AN ANALYSIS OF LAND, MIGRATION AND RURAL DIFFERENTIATION: A CASE STUDY IN BANGLADESH

by

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Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD in Economics
2013

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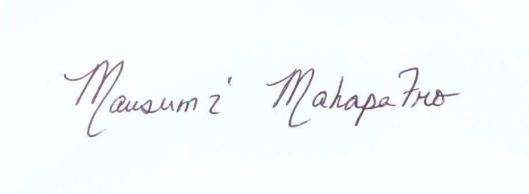
Declaration for PhD thesis

I certify that this thesis, which is submitted for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy in Economics, is solely my own and has not been written for me in whole or in part by any other person.



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Abstract

The dissertation examines the nexus between land, migration and rural differentiation within the context of two villages in rural Bangladesh. As a resurvey spanning nearly thirty years of longitudinal change, it explores the changing role of land in rural livelihoods and the emergence of overseas migration within the wider ambit of agrarian change. In so doing, the research delves into the context-specific relevance of processes such as depeasantisation and the delinking of land from rural livelihoods. Furthemore, this research investigates the persistence of the peasantry within the context of the study area through an analysis of changes inlandholdings and sources of income.

Conditions of reproduction are assessed for sample households within the surveyed villages as a means of examining the validity of the classical terminology of rich/middle/poor peasant. This represents a key point of departure and is based on the argument that rural differentiation is not wholly predicated on processes internal to agriculture. Using conditions of production, though important, presupposes that it is within the ambit of agriculture through which processes of rural differentiation occur. I conclude that rural differentiation can in fact be triggered and deepened by processes external to agriculture and in particular, migration overseas.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables

List of Figures

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BIDS	Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies
BMET	Bangladesh Bureau ofMigration Employment and Training
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CBN	Cost of Basic Needs Approach
DARE	Deagrarianization and Rural Employment
DCI	Direct Calorie Intake
DHS	Demographic Health Surveys
FEI	Food Energy and Intake Method
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDR	Human Development Report
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Surveys
HYV	High Yielding Variety
IMA	International Migrants' Alliance, Bangladesh
IRRI	International Rice Research Institute
MDGs	Millenium Development Goals
NCR	National Council of Research
NCAER	National Council of Applied Economic Research
NELM	New Economics of Labour Migration

NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NRDS	Noakhali Rural Development Society
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer Olking Measure of Sampling Adequacy
PCA	Principal Component Analysis
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RMMRU	Refugee Migratory Movements Research Unit
WARBE	Welfare Association for the Rights of Bangladeshi Emigrants' Development Foundation
WDR	World Development Report

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. Deborah Johnston for her patience and guidance in completing this research and for her sharp attention to detail for which I am grateful. I would also like to extend thanks to Professor Mahbub Ullah from Dhaka University for his openness without which I would not have been able to undertake the resurvey, a core component of my research. I must also acknowledge the Noakhali Rural Development Society (NRDS) for providing logistical support during my fieldwork.

I am indebted to my parents Surendra and Swarnalata Mahapatro for their unwavering support and encouragement and for being a source of strength always. I am also grateful to the following persons for supporting me in countless ways: Zebunessa Khan, Zainul H. Khan, Nurun Nahar Shafique and Mohammad Shafique.

Finally, I dedicate this piece of work to my husband Khan M. Ahsan and my children Jamshed and Vivek.

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Key Objectives of Research

This dissertation aims to contribute further to the scholarship centered on the political economy of agrarian change; it is a reaction to analyses of rural differentiation premised onmethodological individualism and thus uprooted from the wider social and political processes that underpin what it means to be poor and non-poor within a rural context. More specifically, my research will explore the underlying dynamics between land, migration and poverty, all through an analysis that brings rural differentiation to the fore of the analysis. Within the context of two selected villages in Bangladesh, I will argue that the principal means of identifying poverty and processes of rural differentiation are not solely land-centric or completely rooted in the processes of agricultural production and that processes such as migration do spawn and deepen rural disparities.

I focus in particular on how the relationship between land and poverty is evolving and whether the possession of land can even constrain the accumulation of wealth in specific contexts. Further to this end, I examine land transactions and changes in landholdings for a period of over thirty years in the survey villages. In so doing, I will discuss one of the most pertinent questions related to agrarian transition and that is whether the persistence of the small farmer is in fact an enduring phenomenon. As a rigorous ontological exercise, this dissertation will examine the relevance of the classical terminology of rich, middle and small peasant within the context of my survey villages. Is depeasantisation

occurring? Are there ‘classes of labour’ as Bernstein (2010) opts for or does ‘peasant’ stillhold relevance? These are some of the questions I explore.

A key point of departure for this dissertation is the focus on conditions of reproduction in examining rural differentiation as opposed to conditions of production. Many studies as I will be discussing throughout the dissertation have focused on conditions of (agricultural) production such as extent of family labour versus hired labour, extent of marketable surplus, and type of technology employed to name a few. These conditions of production have sought to demarcate across class through an assessment of whether rural households are net buyers or sellers of labour, leasors or lessees of land, credit and so on. Although non-agricultural work has been incorporated into some analyses of conditions of production, the onus of deciphering production relations has centered on agricultural production. Notwithstanding the importance of these conditions of production, I will argue that conditions of reproduction vide a useful accountcan pro of rural differentiation that is not predicated on the assumption that agricultural production and the conditions for such production are what fuel rural differentiation. Focusing on conditions of production implies that forces of rural change are internal to the logic of agricultural production. On the other hand, conditions of reproduction, focuses on the minimal requirements that are needed for reproduction and thus, can be inclusive of wider processes external to agriculture such as migration. This is not to say that an analysis of conditions of reproduction is superior to one centered on conditions of production. In fact, examining conditions of reproduction alone may not provide a full account of class relations**.** My argument is that an assessment of conditions of reproduction provides a useful lens of understanding in addition to that of conditions of production. When coupled with data on conditions of production, it can not only provide a comprehensive analysis of production relations consistent with an approach focused on conditions of production, it can further shed light on the relative importance of economic activity outside of agriculture in household accumulation not merely in terms of share of income but rather as minimal conditions of reproduction.

As my research deals with migrants, the possibility of recall bias was also a potential problem and as such, it was deemed that obtaining data on conditions of production would have been error prone. Moreover, there was also the issue of time and ensuring that the household surveys were of a reasonable duration. Given some of these practical constraints, I felt that a conditions of reproduction approach was the best manner through which to conduct my analysis of rural differentiation despite its limitations. From the outset, however, it is also important to note that disaggregated data on conditions of reproduction could not be obtained due once more to problems with recall bias as there were many overseas migrant households. In future research, however, both disaggregated data on conditions of reproduction alongside data on conditions of production would be integral to an analysis of rural differentiation.

1.2 Structure of Thesis

The remainder of this dissertation is organized in the following manner: chapter2provides an overview of what constitutes poverty and sets out a framework for assessing poverty for the study area I have chosen; chapters 3 and 4 discuss the global literature and the literature specificto Bangladesh on the nexus between land, migration and rural differentiation; chapter 5 sets out the methodology for the research and chapters 6, 7 and 8 discuss the key findings and what these imply for the key research questions I have sought to explore.

Chapter 2 will provide an overall conceptualization of poverty including the basis of how it is measured and some of the key problems associated with the use of poverty lines. How the conceptualization of poverty has evolved from strictly income deprivation to one that is far more multi-dimensional in nature will also be discussed in this chapter. In particular, why some specific conceptualizations such as the livelihoods approach as well as the research on chronic poverty do not fully account for the complexities in which poverty is created and reproduced will be delved into. Finally, this chapter will provide

the rationale for investigating poverty through a relational perspective that takes into account conditions of reproduction.

