

## **Human Security Leverages Development in COVID Pandemic: Bangladesh Context**

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### **Structured Abstract:**

**Purpose:** The study hopes to propose a framework for enforcing a human security-based rural development approach in a post-COVID pandemic in Bangladesh.

**Study Method:** The study has been well guided through content analysis.

**Findings:** Unfortunately, human security-driven rural development does not get momentum even in a post-COVID pandemic as the human security in development is not well-realized across the level. The people of Bangladesh have tried to reach out to the right people in spite of various irregularities during the cash assistance period. There is a big role for the Civil Society Alliance to be played but the reality is different.

**Originality:** A number of researches on human security are still found in contemporary scholarship. The literature review couldn't confirm the research on the same topic with a focus on development in rural Bangladesh in the past and hence it deserves nobility.

**Keywords:** Human Security, Rural Development, Community Participation, and COVID-19 Pandemic

**Paper Type:** Research Paper.

### **Introduction**

Human security is not a conventional security system related to the survival of individuals, communities, and even the world, but rather a system that reflects the dignity of human beings to live and contribute equally to the betterment of society (UNDP, 1994). According to previous research and knowledge, the long experience of rural development of Bangladesh has led not only to socio-economic development, but also to the dark side of social, economic and environmental system. Human security is apparently an emerging example of a global vulnerability whose proponents challenge the traditional notion of national security by arguing that the right reference for security should be the individual rather than the state,

society, as well as complementing great and concerted efforts with the engagement of the national and international development agencies (UNDP, 2006).

Human security certainly believes that national, regional and global stability requires a people-centered approach to security rather than security based on weapons, strength and force. Human security is an emerging example of understanding global vulnerabilities whose proponents challenge the traditional notion of national security by arguing that the appropriate reference for security should be the individual rather than the state to determine the collective voices for welfare of the global community through peaceful existence across the level. Human security therefore is popular and well-respected approach based on a people-centered view of security is necessary for national, regional and global stability. The purpose of human security is to protect all vital elements of human life from a critical threat, in a way that is consistent with long-term human perfection and protects people from state to state and people from unhealthy competition. Human security takes its shape from human: important core that is protected through various elements ranging from personal security to community security. Institutions that undertake to protect human security will not be able to promote every aspect of human well-being despite many challenges on and off.

The human security system calls for protection for an institutional development that is institutional, not episodic; Responsive, not rigid; Resistive, not responsive to moving forward for improvement at the societal level to achieve human dignity across the board. In this way, people will face the inevitable recession. "In the way of saving human lives, security involves not only those organizations that publicly seek to promote human security, but also those organizations that involuntarily destroy harmony and peace with the spirit of living together. Three decades ago, the United Nations Development Program, in its 1994 Human Development Report, introduced the concept of human security through a concerted effort by the obsolete consciousness of state security.

It identifies human security as seven distinct, but interrelated and complementary, dimensions of security, namely, to improve the concept of unconventional approaches to economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political national security systems (UNDP, 2003). Human security is credible for achieving the four indicators for improving non-traditional security by bridging the gap between traditional and non-traditional approaches. Rural development in Bangladesh is considered to be less accelerated as gaps in policy formulation and implementation are reported to be inactive in most community organizations.

In addition, the lack of involvement in development programs, increasing community reliance on external assistance and initiatives, less focus on SMEs, lack of integrated approach and lack of community-based development have initiated underdevelopment in rural Bangladesh. These forms of rural development are a result of the insecurity of the people in rural Bangladesh as rural development generally refers to economic development and community development activities and initiatives taken to improve living standards in suburban areas, remote villages and rural areas (UNDP, 2006).

Rural development has been identified as all efforts to improve the livelihoods of rural people such as change in rural productivity, employment opportunities, income and wealth distribution, social structure and social mobility, resource management, access to information, rural people's strength, health and education and so on (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 2008). The success of rural development has been broadly measured by these changes and human security issues have been set aside.

The study intends to examine the essence of human security particularly the food security and economic security based rural development approach for the sake of sustainable development of rural Bangladesh. It observes the end results of human security driven rural development approach in Bangladesh. And, the study hopes to propose a framework for enforcing human security based rural development approach in post COVID pandemic. The study has been well guided through content analysis.

