN, 2020) emphasized the close link between low level of SRH knowledge and the increasing number of gender-based violence against child brides. According to a youth advocate of Youth's Voice, Naripokkho, "Many problems like child marriage, early pregnancy due to child marriage would have been solved if we can discuss such issues with our family." Also, while discussing the prevention of child marriage, Girls in Gaibandha said- if stern action is taken in a few cases, and all the people involved in child marriage are punished, then child marriage will automatically be stopped.



### 3.4 Good practices developed by SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity

This gender analysis has been carried out as part of the SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity. Many outcomes have been observed in the field in various domains on women's empowerment, gender equality, and overall impact under the result framework of SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity. These all are the cumulative effects of the SHOUHARDO interventions implemented under different phases started in 2006. Thus, it is quite difficult to distinguish the attributes of the SHOUHARDO III plus Activity alone. However, as also highlighted in the above sections, the study captured several good practices demonstrated by SHOUHARDO as a whole. These good practices have potential to be replicated in larger scale by any development interventions to contribute to the goal of gender equality and women's empowerment.

#### **Applying holistic approach of women's empowerment and gender equality**

Using a holistic approach that combines both economic and political empowerment aspects is crucial to bringing about noticeable changes in the area of women's position in the family and community at large. This is important considering the complex interplay between the various aspects of gender equality and the patriarchal system with its hierarchical power structure that treats women as inferior to men. According to this gender analysis study, specific interventions by SHOUHARDO Activity have a significant impact on women beneficiaries' ability to earn income. These interventions include giving sustainable support, such as training on tailoring and providing sewing machines, grant support for homestead gardening along with skill-building support for running the business successfully and making other support services, like input service for agriculture and easy marketing of their produce through LSPs, accessible. The women beneficiaries opined that they now earn, so their status has been increased at the family. They now contribute to meeting the different needs of the family both in normal times and in times of emergencies as well.

Alongside the interventions on income-generating engagement for women, SHOUHARDO Activity also included consistent interventions on raising awareness of rights and empowerment, and on prevention and protection against GBV, such as domestic violence, child marriage etc. engaging both women and girls and boys and men including the elderly of the families. The study documented changes in different interconnected domains of women's empowerment as highlighted in the previous section on study findings. For example, women beneficiaries are now involved in a variety of income-generating activities, which makes them resilient in overcoming challenging circumstances, such as expenditures for the education of the children, and sickness of the family members. Men and women beneficiaries, including the elderly and teenage boys and girls with certain exceptions, are aware of the unique needs of lactating and pregnant women as well as adolescent girls regarding the importance of consuming nutritious food, and they practice gender equitable food intake in their families as their abilities allow. The Activity also contributed to the increased mobility of women, and participation of women in family decision-making and access to assets and resources.

Women respondents in different study areas shared that since they now save money, then can easily take loan from the VSLA in their crisis period. A woman beneficiary in Jamalpur shared that due to various activities of SHOUHARDO, there are changes in different areas. These include cooperation of men in household works, joint decision making by husband and wife, increased income of the family, and enhanced self-esteem of women.

## **Strategy of engaging men and boys**

Given that in the patriarchal power structure men remain at the leadership, engagement of men and boys are widely recognized as important strategy to eliminate gender discrimination and inequality. The gender analysis study also finds the SHOUHARDO strategy of engaging men and boys yielding positive results. The study found the changes in the sharing of household responsibilities amongst the men and women beneficiaries. The study found a correlation between the relaxation of the strict restriction of women's mobility to public places that have been disclosed at the study and reducing trend of domestic violence and child marriages and the mobilization of men and boys in rights awareness and on addressing gender stereotypes by way of 'Men's Forum', 'Boys' Group' and promoting 'Male Champions'.

The main activities of the male engagement strategy implemented during the SHOUHARDO III phase included organizing teashop talk, individual counselling, organizing popular theatre and home visits to convey messaging on gender equitable practices, and influence men in the community to challenge gender-biased norms. And, SHOUHARDO III plus phase continued with strategy of 'Male Champions' who facilitate sessions on gender equal norms, particularly on sharing household works, gender equitable nutrition practices, women's participation in decision making and GBV issues as shared by the beneficiary respondents.

While the study found positive impact of men's engagement in contributing to a harmonious equal family relationship, as highlighted in the above section on study findings, the study finds lack of motivation and gap in understanding of the gender stereotypes and root causes of gender discrimination among the Male Champions. For example, while explaining the necessity of nutritious food for pregnant women, one Male Champion in Saghata compared women to the crop field, and said that there needs to be more care for pregnant women, like the crop field needs fertilizer to grow more crops.

## **Provision of local service providers (LSPs) and promoting women as local service providers (LSPs)**

The important strategy of SHOUHARDO III Plus is to introduce a service model wherein the project facilitated the introduction of local service providers such as Livestock Vaccinators, Seed Agents, Produce Collectors, Fish Fry Hawkers, Sanchay Sathi, Private Community Skilled Birth Attendants (PCSBAs), and Blue Star Providers (BSPs). The study respondents in all working areas recognized the benefit of having LSPs locally, and they spontaneously shared their experiences of how now easily they get agricultural input services, such as seeds, medicines, vaccinations, etc. and can sell their products at fair prices from home through the collectors. Women respondents particularly find it convenient for them, as it is difficult for them due to mobility issue, household works etc. to go to market or the public and private offices in getting the services.

On the other hand, the study team also met several female LSPs, some of whom are women, who mainly work as Vaccinators, Sanchay Sathi, and Private Community Skilled Birth Attendants (PCSBAs). They opined that training and other support from SHOUHARDO, particularly application-based training- KUZA contributed greatly to doing the business efficiently. In their opinions, they did



not know about the planning of the business, and how to keep records etc. An LSP in Jamalpur also shared the linkages with different government and private sector agencies as beneficial. An interview with a private bank official in Sunamganj demonstrates the outcomes of such linkages. The discussion revealed that the bank has now more than 400 female subscribers from the SHOUHARDO project who opened the account at a cost of 10 taka. Similarly, medical officer in Kishoreganj also acknowledged the activities of the PCSBAs saying that they provide door-to-door service and maintain coordination with government health officials.

