

# PORTRAITS

Bangladesh, December 2010

## Voices of the beneficiaries

Padma Pukur and Sutarkhali Unions, Impact Monitoring, Cash for Livelihood Programme (CfL), 2009



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
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Swiss Agency for Development  
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## **Rajeka BEGUM**

**Married, 26 years**

**3 children, one daughter and two sons**

**SUTARKHALI UNION, Village number 9**

Her husband is a fisher man and often away from home. Before Aila she did some chicken farming. The average household income was 5'000 Taka per month with 1'500 of profit. Aila destroyed her house completely and she lost all productive assets. First she thought that this was the end of her life, but soon after the disaster she quickly wanted to rebuild her life. She participated in the tailoring training organised by SDC. But then she changed her mind and invested all the CfL-contribution in her former business – chicken farming. Out of this she currently has a monthly income of 2'000 Taka and has 1'000 Taka of profite. Step by step she saves some money because she intents to buy a sewing machine to start the tayloring business. The CfL-contribution was very important for her and her family. But she is worried how to manage her family in the future because she thinks that life is harder now than before.



## **Sandha SARDER**

**Married, 34 years**

**2 children, 1 daughter and 1 son**

**SUTARKHALI UNION, Village number 1**

Before Aila she did some fishing and worked occasionally as day laborer (cutting mud) for the Government, NGOs or rich people. She had a little house on her own land and some goats and chicken that she sold frequently. She had a monthly income of about 1'500 Taka. Together with her husband's salary life was good compared to now. During Aila her family lost everything and their land was washed away by the surge. Now they live in a shelter on the main embankment (governmental land). She participated in the fishing training organised by the CfL project. With the CfL-contribution she bought a boat (10'000 Taka) and a net. Currently she earns around 2'000 Taka per month, but says life is harder than before. She has to buy food because the family has no agriculture anymore and the season of fishing lasts only from January to June (when the water is the more saline). She stopped paying a life assurance that she had before. Her husband is now often away from home to do some trading business in bigger cities. However, she feels mentally stronger and less vulnerable because now she has more skills and knowledge. Also her status in the community increased. She hopes to stay in her "mother land", give a better education to her children and wants to rebuild her own house soon.



## **Zahida BEGUM**

**Married, 38 years,  
3 children, 2 sons and one daughter  
SUTARKHALI UNION, Village number 9**

Before Aila she was mainly doing agriculture on her own land. She had a house, a pond, a garden and some goats and chicken. With her husband she also did some shrimp farming. Their livelihood was diversified. In her village she was considered a rich woman. The overall family income was about 10'000 Taka per month (with a profit of 3'000), enough to live well. After Aila all was destroyed and her family lost everything. Up to now the family could not start any agricultural activity because the main embankment was not reconstructed and tidal waters daily flood their fields. Currently she rebuilds her house. She participated in the training on small businesses and invested all support in a little shop. Every month she has 5 000 Taka of income and about 3'000 Taka benefit. Life is harder than before, especially because she was considered rich and her status has changed. Currently she waits with impatience for the fishing season to start because then she expects to have more customers. For her the CfL-contribution was a real chance to rebuild her life. Now she would like to see her business grow and to have some employees and she believes it will be possible -"Inshallah".



## **Gurjaka BEGUM**

**Widow since 25 years, 1 son**

**PADMA PUKUR UNION, Village number 4**

Before Aila she was very poor and had just enough to buy food every day. She mostly worked as daily laborer (mud cutting). With her handicapped son she lived in a hut on governmental land. During Aila she lost the little that she had. After Aila she decided to participate in the CfL-training on shrimp farming. With the CfL-contribution she rented a piece of land and she bought shrimp larvae. These developed well and she could sell beautiful shrimps. Currently her profit is about 3'000 Taka per month. With the support of another NGO, Solidarités Internationale she has build a better "house". Currently she feels more secure and she can buy medicine for her son. She says that the training was very good for her. It helped her to develop a new business and she is her own boss. She feels more empowered as her social position is much better than before Aila.

## **RIZA BEGUM**

**Divorced**

**3 children, 2 girls and  
1 one boy**

**PADMA PUKUR UNION,  
Village Number 1**

Before Aila she worked in fishing sector. During Aila she lost everything. She was homeless and alone with her 3 children. Her husband lives now with another woman. She built a small hut on governmental land and was very worried about her future. After participating in the tailoring training and receiving the money of the CfL project she bought a sewing machine. Currently she works at home and likes to be her own boss. She earns more than 2'000



Taka per month. Part of this money she uses for the education of her children. She has a lot of ambitions and she feels now in better social and economic position. She thinks to be a good manager and that she can develop her business further. She has raised the basic platform of her house in order to have a better protection against tidal surges.