### **Defining Human Security and its Origin**

Human security is a paradigm shift in understanding global vulnerabilities whose proponents challenge the traditional notion of national security through military security, arguing that appropriate references to security should be more humane than at the national level. Human security reflects a people-centered and multi-disciplinary understanding of security involving a number of research areas, including development studies, international relations, strategic studies, and human rights. The 1994 United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Report is considered a milestone publication in the field of human security, arguing that ensuring "freedom from want" and "freedom from fear" is the best way to tackle global problems.

The rise of the Human Security Discourse was the result of a combination of factors that led to the end of the Cold War. These challenged the neoliberal paradigm's focus on states,

"mutually guaranteed destruction" and the dominance of military security and, in short, enabled them to raise a broader concept of security (UNDP, 1994). The increasingly rapid pace of globalization; The threat of a nuclear war between the superpowers, the significant increase in democratization and integration, and international human rights law have opened up a space where both the concepts of 'development' and 'security' could be reconsidered. Mahbub-ul-Haq first drew attention to the concept of human security in the 1994 United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Report and sought to influence the 1995 United Nations World Conference on Social Development in Copenhagen (Panday, 2013).

### **Human Security leverages Rural Development in Bangladesh: Issues and Challenges**

Rural development is essential for the overall development of any country. Rural economy is dependent on agriculture. Every state emphasizes on agricultural development. Agricultural development facilitates the development of farmers in various ways (Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, 2011). The intensive cultivation in a scientific way using improved seeds and fertilizers in every inch of agricultural land is called 'Agricultural Revolution'. Rural development and agricultural revolution are included in the constitution of Bangladesh as a principle of governing the state (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 2011). Indeed, people lacked the ability to purchase food or to buy extra in the middle of COVID Pandemic and posed them a serious vulnerability. In dealing with situations like famine or famine, Bangladesh must ensure that the poor do not lose their right to food. For this reason special consideration is required for market and supply chain control. Governments need to consult food security experts to guide their policies and programs

In this regard, the constitution states that the state will take effective measures to bring about radical change in rural areas through development of agrarian revolution, rural electrification system, development of cottage industries and other industries and development of education, communication and public health. In the post-emergence period of Bangladesh, the situation began to change rapidly. Now the village roads are much improved. There are many villages which are connected to the city by paved roads. About 100% of the houses in the village have hygienic toilets (WHO, 2007).

Significant progress has also been made in the field of electricity connection. Residents of remote villages where electricity has not been provided are getting opportunity to use electric lights, electric fans, TVs, fridges etc. due to solar power. There are government primary

schools in almost every village and high schools and colleges near every village. Due to the expansion of urbanization every year and the establishment of housing projects with the establishment of factories all over the cities and villages, the agricultural land is declining. In our country there is still a huge disparity in the way of life of people in urban and rural areas.

However, our Constitution places great emphasis on the development of the agrarian revolution, the electrification of rural areas, the development of cottage industries and other industries, and the development of education, communication and public health to eliminate these inequalities. In the light of the provisions of the Constitution on rural development and agrarian revolution, every government has been striving to make appropriate allocations for this purpose while formulating the annual revenue and development budget (Siddique, 1992).

Our progress in this direction is not promising. In the sense that rural development and agrarian revolution have been termed as 'State Principles' in the Constitution of the highest law of the country, if we can truly implement this principle inspired by its consciousness, the overall development of the country will lead to massive development.

Let's discuss the essence of human security in accelerating rural development in Bangladesh. Long four-decade government activities have placed special emphasis on sustainable micro-rural initiatives for national development. Among these, increasing the rate of equal participation of men and women in national life and contributing to the creation of responsible citizens has become the main focus of government and NGOs (Siddique, 1992).

They have played a vital role in shaping the participation of the poor in the decision-making process. At the time of Bangladesh's birth, when the country was struggling with a war-torn economy, the main tool to turn the tide was the agricultural sector in Bangladesh. In addition to government agricultural development activities, a number of NGOs are carrying out various activities to improve the agricultural sector, including training in modern farming methods, providing agricultural credit, providing quality seeds and fertilizers, and providing ideas on increasing yields through the use of technology in agriculture (Halder, 2003).