The study also found that this provision of LSPs contributed to diversified income options for both women and men, in addition, promotion of women as LSPs further contributed to increase their self-confidence, and increased participation in family decision making. Since there is both supply side and demand side benefit, the LSPs are expected to continue their businesses, and some are even thinking of expanding their businesses. The gender analysis study also confirms the findings of the pilot study (CARE, 2022) where LSPs reported increased income and the ability to provide more and higher quality services in remote areas of Bangladesh.

However, though women LSPs, as shared by the respondents, do not face any such social barriers in the community, sometimes lack of communication infrastructure, transport facilities make their work challenging, and getting payment [in some cases] for their services. PCSBAs find challenges in convincing the elderly about the importance of check-up and intake of supplementary food and social stigma for adolescent girls in disclosing adolescent health issues, like leucorrhoea. During an IDI, one man in Kishoreganj shared that women LSPs face challenge in getting transport.

### **VSLA and Sanchay Sathis (SSs)**

SHOUHARDO facilitated the formation of Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) groups in every village to promote the practice of savings among both women and men in the communities. There are VSLA groups in each village in different categories, such as women's group, young mothers' group, adolescent girls' group, adolescent boys' group and men's group. SHOUHARDO III additionally introduced Sanchay Sathis as a strategy to sustain the intervention beyond the program's term to improve community savings habits. The SSs form and maintain VSLA savings groups to promote community savings and loan options. The VSLAs also have a social welfare fund that the SS actively manages to aid those in need during emergencies.

The main components of women's empowerment with VSLAs are to facilitate access to money in times of need; making independent purchases; taking out loans when necessary for themselves or their families; and group cohesion within VSLAs. These strategies aim to economically empower women to have a long-term effect on the food security situation for PEP. Apart from the share and loan discussions, the VSLAs discuss domestic violence, dowry, child marriage, mental abuse, etc.

All the beneficiary respondents irrespective of gender and age differences proudly shared that they have VSLAs where they save money together and take out small, low-interest loans from those savings and support the people in need. Sanchay Sathi, in Saghata shared that earlier some women and men used to oppose their activities who later also took loans from them, and afterwards they

stopped criticizing VSLAs work. The study considers that issuance of circular of the Bangladesh Bank advising commercial banks to simplify account-opening processes for VSLA members and extend maximal assistance, especially to women entrepreneurs as the primary step towards sustainability of the VSLAs.

### **Multi stakeholder engagement**

Gender discrimination and inequality affects women and men of all age groups, and of all different backgrounds, and each such actors have the role to play in eliminating gender discrimination. The study considers the strategy of SHOUHARDO for multi-stakeholder engagement through mobilizing women, men, boys and girls in different groups contributed to bring about changes in different areas of women's empowerment. For example, mobilization of VDCs, VSLAs and Girls' Forum facilitated women's ability in collective action, including social capital through their network and ability to move safely and freely throughout her community.

Mobilization and collaboration with different groups, particularly the strategy of collaboration of the youth groups with the VDCs and VSLAs, the groups of adult women and men provides the opportunity for the youth boys and girls to gain knowledge on different social issues, understand the power dynamism, and develop their capacities and skills to play collective roles as the responsive citizens, and grow the sense of collective belonging and solidarity.

Moreover, the engagement and collaboration between youth and adult community women and men have the potential to carry forward the learning on gender neutral norms to the next generation, which is important as gender discriminatory practices perpetuates from generation to generation through socialization process and continue the practice.

### **Homestead gardening and associated awareness have great impact**

Engaging women, men and elderly in homestead gardening and nutritional awareness have positive impact on meeting the nutritional gaps and practices of gender equitable food intake. However, due to the gradual increase of living cost, and lack of resources, such as lack of land property, and natural calamities make their life difficult to struggle meeting the basic needs of the family, such as education and health of children. According to a woman respondent in Gaibandha, we don't have any agricultural land. We have only a small piece of homestead land where we have built houses, and there is nothing left to grow vegetables. Women in Sunamganj also shared similar views saying that majority of us do not have agricultural land, we have only homestead land.

This reality prevents women to stick with gender-biased norms, such as women eating less, giving the nutritious food to the children first, and sometimes to husbands despite their knowledge on the gender equitable food and nutrition practices.

### **3.5 Gender Equality in Project Set Up**

There are specific strategies and interventions of SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity for promoting gender equality, women's empowerment, and reducing GBVs, namely- Facilitate Solidarity platforms



(Girls Forum) to strengthen women empowerment; Engagement of Men and Boys (Male Champion); Community mobilization; Engagement with Local Decision makers (Faith leaders); and Advocacy to influence prevention of child marriage.

Similarly, both CARE Bangladesh and its implementing partners have organizational policy and practices on ensuring a gender-responsive work environment (respectful /sexual harassment and exploitation-free workplace etc.). They have Safeguarding policy to prevention of/ protection from Sexual Harassment, Exploitation and Abuse. Discussion with representatives of CARE and partner organizations confirms that all staff members are well oriented on gender sensitivity. In almost all sessions, a time slot is kept on gender sensitivity. However, the project is being implemented in remote areas where availability of women staff is a challenge.

## Chapter 4: Conclusions and Recommendations

The gender analysis study indicates positive changes in the family and the communities in SHOUHARDO III Plus working areas. These include increased household income because of diverse livelihood opportunities and engagement of both husband and wife in income-generating activities, increased knowledge and skills on agricultural practices, expanded opportunity of intake nutritious food because of homestead gardening and increased awareness on the necessity of nutrition and different needs of food and nutrition for other people, particularly for pregnant and lactating mothers and adolescent children.

There are also changes in sharing household work by men, the practice of intake of additional and nutritious food, taking rest, and doing a regular anti-natal and prenatal check by pregnant and lactating women, as well as awareness of reproductive health rights by adolescent girls. Other vital changes documented by the study include increased participation of women in household decision-making, promotion of joint decision-making, increased access to services by both men and women, increased mobility of women outside the homestead periphery and reduced gender-based violence. The study also reveals a changing trend in women's self-esteem and confidence because of the cumulative effects of various SHOUHARDO interventions in different phases. The study considers that a strong foundation has been created in the study areas on gender equality, women's empowerment, and overall improvement in livelihood.

