

**Endline assessment for the  
Community Empowerment for Food Access and Savings (CEFAS)  
Project**

**Reporting of results; December 2021**

Finish Lutheran Overseas Mission (FLOM)

Bangladesh Lutheran Mission– Finnish (BLM–F)

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## List of abbreviations

<b>BDHS</b>	<b>Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey</b>
<b>CBSG</b>	<b>Community Based Savings Group</b>
<b>CM</b>	<b>Child marriage</b>
<b>CwD</b>	<b>Child with disability</b>
<b>FGD</b>	<b>Focus Group Discussion</b>
<b>HW</b>	<b>Health Worker</b>
<b>KII</b>	<b>Key informant interview</b>
<b>NGO</b>	<b>Non-government Organization</b>
<b>PwD</b>	<b>Person with Disability</b>

## Extended Abstract

**Intro/ objective:** The purpose of the study was to evaluate the Community access for food empowerment and savings (CEFAS) project run under the Bangladesh Lutheran Mission- Finnish (BLM-F) at the end of project, looking at progress against project goals and indicators.

**Methodology:** A random sample of 300 Community based savings group (CBSG) members, 280 women and 20 men, were interviewed regarding savings group and Cooperative participation, livelihood training and outcomes, savings and loan activities and outcomes, and food security. Additional questions were included regarding knowledge of and participation in the child nutrition and children with disability program. Qualitative methods (focus group discussions and key informant interviews) were used to gain insight into the impact of the project in the community, key beneficiaries, and integration with government services.

**Results: Women's empowerment:** Decision making; Compared to 2019, in 2021 women were more likely to have a say in family purchases (90% vs 73.1%); how money/savings is spent (91.7% vs 73.1%); their children's health care (87.5% vs 65.6%); and their own health care (85.7% vs 74.1%). Women still say they should have a voice in more areas than they have a voice, especially regarding working or visiting outside the home (94% vs 73% and 94% vs 65%, respectively). Acceptance of wife-beating is still high with one in 7 women saying a man is justified in beating his wife for wasting money, going out without telling him or talking to another man.

**Livelihood:** 62% of savings group members surveyed said they had family savings and 47% said they used the savings for income generating activities. 60% had received a loan from their group and 44% of them used it for income generation. A high proportion of CBSG members who got training from the project used it to plant a garden(all), raise animals (85% for goats, 73% for poultry, 27% for pigeons) or make compost (84-88%). 53% of those who raised vegetables and 71.6% of those who raised livestock, had income from sales. Overall, 46.7% of respondents in 2021 said they had increased family income after joining the CBSG compared to 39.4% in 2019. Vocational training was provided to 60 beneficiaries between 2017 to 2020, with the highest rates of income generation in their area training being for vehicle drivers (11/12, 92%) and mobile repair (7/9, 78%).

**Food security** was impacted with nearly six out of 10 (59.3%) reported having at least three home food sources, and eight out of 10 have at least two food sources at end line. Using the eight question Food insecurity experience scale (FIES) 49.3% of respondents were food secure, 29.3% were mildly food insecure (answered yes to 1, 2 or 3 questions), 13% were moderately insecure (yes to 4, 5 or 6 questions) and 8.3% were severely insecure (yes to 7 or 8 questions). The proportion who was moderately or severely food insecure was higher than a nationally representative sample from September 2021 (21.3% vs 14.2%) but the % with any food insecurity was less (50.7% vs 68.4%).

In 2020 and 2021 69% of **children identified as malnourished** moved into normal weight for age or at least gained weight during the three-month nutrition intervention. This figure was only 25% and 33% for malnourished children with disabilities, in 2020 and 2021, respectively. Of the 751 women trained as peer mentors for the nutrition program, 51% were active in their communities. **Children with Disability** were identified by disability staff and helped with nutrition and/ or treatment as appropriate. Of the 425 identified between 2018 and 2021 103 (23.5%) were included in the nutrition program and 90 (21.2%) were enabled to get treatment and assistive devices as needed at a rehabilitation center.