But she is a bit worried for being alone. If something like a health problem happens, she doesn't know if it will be possible to manage the education of her children and her livelihood. She would like to stay in her village but she is aware of the environmental risks. A next disaster could destroy all what she has build up.



## **DALIL GAZI**

**42 years.**

**Married, 3 sons and 4 daughters**

**Occupation: collecting shrimp larvae**

**SUTAKHALI Union, Ward no. 9**

**DAKOP KHULNA**

Before Aila, he had two huts on his own land. He also had two goats and ten hens. At that time, he collected shrimp larvae from river and sold them to larvae traders. He leased a boat to collect the larvae. His monthly average income was Tk.2000 to Tk.2500. It was hard for him to maintain a family of eight members with the little income. During Aila, he lost his huts, goats, hens and everything else he had. He took shelter on the embankment. His life became horrible at that moment and he was desperate. Then he got support from Govt. and NGOs. For one month, he worked as a day labourer on a Food for Work program for 4 kilos of rice per day. Then he worked on repairing the embankment for Tk.100 to Tk.150 a day.

After getting the CFL money he got a new hope of life. He bought a boat and a net and began to collect shrimp larvae again. From his earnings, he has repaired his huts. Now he is living in his own hut. His monthly average income is Tk.4000 to Tk.45000 at this moment. He is happy with his current situation. Now, he is planning to buy another boat and net so that he could earn more.



## **SOBHAN GAZI**

**60 years.**

**Occupation: day labourer**  
**SUTAKHALI Union, Ward no 9**  
**DAKOP KHULNA**

He has nine members in his family including five daughters and four sons. Three of the daughters are married and two of the sons live separately. Before Aila, he lived on his own land. He had a house, a hut, two cows, a goat, ten ducks and fifteen hens. He worked as a day labourer and earned Tk.100 to Tk.120 per day. So, with this income, he lived from hand to mouth with his family.

When Aila struck in his area he lost everything. He and his family took shelter on the embankment and had to live in a precarious situation. For some days he worked as a day labourer. He got Tk.100 per day. But, then he got sick and was unable to earn a living.

At that critical moment, he got CFL money. He spent some of the money for his treatment. Then he bought two spades and two baskets needed for mud cutting. He bought a cow and two goats from the rest of the CFL money and from some borrowings. He repaired his house with the help of a NGO. His family members are taking care of the livestock. Now he is working as a day labourer and getting Tk.150 a day. But he cannot work everyday because of his age. Though he cannot earn a lot right now, still he is happy with his situation.



## **SAMU SANA**

**AGE: 48 yrs.**

**Married, 2 sons and 2 daughters**

**Occupation: grocery shop**

**SUTAKHALI Union, Ward no 9**

**DAKOP KHULNA**

Before Aila he had a small shrimp farm and was a shrimp larvae trader. He had three houses, twenty five ducks, ten hens and six goats. At that time his monthly income was Tk.3000 to Tk.3500. With this income he could manage his family.

At the time of Aila his shrimp farm was washed away and he lost Tk.60000. One of his houses was destroyed. He also lost five goats and fifteen ducks. Then he started working as a day labourer for Tk.100 per day.

When he got the CFL money he started thinking differently. He builds up a grocery shop in the local market with the money. Now he is earning Tk.3500 to Tk.4000 per month. He is saving some money to start his shrimp farm again. He is satisfied with his present situation.



## **JAHUR SARDER**

**AGE: 32 yrs.**

**Married, 2 sons and 1 daughter**

**Occupation: shrimp larvae trader**

**SUTAKHALI Union, Ward no 9**

**DAKOP KHULNA**

Before Aila he was a shrimp farmer. He had three houses, seven goats, twenty five ducks. At that time his monthly income was Tk.4500 to Tk.5000. So he could maintain his family expenditure smoothly.

During Aila he lost two houses and all goats, ducks and hens. Then he worked as a day labourer on the reconstruction of the main embankment for Tk.100 per day.

With the CFL money he started shrimp larvae trading. He is earning Tk.4000 to Tk.4500 per month. From his profit, he has bought two goats, five hens and five ducks. Now he is a happy man.

## **Manindra MONDA**

He invested 6500 Taka of the Cfl money to buy a van (transport rickshaw). With another 6500 Taka he leased a plot to cultivate paddy and for 2000 Taka he bought a small pig.

He works about 300 days per year as a rickshaw rider. In average he earns 150 Taka per day (before having his own rickshaw he had leased one for 30 Taka a day). The paddy plot gives enough to feed his family on throughout the year (which is worth about 20 Taka a day). He feeds the pig with the paddy bran. The pig has grown nicely and at the moment is worth about 6000 Taka. The return on investment per year amounts to more than 100%.