Chapter 3 focuses on the global literature that sets out what the relationship between land and poverty has been and how it has evolved and how it may further change due to processes such as migration and more generally, the non-farm sector. Has land become delinked from livelihoods? Are deagrarianisation and depeasantisation widespread processes of rural change or are they specific to heterodox contexts? These questions are taken up in Chapter 3 and once again in Chapter 4 which focuses specifically on Bangladesh. In Chapter 4, I provide an overview of the relationship between land and poverty using national level data and the evolution of migration as s distinct livelihood strategy taken on by the rural poor . I also situate these changing contexts within a backdrop of rural differentiation.

Chapter 5 lays out the methodology for the research which is based on a resurvey of two villages that were studied during the 1980s. This resurvey represents a salient methodological feature of the dissertation in that it seeks to capture rural change, particularly in land ownership, over a span of 30 years. It is particularly important in light of the need for longitudinal analysis to fully comprehend and in turn assess the totality of rural change. Another key distinction in my methodology is the use of the asset index in measuring poverty as opposed to employing income data. In chapter 5, I provide both a theoretical and empirical rationale for using the asset index. In chapters 6 and 7, I present the evidence from household surveys in two selected villages in Bangladesh, the same two villages that were studied commencing in the 1980s. I discuss what the original survey findings indicated, what my resurveys suggest and explore the differences in the findings. Finally, chapter 8 pools all the findings together, both from the secondary literature and the surveys, in order to fully assess what these findings imply for the nexus between land, migration and rural differentiation.

Chapter 2: POVERTY: CONCEPT AND MEASUREMENT

The topical literature on poverty and its measurement is indeed vast, both in terms of concept and empirics. The following chapter seeks to identify the salient aspects of the literature including the areas where progress has been made in providing a richer conceptualization of poverty and its subsequent measurement, the critiques on mainstream poverty measurement approaches that have gained currency and finally, the gaps in the research. In so doing, I discuss the importance of taking a relational view to understanding poverty as material deprivation in all its complexity and the rationale for the method I will employ in the measurement of poverty in two selected villages in rural Bangladesh.

2.1 POVERTY AS MATERIAL DEPRIVATION

Poverty as an objectifiable condition of deprivation either in terms of income, expernditure or consumption remains the most common understanding of what it means to be poor. This section looks at each of these forms of material deprivation that are considered to fall under the conceptual rubric of poverty. Income and/or expenditure, risk, social and geographical isolation, and livelihood diversification form some of the more prominent measures used to determine depth of poverty and are discussed below.

2.1.1 The measurement of income/consumption poverty through a poverty line

One of the first within the discipline of social science to formulate distinct and measurable estimates of material deprivation was Benjamin Seebohm Rowntree (1901) who in his classic study of York concluded that 15 shillings would provide the minimum energy levels for a household consisting of six members for one week. Rowntree, in turn, calculated a poverty line of 26 shillings which was inclusive of non-food requirements integral for subsistence. Even earlier than Rowntree, in 1876 and later in 1899, Dadabhai Naoroji was determining the subsistence income in India. Other notable statisticians and social scientists also made due contributions including Sir Arthur Bowley (1915) for bringing statistical rigor into the measurement of poverty, Peter Townsend who in the 1960s and 1970s carried out large-scale surveys to measure poverty in the United Kingdom and P.C. Mahalanobis who did the same in India in the 1950s. More on the the problems inherent in the formation of national poverty lines is discussed in section 2.2. Centered on the formation of poverty lines, rigorous measurement indices for aggregationhave followed suit taking into account key axioms such as monotonicity and transfer principles. For instance, Amartya Sen (1976) devised a method for ordinal ranking of the poor, giving a greater weight to the poorest which a simple headcount neglected. The Foster Greer Thorbecke (FGT) index went one step further, generating a decomposable measure of poverty which provided weighted measures of poverty for different population groups and, by far, has become the most widely used index for measuring poverty gaps and creating poverty profiles of select demographic groups (Foster et al, 1984).

In addition to national level poverty lines, it was through the World Bank that the idea of an international poverty line was conceived with the aim to set an objective standard for cross-country comparisons of poverty (Kakwani, 2002). Such an objective standard, it was deemed, would be the basis on which international flow of aid would be determined. To facilitate the process of this objective standard, the Purchasing Power Parity project was developed using the United States as the reference country.[1] The Penn World Table

[1]Purchasing power parities (PPPs) are the rates of currency conversion that equalise the purchasing power of different currencies by eliminating the differences in price levels between countries. In their simplest

and International Comparisons Project (ICP) were, in turn, used to determine PPP exchange rates that were equivalent to the oft quoted $1 a day benchmark that was used as the IPL[2]. This IPL, notwithstanding its popular simplicity, is what is termed a money-metric approach, a line that is essentially linked to a money amount rather than a standard of well-being (Reddy et al, 2007). The first IPL was set at $1.02 (1985 PPP), although it was popularized as $1 a day, and was determined based on the ground that the domestic poverty lines of 8 countries was *close* to this amount. The next IPL was set at $1.075 (1993 PPP) as it represented the median of the 10 lowest domestic poverty lines.[3] The latest IPL stands at $1.25 using 2005 as the base year and was calculated as the mean of the domestic poverty lines of 15 poor countries (Pogge, 2008). Some of the limitations of this approach are discussed in section 2.2.3.

2.1.2 Poverty as deprivation of basic needs and freedoms

During the early 1970s, in the heyday of stagflation worries, came the Basic Needs Approach (BNA) spearheaded by the World Bank and pioneered by Paul Streeten (1995). The approach brought focus on the most essential human needs like health, food, education, water, shelter and transport: Poverty was seen as an inability to have command over these basic needs. Some of the drawbacks of the BNA had to do with the difficulty with implementation particularly when different groups could perhaps need different requirements of the same basic needs in order to achieve the same outcome (Reader, 2006, p.338). There was also the interpretation made by Sen, for instance, that the approach fetishizes the role of commodities in development without taking into account the broader dimensions of human development and freedoms (Sen, 1984). Such criticism alongside the shift in priorities towards a neoliberal emphasis on growth spelled the early death knell of the BNA (Reader, 2006).

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form, PPPs are simply price relatives which show the ratio of the prices in national currencies of the same good or service in different countries. See OECD's Glossary of Statistical Terms, 2001.

[2] The earlier data set is from the Penn World Table which covers 60 countries. The ICP covers 110 countries and used 1993 as the base year.

[3] This second line as developed by Ravallion, Datt and Van de Walle was considered a more accurate poverty line in comparison to the first as it was formulated using a more comprehensive database of 110 countries and using 1993 as the base year.

The latest conceptual surge came in the form of the Capabilities Approach (CA) developed by Amartya Sen who maintained that income as a sole determinant of deprivation provides a defective measure of what it means to be poor (Sen, 1999; Clark, 2006). Sen, in turn, argued that income (and basic needs) cannot be the sole criterion for deprivation due to such factors as personal heterogeneities, social climate, and relational perspectives amongst others. Rather, it is those things that we value doing or being in the form of functionings and the set of functionings which he termed capabilities that ultimately matter.This went counter to the basic needs approach which 'seemingly' focused only on commodities as the end all, giving, in turn, the ultimate ends in terms of livelihood, mobility, and freedom a greater significance than the means. The alleged 'commodity fetishism' of the BNA, however, has been rejected as a false interpretation of an approach that in fact, introduced basic needs as opposed to income for the same reasons that the CA focused on capabilities over income (Streeten, 1994, p.342). The two approaches can, in fact, be complementary as Streeten purports. What matters then is not the income per se but whether this income lead to life transformations and widening of capability sets. The CA rejected the utilitarian conception of welfare and well-being based on the notion that a person may be satisfied or happy despite deprivation, though he may value a more dignified life. Consequently, in the utilitarian approach, this person would not be regarded as deprived. In a similar vein, a person receiving all the fruits of life may not necessarily be happy.