Despite the progress made so far in gender equality and women's empowerment, as highlighted in the above sections, gender-based gaps and challenges remain. And gender-stereotyped norms and patriarchal beliefs remain at the core of all barriers that women face in enjoying equal rights and opportunities. Hence, the study formulates two sets of recommendations- one as suggested actions for further strengthening the integration of gender equality perspectives in SHOUHARDO III Plus, and the other one as suggested action points to be considered by CARE in designing any successor program of SHOUHARDO or any development program targeting Char and Haor areas.

### 4.1 Recommendations for SHOUHARDO III Plus

- Explore opportunities to increase female LSPs. More women as LSPs can serve as role models in changing gender-stereotypical beliefs held by family members and community members regarding social barriers to women's employment outside the home. As described in the section on study findings, with an [improved] income, the female LSPs have contributed to family expenses, which enhanced their decision-making power and social acceptance, leading to empowerment.
- Explore the scope of facilitating the VSLAs' further institutionalization in collective groups, such as cooperative societies, to run their activities sustainably. As a potential self-sustaining forum, there are opportunities with the Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) groups to strengthen women's empowerment, particularly in the economic empowerment of women, which facilitates access to financial services. On top of existing activities, VSLAs also play a role in preventing VAW.



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- Review/reshuffle the Girls forum to fill the gap created when peer leaders or members drop out and organize training for the newly included girls.
- Organize training/refresher courses for the Male Champions to enable them to acquire in-depth knowledge and sensitivity about gender equality and women's rights.
- Explore the opportunities to introduce the provision of mentorship and coaching for the members of the Male Champions and Girls' forum by engaging experts on gender equality and women's empowerment
- Strengthen the Child Marriage Prevention Committees at the UP level and explore the opportunities to organize sharing workshops with the lawyers, influencing their positive role in the prevention of child marriage to address the issues of underage marriages through Affidavits.

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## 4.2 Overall Recommendations

### Gender division of labor

Given that traditional mindsets and gender-stereotyped social norms and beliefs rooted in patriarchal systems are the underlying causes for the disproportionate burden of domestic and care work on women and girls, there needs to be continued awareness of both women and men highlighting the long-term implications of gender biased division of labor for health, wellbeing, educational opportunities, and economic empowerment of women and girls. Promoting positive male role models from the community and the national level through creative activities and recognition and celebration can be used to encourage greater participation of male household members in household works and care works like Best Family Award, Husband of the Month, Happy Wife/ Mother, In-law of the Month, etc. with concerned criterion.

Furthermore, to address women's time poverty and promote shared responsibility for household chores, initiatives should be taken to facilitate access to household technologies and introduce neighborhood-based community childcare systems after providing training and hands-on caregiving skills to potential, interested, selected families based on eligibility criteria and compliance.

### Engagement of women in income generating activities

There is also a need for awareness recognizing women as farmers to recognize women's contribution to agriculture and advocacy with the government and private sector to ensure the availability of services and inputs for small-scale agriculture and ensure accessibility of services to women in remote areas. Further support is needed to encourage women's engagement in diverse livelihoods through knowledge, skills, and networking. Women already involved in different livelihoods in the communities could be promoted as role models and encourage other women in engaging income-generating work outside the home.

### Access to public spaces, services, and opportunities

To address the ongoing challenges, such as lack of communication and transport facilities, particularly during the monsoon, lack of safety and security, and fear of sexual violence for women in accessing services and opportunities, development interventions working in the Char and Haor areas should think about advocacy with the relevant government agencies to introduce special services, such as mobile training facilities, floating clinics enabling women and girls in Char and Haor areas to access the services. There also needs to conduct gender safety audits in the working areas involving community people, local government representatives, local administration, and police, and follow-up advocacy with the relevant stakeholders to take measures following the findings of gender safety audits to address the safety and security issues of women in public spaces. Advocacy with the local and central governments is also needed to develop infrastructural facilities in the flood-prone Char and Haor areas and ensure adequate public transport during monsoon season. For example, public boats for the community.

### Access to assets and resources

Taking into account the persistent barriers to women's lack of access and ownership to assets, the study team suggests considering different interventions, such as national level advocacy to reform discriminatory personal laws on inheritance and ensure equal inheritance rights for women and men, irrespective of religious identity. The development interventions can also explore the opportunities to leverage the engagement of the faith leaders in authentic interpretation of the religious law

(Islamic) on inheritance and raise awareness on ensuring receiving the share of women inherited from ancestral property. The study team also considers that the positive changes in the community, such as increased involvement of women in income-earning activities and joint decision-making, could be capitalized in promoting joint ownership of family assets and resources. The development interventions should also consider raising awareness among both women and men about the values and good sides of sharing assets and resources between women and men given the fact that there are limited awareness of the importance of asset ownership by women.

### **Participation in household decision-making**

Given the common barriers to women's participation in household decision-making, such as the traditional mindset of treating women as incapable of making decisions, undervaluing women's opinions, and lack of knowledge and awareness among women of their rights and capability, the study team suggests promoting enhanced understanding of importance of women's participation in household decision making among both women and men and raising awareness among women of their rights and capability.

### **Awareness of rights and participation in public decision-making**

Despite progress in awareness of rights and participation of women in different public forums, the study found gaps in knowledge and understanding of women's rights and underlying causes of gender discrimination and deprivation of their rights. Other barriers, such as disapproval from family, community restrictions, lack of interest of women in public decision-making, and exclusionary attitudes of male leaders, prevent women's participation in the public decision-making process. Therefore, any development intervention should consider leadership development for women to enhance their awareness of rights, self-esteem, and confidence and/or organize refresher courses on the topics. Further awareness interventions targeting men to promote cooperative attitudes and create an enabling environment for women participating in different public forums should also be considered.