This development has also had a major impact on rural socio-economic development, which is helping to strengthen the foundations of the country's entire economy. There is no way to deny the role of NGO sector along with the role of government in rural socio-economic development. Therefore, the NGO sector needs to think about the solution of all the current

obstacles and work for sustainable rural socio-economic development by uniting the marginalized and disadvantaged people in income generating activities.

Bangladesh is on the list of the most vulnerable countries due to climate change. Almost every year the people of Bangladesh especially the char areas, rivers, hills, Barind, haors and coastal communities suffer indescribably due to various natural calamities like floods, droughts, river erosion, tidal surges, cyclones, earthquakes, landslides etc. Currently 40% of the population is poor. 20% of them are extremely poor. The importance of sugar crop in food security, rural development and prevention of migration is immense in this country.

The country's sugar and molasses industry, which is the only heavy industry in the north, has been established on the basis of sugarcane. Therefore, sugarcane contributes the most to the economy of the northern and north-western regions. About 6 lakh farming families in the sugar mill area are directly dependent on sugarcane cultivation.

Apart from that, around 2 million farming families across the country are dependent on sugarcane crop for molasses production outside the sugar mills and for the production of chewed sugarcane (UNDP, 1996). Following steps to take for better economic and food security of rural Bangladesh: Food shortages can be greatly reduced by cutting canals and supplying water, drainage, destroying insects, protecting crops from flooding and brackish water.

- Provide appropriate support for the formation and sustainability of farmer organizations / producer groups.
- Taking specific measures to deal with natural disasters.
- Facilitate agricultural credit activities and ensure that real farmers get loans.
- To provide subsidy to increase food production.
- Ensuring marketing and fair price of manufactured products.

It has become difficult to find agricultural labourers to work in the villages. The men and women who set foot in the city from the village with various colourful dreams in their eyes, when they could not stand as expected, started trying their best to stay in the city. Where many times there is no minimum opportunity to live a healthy life. But in the village, they had nice and tidy houses and suitable agricultural land for subsistence, cultivation of vegetables and cereals in the yard next to the house.

Therefore, in order to discourage the urban-oriented rural masses, it is necessary to create many attractive employment opportunities in the villages. There is no alternative to rice-based agriculture to create rural employment by discouraging domestic and foreign migration. Microfinance continues to make a significant contribution to the alleviation of rural poverty in Bangladesh. About 36 percent of Bangladeshi women are directly involved in the economy outside the home. The country's fast-growing garment industry has provided employment to over 3.3 million people. And more than 60 percent of these workers are women, most of whom have come from rural areas and opted for urban employment (Panday, 2013).

### **Recommendations and Conclusion**

The pressures of globalization, successive natural disasters and instability in the international food market remind us that there is no alternative to increasing investment in agriculture, developing domestic food production, storage and supply systems and raising public awareness to achieve food security in times of crisis. We have to produce our own food. In the past, farmers did not get good prices for their produce particularly at the COVID pandemic. As a result, they have had to struggle to make new investments. The government and various agencies may have tried to give them loans. But not sure how far it has come. That is why there should be inclusive funding to increase agricultural production in the future.

It has to be done through the best use of soil, water, technology and own efforts of the country. In addition to the constitutional guarantee in Bangladesh, the state has a formal responsibility to ensure food security to all citizens of the country in accordance with the International Charter of Human Rights.

Bangladesh has made a legally binding commitment to implement the right to development through the signing of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) in 1997. With the change of time, there is no food crisis in the country now. Almost all types of food are being produced in the country. But safe food has definitely become a big challenge now. This is not possible just by following good practices at the production stage.

Because the product is being contaminated in various ways even during the marketing process and sale. The stated goal of food policy is always to ensure a reliable food security

system for all people. Achieving this goal requires extensive development of the existing food security system in the country. In the context of Bangladesh, food policy is a multidimensional issue, where various ministries and agencies will strive to build a reliable food security system as a common goal through the implementation of their respective programs and strategies related to food security. Moreover, an integrated connection is needed at all stages of the multi-sectoral program. Development partners will try to cooperate from all sides. The people of Bangladesh have tried to reach out to the right people in spite of various irregularities during the cash assistance period. There is a big role for the Civil Society Alliance and these needs to be utilized under the leadership of the different relevant ministries for coping with the challenges owing to COVID.

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