Sen's capabilities approach also implied that what it means to be poor can vary in range and scope from country to country, not only due to cost of living differences but also as a result of cultural attitudes and norms (Sen, 1999). As such, the same amount of monetary income could make a person 'non-poor' in one country but be unable to do so in another where the standards of what it means to be 'non-poor' are higher. The same could also occur with a uniform amount of food provisioning wherein a sedentary elderly person may receive an ample amount but a lactating mother may need a much greater amount. By focusing on the ends rather than the means, Sen was arguing that income and

commodities should be valued for their instrumental value and not be valued as the ultimate end of development.The capabilities approach has not been obviated from criticism, nevertheless. For one, there is the question of aggregation and the ultimate operationalization of the CA which becomes exceedingly difficult given that it is achievements that can be more readily observed, not capability sets (Lipton and Ravallion, 1995). There is also the conceptual blur between functioning and capability. In Sen's terminology, functioning can refer to both the achieved state and the conscious actions necessary to achieve that state. As such, the maintenance of good health represents a functioning but it could also represent a capability if we consider the 'ability to achieve good health' as a set of functioning vectors instrumental to that aim. Thus, the distinction becomes cloudy and vague.

A deeper set of questions also arise as to what 'development as freedom' or development as the expansion of capability sets implies. As Gasper (2002, p.457) argues, can the expansion of casinos or trivial commodities be tantamount to an expansion of development, though it may be considered an expansion of freedom? Furthermore, to borrow the same illustration as made by Gasper, suppose there is a man with suitable income who spends the majority of his time addicted to a television set (2002, p.455). The argument is whether every expansion of 'nonsense' can be considered as an expansion of development and freedom (Gasper, 2002, p.456). And given Sen's notion that functionings represent what is individually 'valued,' what happens when these individual values are not developmental? As such, without a link of the CA with priority capabilities or central basic needs, the approach can then be argued to be facile. Furthermore, the approach can also be argued to overemphasize choice over substantive achievement and does not provide a strong resistance to consumerism, the same reasons for which the Basic Needs approach has also been criticized.

2.1.3 Poverty as a multidimensional concept

The advent of the CA has spawned two indices: the Human Development Index and the Human Poverty Index (HPI) which have sought to concretize Sen's favoring to achieve

amultidimensional approach to understanding poverty. The HPI, for instance, measures deprivation in three areas: longevity, literacy and knowledge, and economic provisioning (Chakravarty and Majumdar, 2005). In the third sector[4], championed by academics the likes of Robert Chambers, participatory poverty assessments (PPAs) have become widely used, their advantage being a more subjective measure of poverty based on the perception the poor hold of their own condition (Chambers, 1997). These participatory assessments, however, have been argued to be, for the most part, superficial qualitative descriptions, rather, that do very little in exposing the exploitive relationships that may cause poverty. For instance, the contentions have been made that one-off participatory rural appraisals may shed very little light on deeper questions of what causes poverty (Laderchi, 2001). Moreover, the reliance on formal public events may impede any further understanding of the rural power structure and how it reinforces poverty (Razavi, 1998). Later work has centered on poverty as exclusion 'from access to the means of participating in the construction of the self" (Bauman, 1998 & 2004). Such conceptualizations have often become distorted in the policy medium, particularly by the World Bank for instance, which in its Voices of the Poor document emphasized the relationship between the poor and institutions as being weak or nonexistent and thus, suggested more inclusive institutions as a policy directive for poverty (Narayan, 1999). In so doing, the poor are simplistically treated as the categorical other who, in order to become non-poor, simply need to be included in the mainstream economic domain (Green and Hulme, 2005).

The same is true of the literature on social capital which the World Bank, once more, has readily used to bring to the fore the idea that the poor must become more socially connected in order to remove the barriers that maintain their poverty (World Bank, 1998; Collier, 1998). So, the claim then is that it is the social isolation, not the exploitation within the embedded social relations that the poor are already part of, that is the cause of their condition. In turn, the use of the term 'capital' has become polluted, stripped from the need for analysis through the lens of political economy (Fine, 2001). There has also

[4]The third sector refers to the voluntary sector. Some countries have also used the PPA methodology in their poverty assessments such as Uganda or Vietnam for instance (Norton, 2001).

been some development in the conceptualization of vulnerability as a representation of the threat of poverty taken in the ex-ante position as opposed to ex-post measurements of poverty (Calvo and Dercon, 2005). In tandem with such temporal measurements, Green and Hulme (2005) have done a substantial piece of work on chronic poverty, but going beyond the customary economic descriptions (and the subsequent confounding of description as cause) and more towards bringing back the political and class dimensions of poverty which has been missing in the earlier literature (Lipton and Ravallion, 1995) that has traditionally focused on poverty as a result of lesser access to land, technology, non-farm opportunities, health, education and so on. The feminisation of poverty and the role that gender plays in perpetuating unequal access to livelihoods and incomes has also become an increasingly important aspect of poverty analysis (Cagatay, 1998; Kabeer, 2003). This literature either focuses on the higher incidence of poverty amongst female headed households, the intensity of their deprivation in comparison to other households or the longitudinal increases in incidence of poverty within these households (Razavi, 1998). The need to incorporate gender analyses into PRSPs and formulate more gender responsive budgets as policy tools has also been discussed (UNDP, 2005; UNIFEM, 2006). The gender disaggregated Human Development Index is one such response in fact to the growing evidence of unequal levels of deprivation across gender.

The stumbling block, however, has been and remains, the nexus between the concept and the method used to measure the concept (see section 2.2 for a discussion on measurement). In this nexus, only vague approximations have resulted, and an arguablyoverwhelming move towards the arbitrary and conjecture. For instance, the Human Development Index (as also its counterpart, the HPI) enters into a normative domain when assigning equal weights to its three components, thus making the bold proposition that life expectancy is as important, in fact, of equal importance, as purchasing power and literacy (Noorbakhsh, 1998; Stanton, 2007). These equal weights then override the issue of whether purchasing power may, in and of itself, be a determinant (though not the singular determinant) of life expectancy and literacy vis-a-vis expenditures for health care and education respectively. There is also the critique

that the nature of aggregation of the HDI could allow for increases in the HDI despite massive failure in certain components that the HDI measures indirectly such as quality of health care and education (Ravallion, 2010). A similar arbitrariness besets Martha Nussbaum's (2003 and 2006) listing of major capabilities as a manner in which to operationalize the capabilities approach. After all, a list of any sort is normative by nature and may open up a Pandora's box of controversy regarding what 'ought' or 'ought not.'[5]