### **Addressing gender-based violence**

Though there is progress in reducing GBV incidents, the study found the prevalence of gender-stereotyped norms, patriarchal ideologies, and hierarchical power dynamics as the root causes of violence against women. However, there are gaps in knowledge and awareness of the root causes of violence against women and in comprehensive knowledge and sensitivity about women's rights and gender equality among both women and men. Besides, lack of strict implementation of laws, corruption, and irregularities of service delivery institutions, and lack of sensitivity of the relevant service delivery personnel about women's rights also persist as barriers in addressing GBV.

To deal with the issues, the study team recommends different interventions, such as further awareness highlighting legal aspects of GBV engaging both community women and men and the duty bearers, such as law enforcing agencies, representatives of local government bodies, marriage registers, lawyers, religious leaders, etc. There need to be continuous efforts of dissemination of information about the available legal services and providing support to the victims/survivors of violence in getting redress through a functional referral mechanism. The study team also considers that there is a need for interventions on anger management for community women and men and raising awareness on SRHR issues engaging educational institutions, particularly to address child marriage issues.

### **Addressing root causes of gender inequality and discrimination**

Considering that all the barriers preventing women from enjoying equal rights are fundamentally rooted in patriarchal systems and traditional mindsets, the study recommends targeted interventions to change gender discriminatory norms and attitudes concerning various domains of gender equality, such as gender division of labor and employment, access and ownership of assets and resources, household decision-making, and participation in public decision-making, etc. Interventions to change gender-biased norms and attitudes are also expected to address the root causes of gender-based violence.

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## Annex 1: Qualitative sample size distribution and tools used

Distribution of the Gender Analysis Study Tools for SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity												
Region	District	Upazila	FG D	Category of respondents and no	ID I	Category of respondents and no	KII	Category of respondents and no	V D	Category of respondents and no	Access and Control Profile	Category of respondents and no
Char	Gaibandha	Fulchari	4	Men (1), Women (1), Boys (1), Girls (1)	3	PLW (1), Husband PLW (1), LSP (1)	4	Govt-2: DAE-SAAO, Youth Development-YDO, NGO-PO, School Teacher	1	Women Group	1	Mixed group of women and men
		Saghata	4	Men (1), Women (1), Boys (1), Girls (1)	3	PLW (1), Husband PLW (1), Community Leader (1)	5	Govt-2: Livestock Officer, UH&FPO, School Teacher (1), Private Sector (1), Religious Leader (1)	1	Women Group	1	Mixed group of women and men
	Jamalpur	Islampur	4	Men (1), Women (1), Boys (1), Girl (1)	3	PLW (1), Husband PLW (1), Community Leader (1)	4	Govt-2: Agriculture Officer, Social welfare officer	1	Women Group	1	Mixed group of women and men



								Official (I), Community Leader (I), Teacher (I), NGO				
		Bakshiganj	4	Men (I), Women (I), Boys (I), Girls (I)	3	PLW (I), Husband PLW (I), VDC - Leader (I)	5	Govt-3: Agriculture Officer, Livestock Officer, , NGO: ESDO, NDP, Religious Leader	1	Women Group	1	Mixed group of women and men
Haor	Kishoregonj	Austogram	4	Men (I), Women (I), Boys (I), Girls (I)	3	PLW (I), Husband PLW (I), CL-woman	4	Govt-2: Fisheries Officer, UP Member, Community Leader (I), NGO (I)	1	Women Group	1	Mixed group of women and men
		Mithamoin	4	Men (I), Women (I), Boys (I), Girls (I)	3	PLW (I), Husband PLW (I), VDC - Leader (I)	5	Govt-2: Medical Officer, Teacher, Social Welfare Officer, Teacher (I), LSP (I), Community Leader (I)	1	Women Group	1	Mixed group of women and men



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	Sunamgonj	Tahirpur	4	Men (I), Women (I), Boys (I), Girls (I)	3	PLW (I), Husband PLW (I), VDC- Leader (I)	4	Govt-2: Livstock Officer, Social Welfare Officer, LSP (I), PVT Bank (I)	I	Women Group	I	Mixed group of women and men
		Dowarabazar	4	Men (I), Women (I), Boys (I), Girls (I)	3	PLW (I), Husband PLW (I), VDC - Leader (I)	5	Govt-2: Social Welfare Officer, Fisheries Officer, NGO (I), UP Woman Member (I), Blue Star (I). PCSBA (I)	I	Women Group	I	Mixed group of women and men
	National level						4	Md. Goalm Rabbani Enterprise Developmen t and Employment Analyst, UNDP (I), Syeda Ashrafiz Zaharia Prodhan Advisor- WE & Advocacy,				



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								CARE Bangladesh (I), Afsana Hossain, Deputy Director Women Developmen t, BRDB, Dhaka (I), Marc Nosboch COP, SHOUHRA DO III Plus (I)				
	<b>Total no of tools</b>		32		24		40		8		8	

SL	Key areas of inquiry	Key study questions	Corresponding domains (Building agency/changing relations/changing structures)	Data source/ stakeholders to be consulted	Tools to be used
01	Overall gender relations scenario of the country, particularly in context of agriculture, livelihood and nutritional security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the prevalent gender roles/gender divisions of labour in the community in context of agriculture, livelihood and nutritional security?</li> <li>• Who has access to what assets and services, and what prevents others from gaining access to those services in relation to agriculture, livelihood and nutritional security?</li> <li>• What are the prevalent gender stereotyped norms and practices in the households, and how they hinder gender equal access to resources and services in relation to agriculture, livelihood and nutritional security?</li> <li>• What are the status of women and men in decision making in family and in community</li> </ul>	The responses to be organized and analyzed under the three above mentioned interconnected domains as appropriate	Baseline report, previous gender analysis of the project and other relevant reports	Given the time constraint, information about project context to be collected mainly from secondary information.



