**Preferred themes:** Women’s Economic Empowerment

**Title:** Understanding and Enhancing Women’s Livelihoods in Darianagar, Cox's Bazar

**Background:**

Between 2019 and 2020, the global women’s labour-force participation rate declined by 3.4%, as compared to 2.4% for men 1. Suitable training and skill development, as well as the use of technology, are crucial for entering and remaining in the job market for the majority of female workers 2. The structural barriers to women entering the workforce can be solved by creating more gender-friendly employment opportunities 3.

According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), female participation in the country's labor force increased from 36.3% in 2017 to 42.68% in 2022. However, the World Bank reported that the percentage of women in the labor force in Bangladesh was 32.43% in 2023. The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation's 2022-23 Periodic Labour Force Survey Report, released in October 2023, shows that the female labor force participation rate increased to 37.0% in 20234. Female labor force participation rate in Bangladesh has increased significantly over the past five years, especially in rural areas, indicating that more women are now able to access employment opportunities and contribute to the country's economic growth.

For this reason, this study will try to understand the current situation of women in regard of livelihoods and find out the gaps behind their income generation.

**Research Questions:**

* What is the current situation of the women?
* What are the gaps behind their income generation also discover the potential solution to overcome the situation?

**Aims and Objectives:**

The main objective of the study is to understand the current situation of the targeted people. What are the gaps behind their income generation and how can they overcome the situation.

The specific objectives are as given below:

* To assess the current situation of the targeted people
* To find out the gaps behind their income generation and also discover the potential solution to overcome the situation
* To provide potential recommendations for the policymakers in addressing priority needs and overcoming strategy.

**Methods and Techniques:**

The study will apply both quantitative and qualitative mixed methods to collect the required data from the targeted people in Darianagar, Cox’s Bazar. Under the quantitative methods, the study will conduct a household survey on the other hand for the qualitative methods, study will be conducted through Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with the targeted group, Key Informant Interviews with the key stakeholders, and In-Depth Interviews with the potential beneficiaries. The following study methods and tools are given below:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Method** | **Tools** | | |
| **Quantitative** | Household Survey | | |
| **Qualitative** | Focus Group Discussions | Key Informant’s Interview | In-Depth Interview |

## Sample Size for the Household Survey

The survey will follow the simple purposive sampling process for the household survey of those who received any types of training for livelihood. As the study duration will be very short and the beneficiary number is small, we will follow a purposive sampling process to fix up the sample size for the household survey. The total beneficiaries with the sample size as given below:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Training Name** | **Total Population** | **Sample Size** | **% of Population** |
| **Sewing Machine** | 50 | 15 | 30% |
| **Block painting** | 20 | 8 | 40% |
| **Driving** | 12 | 6 | 50% |
| **Total** | **82** | **29** | **40%** |

We have found that total of 82 beneficiaries received training in their lifetime namely Sewing Machine-50, Block painting-20, and Driving-12. Randomly we have collected 29 households’ information as a part of a household survey that will cover 40% of the total population of this study.

## Sample Size for the Qualitative Survey

We have covered 3 FGDs, 7 KIIs, and 3 IDIs for the qualitative survey method. The details of this qualitative survey method are given below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Tools** | **Targeted Group** | **Sample Size** |
| **FGDs** | 3 types of training categories group | 3 |
| **KIIs** | Key stakeholders (Trainer, community leaders, key Staff) | 7 |
| **IDIs** | 3 people from 3 types of training categories | 3 |

## Data Collection Tools Design

For collecting the data from the field, the study team will be developed same structured interview questionnaire for the household survey and design checklist for the FGDs, KIIs and IDIs based on the requirement of the information needed and the objectives of the data collecting plan for the qualitative survey. However, qualitative results and secondary data will be used to contextualize quantitative findings and draw qualitative links between sectoral outcomes to provide a more holistic picture of needs and service gaps.

## Data Management and Analysis

After the collection of survey data using the Kobo toolbox, it will transfer to Excel/SPSS for some logical check and conducting statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics will be used for data analysis which will be visualised and presented through tables and bar charts.

**Expected Outcomes:**

* Lack of seed money or business capital: Most of them face problems due to not having seed money or capital to purchase their machine or instrument to start the business. On the other hand, raw materials for the block painting were not available in the area.
* Lack of market linkage opportunity: On the other hand, market linkage facility, knowledge on how to sell their product in the market and not having the opportunity.
* Lack of job placement opportunity: job placement for the participant.
* Lack of license: Not having a driving license for the participants who received training on driving. That’s why the training participant are not be able to join any job or could not start self-employment activities after completed the training.

**Reference:**

1 Gender gaps in the workforce - Global Gender Gap Report 2023 | World Economic Forum. https://www.weforum.org/publications/global-gender-gap-report-2023/in-full/gender-gaps-in-the-workforce/ (accessed May 6, 2024).

2 Blau FD, Kahn LM. The gender wage gap: Extent, trends, & explanations. *J Econ Lit* 2017; **55**: 789–865.

3 Breaking barriers: Unconscious gender bias in the workplace.

4 More women joining the workforce | The Business Standard. https://www.tbsnews.net/bangladesh/more-women-joining-workforce-607426 (accessed May 6, 2024).