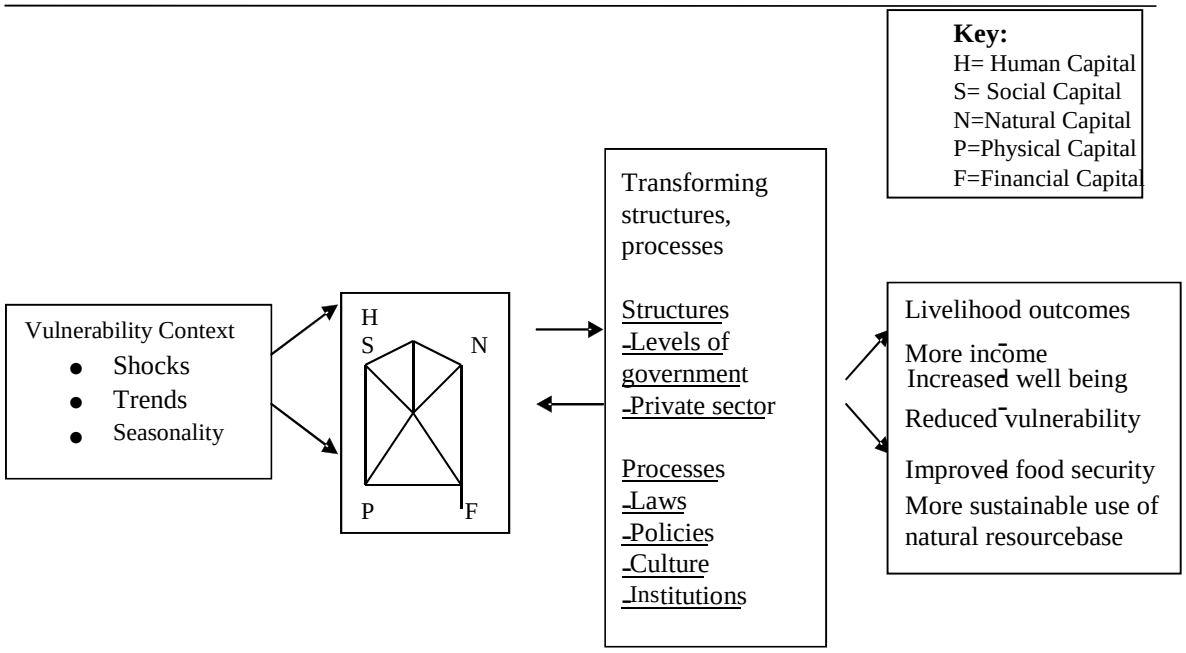
2.1.4 The poverty and livelihoods nexus

More recent literature dating from the early 1990s has however pointed towards the diversity of the poor, particularly, in the livelihoods that support them (Chambers and Conway, 1992; Scoones, 1998; DFID, 1999). The sustainable livelihoods approach is one such recent progression in the conceptualization of poverty that has sought to address the multiplicities of economic reproduction taken forth by the poor.[6] Livelihoods, in turn, referred to the multiple 'capabilities,' 'assets' or 'actions' of the poor, thus alluding to the dynamic context in which the poor operated (DFID, 1999). The figure below illustrates the key components of the sustainable livelihoods framework.

Figure 2.1: SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS FRAMEWORK

[5] Nussbaum highlights ten central capabilities as being of prime importance which include life, bodily health, senses and imagination to name a few. Deepa Narayan has used six dimensions of well-being while Manfred Max Neef has focused on subsistence, protection, affection, understanding, participation, leisure, creation, identity and freedom. See S.Alkire (2002) for a description of each of the aforementioned dimensions of human development.

[6] Both DFID and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) of the United Nations have adopted the sustainable livelihoods approach. See DFID's Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance Sheets (1999) and IFAD's Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (Hamilton-Peach and Townsley, n.d.).



Source: DFID, 1999

What the livelihoods framework does is provide a snapshot of the various range of factors and interrelationships that may influence livelihoods in the rural context. The framework depicts a story of how the poor combine a range of different capitals in the presence of vulnerability and shock to influence the structures and processes that will lead to certain livelihood outcomes. The asset pentagon displays the wide range of capital that the poor have at their disposal. These can range from possession of land and livestock to skill sets and social networks. On these range of assets impinge the livelihood outcomes that may result. The key departure of the livelihoods framework is in envisioning the poor not solely as farmers or labourers but as households who combine or straddle a range of economic activity. In fact, three broad clusters of livelihood strategies emerge out of the framework – agricultural intensification, diversification into off-farm or non-farm and migration (Scoones, 1998, p.9).

Critiques of the livelihoods approach have also emerged which have divulged the key weakness of an approach that, though mentioning surface differentiation amongst the poor, speaks little of the underlying relationships of power and class that may be at the source of any differences amongst the poor to begin with. For instance, critics have focused on the strictly microeconomic logic of the livelihoods approach as limiting a fuller understanding of why households diversify in the first place (Start and Johnson, 2004). The poor were perceived as vulnerable to risk and consequently diversified their strategies in a rational manner, consistent with the neoclassical modus operandi, albeit with the caveat that markets were indeed imperfect, particularly credit and insurance markets, and that information asymmetries were rampant (Pontara, 2010). Though the livelihoods approach called for a more inclusive, participatory driven development agenda that took into account the dynamic nature of livelihoods of the poor, it retained (perhaps tacitly) its neoclassical character. In consonance with neoclassical economics, the poor were seen to exhibit rational behavior, seeking to both maximize returns and minimize risk. Pontara has also discussed the vagueness of the term 'livelihoods' thus barring conceptual clarity on what livelihoods are and how they link with wider rural economies (Pontara, 2010). Moreover, as Scoones has recognised, the livelihoods approach has not fully responded to the criticisms around four key areas: 1) an overemphasis on the local without an analysis of how globalization affects rural economies; (2) environmental sustainability; 3) how politics and power play into rural diversification and 4) how rural diversification fits into the larger picture of agrarian change (Scoones, 2009). Although a proponent of the livelihoods approach, Scoones has emphasised the need to develop the approach further.

In essence, the sustainable livelihoods approach envisions rural poverty as an amalgam of vulnerability and risk and relies on an ahistorical and asocialpath of deliverance of poverty reduction. The zealous focus on livelihood diversification as a possible cure-all, in turn, diverts a much needed attention away from critical historical, social and political factors that may have established and maintained existing conditions of poverty. The approach has been particularly well-received by donor agencies, becoming the central

plank of poverty reduction programmes, perhaps due to its non-confrontational character.[7] Sender, for instance, writes the following:

> Therefore, the policy mix advocated by the vast majority of agencies (and implemented by the NGOs they fund) has become dominated by initiatives to promote various forms of off-farm female self-employment: the promotion of retailing enterprises, food processing/catering stalls, hairdressing, handicraft (baskets, mats, pottery, soft toys), sewing/tailoring and small livestock enterprises (chickens, ducks, rabbits, stall-fed goats, etc.) Some intellectual legitimacy for these initiatives has been offered by the 'livelihoods approach' literature, which accepts the evidence that poor rural people may not be small farmers, but usually have to combine *non-agricultural* assets and activities in 'diversified livelihood packages,' in a 'coping' or survival strategy (Sender, 2003, pp.406-407, author's emphasis).

In the policy realm, such new conceptualization of the poor has brought about a greater focus on the role of the non-farm sector as an abode for the poor, self-employment becoming the new cure-all, a way to transform the poor into the owner of means of production, similar to new terms such as human capital and social capital which bring 'capital' back to the disenfranchised poor.

In so doing, however, the policy recommendations drawn from such a framework focus on ways of expanding the range of straddling activities available to the poor, without assessment of the causes of distress that demanded such straddling in the first place. As such, the livelihoods approach appears to have done little to link the micro-level livelihoods with macro or meso level changes, thus spawning policy change that can only be considered to lead to micro-level success, if at all (Start and Johnson, 2004).