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		<p>level (particularly in relation to agriculture, livelihood and nutritional security)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What are the common peripheries of mobility for both men and boys and women and girls? For instance: schools, local markets, hospitals, agricultural field, union parishad etc.</li><li>• What are the differing needs and interests of women and girls, and men and boys in context of agriculture, livelihood, and nutrition?</li><li>• What are gender specific barriers (barriers for men and boys/ barriers for women and girls) in accessing different services on agriculture, livelihood and nutrition?</li><li>• Who are the supporters to contribute to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment and reducing GBV?</li></ul>			
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2	Gender roles and division of labor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What types of roles and responsibilities do women or men perform within the family and the community level?</li> <li>• What are the primary responsibilities of women and men within the household in terms of livelihood activities?</li> <li>• What are the differing needs of women and men, boys and girls within the scope of program interventions (food security and nutrition, agriculture, entrepreneurship etc.)?</li> <li>• What are the differing interests of women and men, boys and girls in household livelihoods?</li> <li>• What changes are perceived in recent years on the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family, community (unpaid household work, care work, agriculture and livelihood)?</li> <li>• What are factors and actors behind such changes in gender roles and responsibilities in the family, community (unpaid household work, care work, agriculture and livelihood)?</li> </ul>		Baseline report of SHOUHARDO III Plus, Nationally available research and reports, primary data by way of interacting with the project beneficiaries and project personnel	Literature review, KII with CARE/PNGO/project staff/FGD,IDI with with beneficiaries, KIIs with community representatives
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What challenges or barriers do women/men encounter in livelihood activities, and how do they address or overcome those?</li><li>• What are the gender specific barriers in engaging with livelihood activities for women and men?</li><li>• How prevailing gender roles/ gender divisions of labour affect food security and nutrition/ livelihood opportunities of different gender groups/?</li><li>• What are the causes/influencing factors for the traditional roles and responsibilities that women and men perform in the family and in the society (How do customs and norms shape women's options for productive (paid) work compared with men? What is the value given to such work? What about equal wages for men and women?)</li><li>• How are children socialized to be responsible for certain tasks and roles in this context? Why</li></ul>			
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		<p>are girls and boys expected to do different kinds of tasks?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How many hours a day are girls doing domestic work compared to boys?</li><li>• Do household responsibilities shift to girls and/or boys when caregivers become more engaged in civic participation (including CARE's programming) or livelihood activities?</li><li>• Are girls or boys expected to engage in income generating work outside the home to contribute to family support? If so, what types of work are they engaged in? Is it different for girls and for boys?</li><li>• What changes in the roles and responsibilities of women and men are expected? What will be the benefit of such changes?</li><li>• Why women and men need to share unpaid household activities, care work etc. Why women also need to engage in paid works?</li></ul>			
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3	Access to public spaces, services and opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What services, laws or policies exist to support men and women's livelihoods (agriculture and other livelihood activities), access to health and nutrition services? How accessible are these services? - (agriculture, market services, financial services, nutrition, WASH, disaster risk reduction and others)/ Gaps and limitation in the laws, policies and services in facilitating gender equal access?</li> <li>• How do men and women, boys and girls navigate public spaces? What are reasons for this?</li> <li>• Current scenario of accessing the services and opportunities: How the services (agriculture, health and nutrition, financial etc.) are accessible for women and men?</li> <li>• Who has access to what assets and services, and what prevents others from gaining access</li> </ul>		Project progress reports, and other documentations, KII/FGDs/IDIs with project beneficiaries and other stakeholders (service providers).	Literature review KII FGD IDI SM



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		<p>to those services in relation to food security, nutrition, agriculture, entrepreneurship, etc.?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What changes have occurred in recent years in accessing these services (easy and better access for women or more restriction for women in accessing the services)?</li><li>• What are reasons behind (enabling factors) such changes? – Which project interventions contributed, and how?</li><li>• What barriers/challenges exist (still) in better and gender equal access of these services?- social norms, institutional barriers, policy barriers, infrastructural barriers etc.</li><li>• What are the barriers faced by women and men in accessing resources and opportunities on entrepreneurship and employment?</li><li>• What barrier do women and adolescent girls face in linking with markets and other services (public and private)?</li></ul>			
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the barriers and experiences faced by women and men in agriculture and nutritional well-being and service provisions in the SHOUHARDO III Plus areas?</li> <li>• What are the prevalent norms and practices in the households, and how they promote/hinder gender equal access to services in relation to livelihoods, food security, and nutrition?</li> <li>• What are the consequences of gender unequal access to services and opportunities (agriculture, market services, financial services, nutrition, WASH, disaster risk reduction and others)?</li> <li>• What needs to be done to further promote gender equal access to services and opportunities? Who can support on this? (GoB, CARE, UP, Private sector etc.)</li> </ul>			
4	Access and ownership of assets and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the available assets and resources within family and community?</li> </ul>		Project progress reports, and other documentations,	Literature review, KII FGD



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Who primarily owns and controls the assets resources within the households? What are the common practices?</li><li>• What are household norms on the management of productive assets between men and women?</li><li>• How do societal norms, policies or programs influence ownership, use and control of productive assets for women?</li><li>• What are the barriers for women in accessing resources?</li><li>• What are the consequences of lack of access to assets and resources for women, for the family?</li><li>• What changes occurred in recent years in ownership, use and control of productive assets and resources by women and men?</li></ul>		KII/FGDs/IDIs with project beneficiaries and community representatives	IDI
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What are the contributing factors to such changes?</li><li>• How are girls and boys being socialized regarding societal/cultural expectations of their roles in control, use of and/or benefits from productive assets?</li><li>• Are girls and boys given equal access to education, training, parenting or mentoring that enhances their acquisition of skills, attitudes, and knowledge to maximize successful future control over productive assets?</li><li>• How do time and gendered division of labour affect the ability of women and girls to participate in activities related to livelihoods and to access local services?</li><li>• What opportunities are available to transform and equitably support women to participate in income and social activity?</li></ul>			
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What needed to be done to promoting women's access to assets and resources/ joint ownership to family assets?</li> </ul>			
5	Household decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are household norms and community expectations in household decision-making processes? Why these norms are practiced?</li> <li>• Who is involved in key decisions concerning the household (i.e. income and expenditures, family planning, education, food allocation within the household, etc.) and how are negotiations about these decisions managed?</li> <li>• How and when women takes part in these decisions making/makes decisions? In which matters?</li> <li>• What changes occurred in decision-making patterns (equal participation of women and men, joint decision making) in recent years?</li> <li>• What factors contributed to such changes? How these changes are benefitting the family and the community?</li> </ul>		Project beneficiaries  Project staff  PNGOs	KII  IDI  FGD



