

Impact of River Bank Erosion on Rural Society in Bangladesh

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Abstract

The geographical setting of Bangladesh and the characteristics of the tropical monsoon climate are greatly responsible for a variety of natural and human-induced disasters. Due to river erosion each year thousands of people who live near the bank line are dislocating and become destitute losing their house and household resources, agricultural land, standing crops, employment etc. The study, therefore, aimed to: (i) explore the extent and causes of river erosion of selected rivers; (ii) assess the socio-economic effect of riverbank erosion on the livelihood of vulnerable people; (iii) invent the resources damaged due to river erosion and interventions of different institutions; and (iv) identify the status of food intake, water, and sanitation of the study areas. Erosion prone three unions alongside the mighty rivers Padma, Meghna and Shandha were studied in this regard. The research was based on qualitative and quantitative approaches. Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. In order to fulfill the objectives of the research, different methods and tools were used to get the views and opinions of the vulnerable and destitute people. Analysis of the collected information showed that meandering, riverbed siltation, poor drainage system, wave action and excessive rainfall are the main causes of bank line erosion and it brings miserable sufferings to the vulnerable people. The study also revealed that they lost house and household resources, employment, agricultural land, standing crops, growth centers and infrastructures at different degrees. Furthermore, the displaced people faced unstable and uncertain situation in terms of income, occupation, household resources, shelter and social dignity. Based on these problems some policy suggestions have been put forward to take immediate initiative to reduce the sufferings of the displaced and hard core poor people.