Wood's analysis of a 'Faustian bargain' whereby the poor forfeit their agency for greater livelihood security perhaps sums up the deficit in the livelihoods literature best (Wood, 2003). The later work on chronic poverty (Green and Hulme, 2005) has sought to correct

[7]The Bangladesh PRSP, (2005) in a tacit reference to the livelihoods approach, mentions the importance of all routes in poverty reduction including non-farm economic activity.

for the absence of power and class analysis by assessing groups of poor as they relate to one another. In so doing, different groups have been identified to include the never poor, descending poor, ascending poor, the chronic poor and so on (Shepherd and Hulme, 2003). This has formed the center of the argument, in fact, for an escape out of poverty in Bangladesh:

> The ascending households have been found to be faster accumulators of human, physical and financial assets. They were better diversifiers – they allocated more land to non-rice crops – and better adopters – within rice areas, they cultivated more landunder high-yielding modern varieties. They, in general, displayed strong non-agricultural orientations with much higher proportion of earners engaging in activities such as trade, service, migration (providing remittances), and non-agricultural labour (transport, construction and industry).
>
> Sen and Hulme, 2006, p.77

Thus, the ascending poor are the ones who can hedge risk, take up new opportunities and innovate, while the chronic and the descending poor are ridden with adversities that make them more vulnerable and less able to improve their circumstances. Such classifications have brought to light important aspects of poverty which mainstream poverty line measurements have neglected; that is, the duration of poverty and movements into and out of poverty. Moreover, such research does indeed mark a progression in our understanding of what causes poverty, why some households remain poor and the processes that reproduce their poverty. However, as Devereux has rightly pointed out, focus on the duration of poverty may divert attention from more important aspects such as the severity of poverty (Devereux, 2003). Furthermore, the danger is always there for such research to move away from what Hickey and Bracking (2005) consider a political problem to arguably technocratic analyses centered on individual agency as the passage by Sender (2003) below illustrates. In fact, a depoliticisation of poverty has become the norm, shrouding our understanding of the genesis of poverty and its intractability in a vague cloud of mystery. Hariss (2007) provides a critique of conventional poverty research agendas, arguing that they form part of what can be labeled as the “anti-politics

machine" which center the problematic of poverty as an individual or household condition, divorced from the larger political economy considerations of late capitalism. Thus, as Harriss argues, even contemporary research feeds into this depoliticization of poverty.

For instance, adverse geography is also considered to play a part in inducing poverty traps, leading to a newer terminology of 'spatial' poverty.[8] The amalgam of such factors form the basis for what are referred to as poverty traps, akin to a low level state of equilibrium. Gender roles and discrimination have also come into analysis with stylized, popular labels such as the 'feminization of poverty'(Chant, 2006). Despite the attention given to gender by development organizations such as World Bank, for instance, the result has been considered to be technocratic solutions that see gender and women as being synonymous, thus resulting in a depoliticization of gender analysis (Baden and Goetz, 1998). To take an example, the World Bank (2001) has promoted a policy of access to productive resources for women centered on the argument that gender equality is conducive to economic growth and the reduction of poverty. Such interpretations have received a great deal of criticism, particularly for promoting a myth about womens' behavior that Cornwall et. al refer to as 'essentialized images of woman' (Cornwall et al, 2007, p.3). O'laughlin (2007) offers a similar critique, arguing in turn that the policy conclusion which calls for bringing back control over productive resources to women as a way to address both gender equality and poverty is once more based on a myth of womens' purported household behavior. She further argues that gender equality should not have to depend on its instrumental value for achieving certain aims but in and of itself (O'laughlin, 2007, p.23).

As Sender argues with regard to policies for poverty reduction in rural Africa for instance,

[8]Sachs et al (2001) has contributed to the discussion on spatial poverty and adverse geography and the negative role it plays in development.

> One policy conclusion was to modify the general advice to improve smallholder access to inputs...to insist that the same inputs need to be focussed to a much greater extent on Female Headed Households, or directed towards those specific farming enterprises within all households that are undertaken and 'controlled' by women (Sender, 2003, p.405)

Hence, descriptive (as opposed to analytical) differences amongst the poor which amount mainly to differences in characteristics or the regions they habitate are used to categories the poor into a myriad labels that amount to characteristics of the poor, not the causes that spawn poverty (Green and Hulme, 2005; Johnston and Sender, 2008). These descriptive labels, however, do not move beyond descriptions, falsely equating symptom with causeand in turn, fall into the earlier mentioned notion of the'anti-politics machine' (Harriss, 2007). To make the hollow statement that a person is poor because of his/her illiteracy or social isolation obscures the very reasons the poor person is illiterate or isolated in the first place. Yes, it may be stated, more cautiously, that the poor are perhaps more likely to be illiterate which then, moves away from assigning spurious causality where it may not exist. Ultimately, then, despite an overt rejection of the poor as homogenous, some of the newer conceptualisations of poverty have remained embedded to individual household condition and not wider political processes.

2.2 ON THE MEASUREMENT OF POVERTY AND THE PROBLEMS THEREIN

Given that this thesis will measure poverty in two selected villages, it will be relevant to discuss some of the key problems with regard to poverty measurement. As discussed in section 2.1.3, the measurement of poverty can be argued to be to a certain extent arbitrary. Perhaps the epitome of this vague, arbitrary nature of measurement is the poverty line (PL), the same poverty line that Rowntree claimed to be 26 shillings back in the dawn of the twentieth century. In fact, it has even been suggested that instead of PLs, focusing on income distribution and the bottom quintiles may be less cumbersome. Such a method, however, is also to a certain extent arbitrary in the sense that it must be determined whether to deem the bottom 20 or 40 percent as poor. This notion of arbitrariness has been emphasized by Stein Ringen (1985) who aptly stated that the

'logical link' between poverty as concept and its measurement is extremely weak. Although numerous statistical advances have been made to make approximations of poverty more precise and accurate, such approximations have been riddled with problems from the outset. The following summarizes the key hurdles in the estimation process and the controversies that have unfolded over poverty numbers.

2.2.1 On Survey Method

As this thesis will set up a household survey to inform its findings, it is important to focus on the most salient debates and problems regarding surveys. The debate about using national accounts over household surveys is indeed a complex one raising only more questions about which method is a more accurate indicator of actual levels of poverty.[9] What is certain, however, is the the divergence in national accounts and household survey data has been increasing over time, particularly in the case of India (Quibria,2003). It can only be expected that margins of error will arise upon applying statistical techniques to reflect poverty trends. This is further illustrated by the fact that very little consensus exists on the state of poverty. For instance, in India, the opinion is divided between those who indicate that national poverty headcount ratio fell by 50 percent between 1990 and 1998 (Bhalla, 2000) to those who maintain that between 1993/94 and 1999/2000, poverty

[9]One of the reigning sources of disagreement on poverty estimates is the dispute over the national accounts as opposed to household surveys as a means to extract data on consumption and expenditure. Those in favor of using the national accounts argue that household surveys are conducted with less frequency whereas national accounting is done every year. The argument is extended that household surveys also tend to underestimate consumption and thus, overestimate poverty (Dandekar and Rath, 1971). At the opposing end, in favor of surveys are those who maintain that national accounts data are not intended for measuring poverty (Quibria, 2003). The higher levels ofconsumption under national accounts and stagnant levels of consumption under household surveys stems from the positioning that survey data is unrepresentative of high income and expenditure groups whereas national accounts is unrepresentative of the lower income stratas (Naseem, 1973). In India, the National Sample Survey (NSS) estimates of foodgrain consumption has been reported to be higher in specific years than what has been shown in the official national accounts. In the case of non-food items, again the NSS estimates were higher; only in the area of services were the NSS estimates lower than that of national accounts (Srinivasan, et al, 2005). As such, this is in direct opposition to the earlier works by Dandekar and Rath who claimed that NSS data underestimates consumer expenditure. Such a proposition, however, has been claimed to be only the case for Asian countries such as Bangladesh; for African countries, it is purported that household surveys in fact overestimate consumption (Karshenas, 2001).

fell by no more than 3 percent.[10] Patnaik (2004, 2005, 2006) in fact, suggests that poverty had actually risen during this period. One factor that has been cited for differing poverty estimates involves the actual nature of the survey used, in particular, the length of the recall period. In India, studies indicate that a switch from the standard 30 day reporting period to a 7 day reporting period lifts 175 million people out of poverty, a sizable reduction indeed (Wade, 2004). In a similar vein, poverty figures can also differ based on whether the unit of measurement is at the individual or the household level as Naseem (1973) has shown in the case of Pakistan.[11]Furthermore, the majority of survey methods used are still static in nature and are thus, unable to capture the dynamic movements that take place both above and below the poverty line over time (Baulch, 1996).