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do girls and boys have equal opportunities to develop skills necessary for household decision-making later in life?</li><li>• How are girls and boys given needed support in learning negotiation, finance, and other life skills? Are these equally available to both?</li><li>• What are the consequences of lack of women's participation in household decision-making?</li><li>• Why women's participation in household decision-making is to be promoted?</li><li>• What are the causes/barriers for women's lack of participation in household decision-making?</li><li>• What is further needed to address these barriers and promote women's participation in household decision-making?</li></ul>			
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6	<p>Claiming rights and participation in public decision-making</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of the rights among the beneficiaries (right to development, access to services and opportunities, participation in decision-making, equality, non-discrimination)?</li> <li>• What are the decision-making bodies available at the communities?</li> <li>• What are policies, programs or strategies that promote women's and children's' participation in public policy, planning and decision-making?/ Gaps in laws and policies, implementation gaps?</li> <li>• What are the perceptions of family and community about men and women's participation in social activity?</li> <li>• What roles are women taking in various decision-making bodies (both formal and non-formal)? Are women and girls in leadership positions?</li> </ul>		<p>Community representatives</p> <p>Representatives of different public bodies</p> <p>Project beneficiaries</p> <p>Project staff</p>	<p>Literature review</p> <p>KII</p> <p>FGD</p> <p>IDI</p> <p>VD</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What are the attitudes and perceptions of community members towards women's participation in community actions/ rights awareness events/development campaigns?</li><li>• What changes occurred in the past years in women's participation in public decision-making bodies? ( positive/negative)</li><li>• What are the contributing factors to such changes?</li><li>• What are the barriers in promoting women's active participation in public decision-making?</li><li>• What are the consequences of lack of women's participation in public decision-making? What are the benefits of women's participation in public decision-making?</li><li>• How the prevailing power structure and decision making hamper equal access of women and girls to various services and opportunities?</li></ul>			
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What else is needed to promote women's meaningful participation in public decision-making?</li> </ul>			
7	Prevalence of gender based violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the overall GBV situation in the community? (What types of violence, where occurs, who are the perpetrators etc.)</li> <li>• What are the GBV issues? Child marriage?</li> <li>• What are the specific risks and vulnerabilities (gender based violence, such as child marriage, dowry etc.) for women and adolescent girls in engaging in agriculture, nutrition, and governance activity?</li> <li>• Why GBV occurs in family and in community?</li> <li>• What are the root causes of GBV?</li> </ul>		<p>Community representatives</p> <p>Project beneficiaries</p> <p>Project staff</p>	<p>Literature review</p> <p>KII</p> <p>FGD</p> <p>IDI</p> <p>VD</p> <p>SM</p>



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What steps are being taken to address and prevent gender-based violence in your community?</li> <li>• What are the gaps in addressing gender-based violence?</li> <li>• What further steps are needed to be taken to effectively address the GBV issues?</li> </ul>			
-	Project design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the key strategies of promoting gender equality, women's empowerment, reducing GBVs?</li> <li>• What are the key interventions of the project in promoting gender equality, women's empowerment, reducing GBVs?</li> <li>• How SHOUHARDO III Plus promote gender equal access to services and opportunities? What else need to be done?</li> </ul>		Project planning documents, project reports, project staff	Literature review KII



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Whether and how SHOUHARDO III Plus interventions address different needs of women, men, boys and girls in food security and nutrition. What else need to be done?</li><li>• How SHOUHARDO III Plus are promoting gender equal norms and beliefs? What else need to be done?</li><li>• What SHOUHARDO III Plus can do in addressing gaps in laws and policies, gaps in implementation?</li><li>• Whether SHOUHARDO III Plus has any interventions to address the issue of gender equal decision making? How these interventions are useful/effective? What else need to be done?</li><li>• What are the strengths of SHOUHARDO III Plus activity in promoting gender equality, women's empowerment, reducing GBVs?</li></ul>			
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the weaknesses of SHOUHARDOIII Plus activity in promoting gender equality, women's empowerment, reducing GBVs?</li> <li>• How better gender issues can be integrated in the program design and intervention to effectively promote gender equality, women's empowerment, and reduce GBVs?</li> </ul>			
-	Project set up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What about organizational commitment on gender equality and social inclusion (both CARE and PNGO)?</li> <li>• Are the project staff composition gender balanced? Are they well oriented on gender sensitivity and inclusion in context of agriculture, livelihood and nutrition?</li> <li>• What about organizational policy and practice (both CARE and PNGO) on ensuring gender responsive work environment (respectful /sexual harassment and exploitation free workplace etc.)</li> <li>• What are the challenges in ensuring gender responsive project environment? How those are dealt? What further could be done?</li> </ul>		CARE and PNGO documents  Project staff  PNGO  CARE	Literature review  KII  FGD  Observation

### Annex 3: Field Work Schedule

Field work schedule for Gender Analysis, SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity					
4 February- 16 February 2024					
Date/Time	District	location	Activity & Time	Responsibility	Remarks
Day 1 (04/02/2024)/Sunday: Travel to Gaibandha and meeting with SHOUHARDO III Plus team					
Day 1 04/02/2024 Sunday	Gaibandha		Introduction with Partner NGO/ SOUHARDOO III Plus team  Key Informant Interview (KII) with Partner NGO/ SOUHARDOO III Plus team  Time: 3.00 pm- 5.00 pm	Consultant Team	The consultant team need support from SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity team to organize field visit
Day 2 05/02/2024 Monday		Fulchari	Night stay in Gaibandha		(Unions to be selected in consultation with Partner NGO/ SOUHARDOO III Plus team )  2 villages from 2 adjacent unions ( 1 village from 1 union)
			Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with girls/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 1 (union 1)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with men/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 2 (union 1)	Approximate 8-10 participants



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Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with boys/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 3 (union 2)	Approximate 8-10 participants
Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with women/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 4 (union 2)	Approximate 8-10 participants
IDI with PLW/01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 1 (union 1)	
IDI with Husband of PLW/01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 2 (union 1)	
IDI with Community Group/ VDC/LSP 01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 3 (union 2)	
KII with local/religious leaders/01 [UP member (woman)]  Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 4 (union 2)	
Access and Control Profile 01- mixed group of women and beneficiaries (VDC, LSPs, VSLAs etc.)  Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 1 (union 1)	
Venn Diagram (VD) / 01- Women beneficiaries  Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 2 (union 1)	
Access and Control Profile 01- mixed group of women and beneficiaries (VDC, LSPs, VSLAs etc.)  Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 3 (union 2)	
Venn Diagram (VD) / 01- Women beneficiaries  Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 4 (union 2)	



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Day 3 06/02/2024 Tuesday			KII with teacher/01 Time: 3.30 pm-4.30 pm	Team (1) Union 1	
			KII with NGO/private sector service providing agencies/01 ( NGO representative) Time: 3.30 pm-4.30 pm	Team (2) (Upazila level)	
			KII with govt. officials/02 (Upazila Women affairs Officer/ Upazila Agriculture Officer)  Time: 3.30 pm-4.30 pm	Team 3& 4 (Upazila level)	
		Saghata	Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with girls/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 1 (union 1)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with men/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 2 (union 1)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with boys/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 3 (union 2)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with women/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 4 (union 2)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			IDI with PLW/01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 1 (union 1)	
			IDI with Husband of PLW/01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 2 (union 1)	
			IDI with Community Group/ VDC/LSP 01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 3 (union 2)	



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			KII with local/religious leaders/01 [religious leader]  Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 4 (union 2)	
			Access and Control Profile 01- mixed group of women and beneficiaries (VDC, LSPs, VSLAs etc.)  Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 1 (union 1)	
			Venn Diagram (VD) / 01- Women beneficiaries  Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 2 (union 1)	
			Access and Control Profile 01- mixed group of women and beneficiaries (VDC, LSPs, VSLAs etc.)  Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 3 (union 2)	
			Venn Diagram (VD) / 01- Women beneficiaries  Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 4 (union 2)	
			KII with teacher/01 Time: 3.30 pm-4.30 pm	Team (1) Union 1	
			KII with NGO/private sector service providing agencies/01	Team (2) (Upazila level)	

			(Representatives of a private bank/ financial service providing institution)  Time: 3.30 pm-4.30 pm		
			KII with govt. officials/02 (Upazila Livestock Officer/Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer)  Time: 3.30 pm-4.30 pm	Team 3& 4 (Upazila level)	
Day 4 07/02/2024 Wednesday	Travel to Jamalpur		Introduction and KII with the SHOUHARDO III Plus staff/ implementing partner staff  Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm  KIIs with govt. officials/02  District/Livestock Officer/District Health and Family Planning Officer  (3.00 pm-4.00 pm)	Consultant Team	
Day 5 08/02/2024 Thursday	Jamalpur	Islampur	Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with girls/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 1 (union 1)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with men/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 2 (union 1)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with boys/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 3 (union 2)	Approximate 8-10 participants

			Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with women/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 4 (union 2)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			IDI with PLW/01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 1 (union 1)	
			IDI with Husband of PLW/01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 2 (union 1)	
			IDI with Community Group/ VDC/LSP 01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 3 (union 2)	
			KII with local/religious leaders/01 [religious leader]  Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 4 (union 2)	
			Access and Control Profile 01- mixed group of women and beneficiaries (VDC, LSPs, VSLAs etc.)  Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 1 (union 1)	
			Venn Diagram (VD) / 01- Women beneficiaries  Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 2 (union 1)	
			Access and Control Profile 01- mixed group of women and beneficiaries (VDC, LSPs, VSLAs etc.)  Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 3 (union 2)	



			Venn Diagram (VD) / 01- Women beneficiaries Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 4 (union 2)	
			Off	Team (1) Union 1	
			KII with NGO/private sector service providing agencies/01 ( NGO representative) Time: 3.30 pm-4.30 pm	Team (2) (Upazila level)	
			KII with govt. officials/02 (Upazila Youth Development Officer/ Upazila Cooperatives Officer)  Time: 3.30 pm-4.30 pm	Team 3& 4 (Upazila level)	
Day 6 09/02/2024 Friday	Jamalpur	Bakshiganj	Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with girls/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 1 ( union 1)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with men/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 2 (union 1)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with boys/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 3 (union 2)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with women/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 4 (union 2)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			IDI with PLW/01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 1 (union 1)	

			IDI with Husband of PLW/01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 2 (union 1)	
			IDI with Community Group/ VDC/LSP 01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 3 (union 2)	
			KII with local/religious leaders/01 [UP chair]  Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 4 (union 2)	
			Access and Control Profile 01- mixed group of women and beneficiaries (VDC, LSPs, VSLAs etc.)  Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 1 (union 1)	
			Venn Diagram (VD) / 01- Women beneficiaries  Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 2 (union 1)	
			Access and Control Profile 01- mixed group of women and beneficiaries (VDC, LSPs, VSLAs etc.)  Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 3 (union 2)	
			Venn Diagram (VD) / 01- Women beneficiaries  Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 4 (union 2)	
			Off	Team (1) Union 1	
			KII with NGO/private sector service providing agencies/01	Team (2) (Upazila level)	

			( Private seed agent) Time: 3.30 pm-4.30 pm		
			Off	Team 3 & 4	
Day 7 10/02/2024 Saturday	Travel to Kishoreganj		Introduction and KII with the SHOUHARDO III Plus staff/ implementing partner staff  Time: 3.00 pm-5.00 pm	Consultant Team	
Day 8 11/02/2024 Sunday	Kishoreganj	Austogram	Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with girls/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 1 ( union 1)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with men/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 2 (union 1)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with boys/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 3 (union 2)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with women/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 4 (union 2)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			IDI with PLW/01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 1 (union 1)	
			IDI with Husband of PLW/01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 2 (union 1)	
			IDI with Community Group/ VDC/LSP 01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 3 (union 2)	
			KII with local/religious leaders/01 [UP Chair]  Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 4 (union 2)	