2.2.2 Income versus Expenditure

In addition to some of the problems with recall periods and the discrepancy between national account and household surveys, there is also the differential that can be attributed to surveys that use income as the yardstick as opposed to expenditure. Whether to employ income or expenditure data in determining poverty is in fact yet another thorny issue related to poverty measurement. The argument for using levels of expenditure are based on the seasonal nature of income in rural settings and therefore the difficulty in recalling these incomes for the purpose of household surveys (Christiansen et al, 2002). There is also the argument that income may not necessarily reflect levels of well-being that depend more on questions of access and availability. In conjunction with this, consumption expenditure, in addition to reflecting command over commodities, can

[10]World poverty counts are also a bone of contention. For instance, Chen and Ravallion (2001) are outspoken in the contention that world poverty actually fell during the 1990s due to reduction in poverty in China and India. However, both Reddy et al (2007) and Pogge (2008) maintain that despite reductions in China and India, world poverty actually increased over the span of the 1990s.

[11]This is owing to equivalence scales calculated to measure scale economies in a household. However, equivalence scales can vary across time and also across countries (Lumbrano, 2012). There is some debate about to set such scales as discussed in Johnston and Sender (2008).

also reveal access to credit markets and levels of household savings when incomes fluctuate (ibid, 2002). In Pakistan, for instance, the proportion below the poverty line varies based on whether income or expenditure is used, in part due to factors such as dissavings, gifts and remittances which do not fall neatly under the income category (Naseem, 1973). Although there are advantages in using income data to uncover various sources of income and their relative contribution to livelihoods, in economies where a large proportion of the population lives in subsistence and does not fall under the aegis of the market, imputing income becomes an onerous task prone to error.

Nevertheless, expenditure data is also fraught with error. For one, as noted earlier, there is the problem of recall periods just as for collection of income data (Sahn and Stifel, 2003). The process of collection of accurate expenditure data can in fact be just as convoluted as that of income requiring repeat visits and the chance of households withholding information (Howe et al, 2012). The overall reliability of household expenditure surveys including their frequency and completeness are also called to question in the context of developing countries (Deaton, 2001; Srinivasan, 2001; Macpherson and Silburn 1998; Baulch and Hoddinot, 2000). Finally, non-cash sources of income (i.e. common property resources) will be excluded under standard consumption measures (Macpherson and Silburn,1998). In light of the aforementioned problems and particularly the problems associated with the collection of both income and expenditure data, this dissertation will use the asset index as a measure of poverty in the surveyed villages. More on asset indices as superior measures of poverty is discussed in depth in chapter 5.

2.2.3 Setting poverty lines

In order to make international comparisons of poverty, an international poverty line (IPL) has been used that corresponds to the socially minimum standard of living across the countries being compared (see earlier section 2.1.1 on the actual IPLs that have been used over time). Several problems arise in the formulation of an IPL using the PPP

methodology as cited in the literature. First comes the concern of commodity irrelevance of the PPP commodities as part of the Penn World Table and ICP. The argument made is that many of the commodities listed are not consumed by the poor and thus, their respective prices have no bearing on the levels of consumption of the poor. In fact, a study that has constructed poverty-specific purchasing power parities has shown that the poverty lines are raised upward as a result (ADB, 2005). To exacerbate the irrelevance, the commodities for which price data is used are based on the consumption patterns of the reference country, the United States. As such, as Thomas Pogge (2009) aptly states in a rejoinder to the World Bank, if potatoes are consumed in bulk by Americans, then a PPP adjusted poverty line for Bangladesh or India would be based on the prices of potatoes in these countries, regardless of whether the poor actually consume these in large number. Thus, the types of commodities used will have bearing on the PPP adjusted domestic poverty lines that are equivalent to $1.25 a day IPL. Similarly, changes in the base year used can also lead to divergent results. What has been noted is the PPP adjusted lines have underestimated cost of living in most developing countries and consequently have lowered the equivalent poverty lines (Pogge, 2008; Wade, 2004).

These problems are only compounded by the fact that the IPLs over time have not increased at an adequate rate to account for world inflation. For instance, as Wade suggests, the equivalence of $1 a day at 1985 prices and $1.08 at 1993 prices translates into an average global inflation of only 8%. Given that global inflation between these 8 years was actually 28 percent, an IPL of $1.28 would have been more appropriate. There is no basis to account for the small increase in the IPL as food prices which form the lion's share of expenditure for poor households were increasing rapidly during this period, even higher than the prices of non-food items. The controversy that shrouds the IPL only goes to show the problems that 'objectifying' can result in, so much so that some economists such as Angus Deaton (2005) and T. Srinivasan (2003) have even suggested terminating the entire exercise of determining global counts of poverty. Countries such as China and India have declined to participate in various PPP projects owing to the methodological problems that plague such an exercise.

The same issues are also relevant for national poverty lines. Three major approaches to poverty measurement exist at the national level: Direct Calorie Intake (DCI), Food Energy Intake (FEI) and Cost of Basic Needs (CBN) (Kakwani, 2003). The DCI approach requires data on the quantities of food consumed by households which are then converted into calories. Households are considered poor if their per capita calorie consumption falls below a threshold level. However, there is a great deal of criticism with regard to a calorie line particularly considering heterogeneities in age, weight and other factors (Srinivasan, 2001; Johnston and Sender, 2008). As part of the Food Expenditure and Income (FEI) method, a poverty line which represents a daily expenditure is determined based on a calorie intake that represents the minimum per capita calorie need. The line is calculated by regressing the inverse of an Engel curve which relates monthly expenditure on a basket of food with the calorie content that basket of food provides. Finally, the CBN approach measures poverty based on lack of command over a set of consumption items including both food and non-food items that form a consumption basket (Kakwani, 2003).

The Direct Calorie Intake (DCI) and Food Energy Intake (FEI) approaches have been used most widely in Bangladesh. The calorie conversions are derived from the Institute of Nutrition and Food Science of Dhaka University (Ahmed, 2004). The DCI approach, however, has been criticized for only measuring undernourishment and not deprivation as a whole in all its complexity. The food poverty line in Bangladesh consists of 11 items inclusive of rice, lentils, vegetables and other items in a typical poor household's diet. Under the FEI approach, there is both an upper and lower calorie line of 2112 and 1805 calories respectively. Those whose consumption falls below this line are said to represent the hardcore poor. The 'absolute poor' is the term used for those whose daily consumption falls below 2112 calories but is above 1805 calories.The FEI method also has its critics. For one, the poor, as do all expenditure groups, do change their consumption patterns over time, due to price changes, changes in income patterns and changes in tastes and preferences. Thus, the same level of expenditure, even if it

accounted for changes in cost of living, would not necessarily represent the same calorie norm. In addition, what is more troubling is that the regressed expenditure that corresponds with the calorie norm may not reflect a 'desired' activity level (Mehta et al, 2000). In other words, a person with a low calorie intake due to low activity levels as a result of unemployment or deep seated poverty will in turn, bias the nutritional requirement downwards. The cost of basic needs (CBN) approach was introduced in the mid 1990s which basically took the FEI expenditure and added a non-food basket. As such, lower and upper poverty lineswere created, with the difference being the arbitrary amount of expenditure for the non-food items. This non-food basket is, however, considered to be more arbitrary as there is no minimum standard for non-food consumption as there is in the case of a food poverty line (Asra et al, 2003).

Despite the static nature of current measures of poverty, the need to observe and monitor trends has necessitated a method by which poverty lines can be updated in such a manner that the PL reflects the same real income or expenditure. This has been done by way of standard Laspeyres, Paasche, Fisher or Tornqvist price indices. Such updating of the poverty line to reflect cost of living changes has been laden with problems from the outset. Poverty lines that reflect a calorie norm were generally updated in a manner which highly deviated from the calorie norm they sought to represent (Deaton, 2003, Patnaik, 2004). This is due to changes in the food baskets consumed by the poor over time which were not reflected in the consumer price indices that were updated to account for changes in cost of living. This is where a tension arises between relevance and comparability. Countries such as India and Bangladesh have emphasized comparability and hence, have used the same CPI basket[12] despite changes in consumption behavior in order to maintain a consistent benchmark for comparability over different years (Asra et al, 2003). On the other hand, in Indonesia and the Philippines, the food and non-food baskets are changed every time poverty is estimated, thus satisfying the relevance

[12] In India, specific CPIs were constructed for agricultural laborers. See the All-India Consumer Price Index for Agricultural and Rural Labourers, Labour Bureau, Government of India.

condition, but making it difficult to compare poverty temporally given that different baskets are used every time.

Such a conflict begets the question: Is poverty measured to reflect a temporal trend or for the purpose of knowing who the poor are and their numbers so as to shape policies and budgets accordingly? Even the poverty line in and of itself, be it 26 shillings a week or $1.25 a day is in fact arbitrary, notwithstanding the statistical rigor with which it is articulated. It is indeed a plausible question to ask, then, whether a person with a daily expenditure of $1.30 or even $2 can be consideredas non-poor. Furthermore, given the food based calorie lines that are also in use, a 'scientific' conjecture is made of the minimum energy intake required for subsistence (Srinivasan, 2001) It may be of interest to note here that scientists still have not reached any consensus regarding a minimum food requirement and these nutritional 'norms' are derived more from actual average consumption levels than any physiological standards (Mehta et al, 2000). Moreover, factors such as weight, gender, geographic location and level of activity also have significant bearing on nutritional requirements as pointed out by Johnston and Sender (2008) who have supported the development of an asset index as a more appropriate measure of poverty.

2.3 POVERTY AS A RELATIONAL CONCEPT MEASURED THROUGH EXPLOITATION

As discussed in section 2.1, the conceptual foundation of poverty has become far more inclusive of a wide range of causes and processes that spawn deprivation. Nevertheless, these still remain centered on the individual household condition without taking full account of the wider structures that spawn poverty while at the same time generating processes of wealth accumulation for non-poor households. This relational aspect of poverty that views the poor not as a singular category of households facing material deprivation (albeit with differing levels of severity) but as households with competing interests that may in fact be structurally opposed to one another is not an

entirely new perspective and dates back to the classical discussions on rural differentiation.

Any discussion on differentiation of the poor in rural economies would necessitate a purview of Chayanov's arguments on the demographic cycle (1925). Chayanov posited early on based on his research in Russia that the subsistence based family farm represented the cornerstone of agriculture as distinct from for-profit capitalist enterprises found in industry (Ellis, 1993). It was this subsistence motive that triggered differentiation over time and across generations. Thus the observed levels of inequality in terms of land size or overall investments in Russia were not a result of differentiation through class formation but reflected variations in demography. Household size was the key determining factor which was then divided into producers, or working adults, and consumers which represented the entire household. It was this ratio or producers to consumers in what was referred to as the 'labour-consumer balance' that determined the variations in the demographic cycle and ultimately rendered differentiation as far as size, output and income of farms (Bernstein, 2009).

As part of the demographic cycle, the first stage involves a household at its inception gradually growing in size as children are born, thus raising the minimum consumption level. During the second phase, these children grow up and begin to contribute to the family labor. Finally, in the third phase, adult children begin to form families and have farms on their own thus igniting a perpetual series of demographic cycles (Ellis, 1993). The various stages in the demographic cycle lead to variations in farm size and incomes. Chayanov links the demographic cycle with differentiations in output and size in the following manner:

1. Higher labor input per worker as the consumer/worker ratio rises
2. Marginal product of labor varies inversely with the consumer/worker ratio
3. More land cultivated as family size increases
4. Average income per person varies inversely with consumer/worker ratio

The nature of household production and consumption will change based on the ratio of consumers to workers. For instance, at its inception, a household consisting of a married couple will have two whole units of labor as well as two units of consumers. As the household matures and successive children are born, it will experience major downswings economically as there will be more consumers to workers. After these children become working adults, once more the ratio which will favor the household economically. The household will experience its greatest difficulty in its fourteenth year with a consumer-worker ratio of 1.94 but with many upswings and downswings both prior and subsequent to this year (ibid, 1993). As such, Chayanov perceived the differentiation that did persist in Russian agriculture to be one ultimately determined by demographic factors alone and not any inherent class differentiation as proclaimed by Lenin. Family labor was organized around the need to persist and not on any profit maximizing principle. It follows that labor effort would increase as the number of consumers to producers would increase.

Lenin, on the other hand, was of the position that class based differentiation exists and it is this differentiation that is integral to a capitalist transition in agriculture (1899). Lenin vehemently dispelled any Chayanovian notion of differentiation and proposed rather a differentiation of rich, middle and poor peasants who would gradually evolve into polarized classes of agrarian capitalists and proletarian labor at the expense of the middle peasantry (Bernstein, 2009). Though Chayanov maintained that the dominance of the subsistence motive in agriculture would obstruct any capitalist agriculture from forming, Lenin repeatedly emphasized the differentiation of the poor in agriculture as the prime catalyst for capitalist agrarian transition. It is this differentiation that promoted a class of agricultural entrepreneurs and ultimately paved the path for capitalist transitions in England and Prussia as Byres suggests (2009). Byres in fact notes that it is differentiation of the peasantry that represents a key determining variable of rural transformations.

Despite the strong microeconomic logic of Chayanov's arguments, the peasant's strictly subsistence logic, fully isolated from the profit motive, is questionable particularly due to the compulsions of the market and the advent of newer, more advanced technologies that make agricultural surplus an attainable possibility, though not necessarily a widespread phenomenon (Patnaik, 1979; Bernstein, 2009). As such, the Chayanovian rationale for differentiation, provides an understanding of the internal logic of a farm but without regard to external social processes (Bernstein, 2009). It is this Leninist rationale of peasant differentiation that in turn perhaps provides the most compelling theoretical framework for understanding the linkages between land, migration and poverty and will be discussed in depth throughout the remainder of the dissertation.