			Access and Control Profile 01- mixed group of women and beneficiaries (VDC, LSPs, VSLAs etc.) Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 1 (union 1)	
			Venn Diagram (VD) / 01- Women beneficiaries Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 2 (union 1)	
			Access and Control Profile 01- mixed group of women and beneficiaries (VDC, LSPs, VSLAs etc.) Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 3 (union 2)	
			Venn Diagram (VD) / 01- Women beneficiaries Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 4 (union 2)	
			Off	Team (1) Union 1	
			KII with NGO/private sector service providing agencies/01 (NGO representative) Time: 3.30 pm-4.30 pm	Team (2) (Upazila level)	
			KII with govt. officials/02 (Upazila Social Service officer/ Upazila Upazila Fisheries Officer)	Team 3& 4 (Upazila level)	

			Time: 3.30 pm-4.30 pm		
Day 9 12/02/2024 Monday	Kishoreganj	Mithamoin	Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with girls/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 1 (union 1)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with men/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 2 (union 1)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with boys/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 3 (union 2)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with women/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 4 (union 2)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			IDI with PLW/01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 1 (union 1)	
			IDI with Husband of PLW/01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 2 (union 1)	
			IDI with Community Group/ VDC/LSP 01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 3 (union 2)	
			KII with local/religious leaders/01 [religious leader] Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 4 (union 2)	
			Access and Control Profile 01- mixed group of women and beneficiaries (VDC, LSPs, VSLAs etc.) Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 1 (union 1)	
			Venn Diagram (VD) / 01- Women beneficiaries	Team 2	



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			Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	(union 1)	
			Access and Control Profile 01- mixed group of women and beneficiaries (VDC, LSPs, VSLAs etc.)	Team 3 (union 2)	
			Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm		
			Venn Diagram (VD) / 01- Women beneficiaries		
			Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 4 (union 2)	
			KII with teacher/01 Time: 3.30 pm-4.30 pm	Team (1) Union 1	
			Off	Team (2) (Upazila level)	
			KII with govt. officials/02 (Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer/ Upazila Agriculture Officer)	Team 3& 4 (Upazila level)	
			Time: 3.30 pm-4.30 pm		
Day 10 13/02/2024 Tuesday	Travel to Sunamganj		Introduction and Key Informant Interview (KII) with Partner NGO/ SOUHARDOO Plus team	Consultant Team	
			Time: 3.00 pm-5.00 pm		
Day 11 14/02/2024 Wednesday	Sunamganj	Tahirpur	Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with girls/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 1 ( union 1)	Approximate 8-10 participants

			Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with men/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 2 (union 1)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with boys/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 3 (union 2)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with women/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 4 (union 2)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			IDI with PLW/01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 1 (union 1)	
			IDI with Husband of PLW/01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 2 (union 1)	
			IDI with Community Group/ VDC/LSP 01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 3 (union 2)	
			KII with local/religious leaders/01 [Community leader]  Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 4 (union 2)	
			Access and Control Profile 01- mixed group of women and beneficiaries (VDC, LSPs, VSLAs etc.)  Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 1 (union 1)	
			Venn Diagram (VD) / 01- Women beneficiaries  Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 2 (union 1)	



			Access and Control Profile 01- mixed group of women and beneficiaries (VDC, LSPs, VSLAs etc.)  Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 3 (union 2)	
			Venn Diagram (VD) / 01- Women beneficiaries  Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 4 (union 2)	
			Off	Team (1) Union 1	
			KII with NGO/private sector service providing agencies/01 (Representatives of a private bank/ financial service providing agency/health service providers)  Time: 3.30 pm-4.30 pm	Team (2) (Upazila level)	
			KII with govt. officials/02 (Upazila Women Development Officer/ Upazila Cooperatives Officer)  Time: 3.30 pm-4.30 pm	Team 3& 4 (Upazila level)	
	Day 12 15/02/2024 Thursday	Dowarabazar	Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with girls/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 1 ( union 1)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with men/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 2 (union 1)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with boys/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 3 (union 2)	Approximate 8-10 participants

			Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with women/01 Time: 10.00 am-11.00 am	Team 4 (union 2)	Approximate 8-10 participants
			IDI with PLW/01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 1 (union 1)	
			IDI with Husband of PLW/01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 2 (union 1)	
			IDI with Community Group/ VDC/LSP 01 Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 3 (union 2)	
			KII with local/religious leaders/01 [UP member ( woman)]  Time: 11.30 am-12.30pm	Team 4 (union 2)	
			Access and Control Profile 01- mixed group of women and beneficiaries (VDC, LSPs, VSLAs etc.)  Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 1 (union 1)	
			Venn Diagram (VD) / 01- Women beneficiaries  Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 2 (union 1)	
			Access and Control Profile 01- mixed group of women and beneficiaries (VDC, LSPs, VSLAs etc.)  Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm	Team 3 (union 2)	
			Venn Diagram (VD) / 01- Women beneficiaries	Team 4 (union 2)	

			Time: 2.00 pm-3.00 pm		
			Off	Team (1) Union 1	
			KII with NGO/private sector service providing agencies/01 (NGO representative) Time: 3.30 pm-4.30 pm	Team (2) (Upazila level)	
			KII with govt. officials/02 (Upazila Youth Development officer/ Upazila Upazila Fisheries Officer)  Time: 3.30 pm-4.30 pm	Team 3& 4 (Upazila level)	
Day 13 16/02/2024  Friday	Back to Dhaka				
Day 14 (date to be added)  (18-20 Jan2024) Sunday- Tuesday	4 KIIs (KIIs with SHOUHARDO III Plus staff in Dhaka and National Level Expert)  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SHOUHARDO III Plus ( Gender Advisor)/ any other personnel</li> <li>• Enterprise and Employment Development Expert</li> <li>• Academia with specialization in women's empowerment</li> <li>• National level expert on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment</li> <li>• Representative of Local Government and Rural Development Department</li> </ul>			Team 1/2/3	

Field Work Teams:

Team 1 Gopal Chowhan & One RA;



- |        |                            |
|--------|----------------------------|
| Team 2 | Lucille Sircar & one RA    |
| Team 3 | Qumrunnessa Nazly & one RA |
| Team 4 | RA (senior one)<br>RA      |