Ranging from the classic Chayanovian to the more recent neoclassical neopopulist literature, (as discussed in chapter 3) the assumption has been an untoward simplification of the poor as a single, monolithic entity (Patnaik, 1979; Runge and Halback, 1987, Byres, 2004) Thus, differentiation resulting from class is sparsely included in any cogent analysis of poverty and its root causes. Here, by class, I mean not a statistical or occupational category or even the oft used distinction of upper, middle and lower, but rather class as a relation with the means of production. Bujra (2006) gives a compelling account of how indexical measurements which in turn reduce class to a quantifiable statistical categoryoften belie the inherent tensions that may exist within groups; for instance, petty commodity producers and wage laborers may be clustered into a term like the "urban poor." Bujra, although focused more on epidemiological research that conflate class formations with terms such as the 'middle class' or 'urban poor' particularly with regard to HIV prevalence in Africa, clearly has relevance in the discussion on poverty in general (Bujra, 2006, p 118). The notion that there could be competing groups of poor or that the accumulation processes taken by the poor could be accompanied by dispossession even within the poor has often been substituted for a more romanticized reification of poverty as a single category.

The classical Leninst school on rural differentiation did markedly distinguish across distinct classes such as the small, middle and rich peasant, classes that, in turn, were distinguishable not based on household demographics as the Chayanovian school maintained, but rather through their relationship to the mode of production (Chapter 3 provides a more in depth discussion on the different school of thought with regard to rural differentiation). Thus, rural differentiation which distinguished, for instance, a small peasant household's sporadic laborer status with that of a rich peasant who was in turn a hirer of labour provided a clear, analytical method through which to assess poverty. In order then to distinguish across these classes empirically (and their subsequent levels of poverty or wealth), levels of exploitation would need to be determined using a set of indicators which came in the form of conditions of production. Patnaik's work (1972), for instance, has exhaustively investigated the conditions of production including such variables as extent of labour hiring and values of marketable surplus on land amongst others to determine the rural classes (Chapters 6 and 7 discuss Patnaik's findings further). Rudra (1978), Oya (2007), and Rahman (1986) have also investigated in a similar vein using a range of different variables related to production. Although these conditions of production which include ownership of land and productive resources, net days of labour hired out, net amount of land rented, and net debts amongst other variables are clearly important in distinguishing across rural classes, I use a different approach in decomposing the nature of rural differentiation, through an analysis of conditions of reproduction, the rationale of which is provided below.

Firstly, although conditions of production are important in distinguishing across classes, it may be argued that these still center on the presumption that agriculture remains the cornerstone of rural livelihoods. As part of the examination of conditions of production, levels of exploitation and extent of accumulation that are evident through extent of labour hiring or value of marketable surplus, for example, can be empirically assessed. However, as we shall see in the next chapter, deep seated changes are taking place in what constitute rural livelihoods that bring to question the representativeness of such terms as 'peasant' for instance (Bernstein, 2010). Secondly, some of the conditions

of production used to distinguish across classes are, on their own, not adequate in determining class status. For instance, the role of land ownership and the purported inverse rule between land ownership and poverty has been sharply contested and in fact, completely uprooted as invalid (Dyer, 2000; Byres, 2004; Patnaik, 1999; Johnston and Le Roux, 2007). More on the inverse rule is found in the next chapter. The role of labour hiring and selling, is an important indicator of class status,but again, not free from anomalies of households that both sell and hire labour (discussed more in chapters 6,7 and 8). Patnaik (1987) has sought to correct for these anomalies by way of formulating an index that takes into account the relative extent to which labour is hired alongside a slew of other indicators such as value of marketable surplus, remittances, non-farm earnings and the like. Rahman (1986) has taken on a similar task in Bangladesh, focusing on ownership of not only land but also other productive resources such as draft animals, equipments and so on. Oya (2004) in his study of Senegal has also examined levels of education, types of technology used in the production process and nature of surplus use in terms of whether surplus is more directed towards consumption or investment. These studies are important in that they shed light on the factors, apart from land, that can be empirically used to distinguish across rural classes. Patnaik's analyses even bring in non-farm earnings and remittances to present a comprehensive empirical assessment of rural classes. Such studies have been helpful in empirically identifying across classes and even within classes based on a distinction between the capitalist and pre-capitalist farmer, for instance (Patnaik, 1987; Oya, 2004). However, there is still the question of differences between classes that result not from varied production processes but rather, divergent pattnerns of social reproduction.

A potential problem, however, lies in conflating incomes derived from agriculture with that of non-farm incomes including remittances in order to form an index that is reflective of class status. For instance, based on Patnaik's schema for rural differentiation (discussed further in chapter 8), a landless agricultural laborer, for instance, whose income is solely derived from agricultural wages could very well be classified together with a landless household whose chief income is derived from migrant

remittances. Though their class status may be considered to be comparable, as they are not the owners of productive resources apart from their labour, their conditions of reproduction are distinctly different. The agricultural laborer, on the one hand, is embedded in the chain of exploitation through the wage relation. On the other hand, the household that receives remittances has arguably reduced the stranglehold of (local) exploitive relations by way of migration. Conflating agricultural and non-agricultural incomes and thus, varying conditions of reproduction, means that the questions of which households rely upon migrant remittances and which households rely mostly on agriculture based livelihoods and the reasons behind such divergent conditions of reproduction would run the risk of not being fully answered within the framework of rural differentiation and class. Pattenden's study of Karnataka's poorest district in South India provides a strong rationale for examining both relations of production alongside changing strategies of household reproduction (Pattenden, 2012). In this study, Pattenden discusses how the increasing casualisation of labour coupled with the introduction of labour-saving rice harvesting machinery has fostered migration to the construction industry of Bangalore (Pattenden, 2012, p.171). Thus, changes in production relations have influenced the conditions of reproduction of certain households.

Understandably, and as discussed in later chapters, rural livelihoods are not so clear-cut; straddling a range of different livelihoods is the norm, thus making the process of identifying mutually exclusive categories of class a burdensome exercise. Nevertheless, it could also be argued that certain distinct classes may emerge: Laborer households for instance who rely solely upon agricultural labor and other forms of labor for their reproduction vis a vis households who hire labor only. The same could be argued of households who are connected to the wider economy through migration vis a vis households with no such connection. It is, however, important not to see these differences in conditions of reproduction as the endpoint of an analysis thus making such an analysis merely descriptive. What is required is an understanding of why conditions of reproduction are distinct across households and the implications

of this on poverty. Furthermore, it is also important to understand how these distinct trajectories of social reproduction come about and how these households relate to one another. Ultimately, how these processes feed into class dynamics will be explored further in later chapters.

2.4 WAY FORWARD: MEASURING POVERTY AS MATERIAL DEPRIVATION THROUGH AN ANALYSIS OF CONDITIONS OF REPRODUCTION

The discussion in this chapter has highlighted several issues raised by the theoretical debates on poverty which are relevant for my research. For instance, this chapter has shown how the conceptual understanding of poverty has moved away from merely an income based framework to one that encompasses a broad range of factors associated with human development. I have also discussed the key, underlying problems with standard measures of poverty measurement that either use income or expenditure in the construction of a poverty line . Although it would have been useful to view poverty through a multidimensional lens that is inclusive of not only income but also other variables such as literacy and other capabilities for instance, I focus specifically on poverty as material deprivation as measured through the accumulation of assets. The advantages of using an asset index as opposed to income are further discussed in chapter .5 Furthermore, I use rural differentiation and the identification of classes as the key entry point in delving further into the relational nature of poverty and in assessing the nexus between land, migration and poverty. The point of departure, however, is in the examination of conditions of reproduction, not conditions of production, in distinguishing across classes.

The next chapter reviews the literature on the relationship between land and poverty where we shall see that land is increasingly becoming delinked from rural livelihoods as the contribution of agriculture to rural incomes is waning with a simultaneous increase in

the importance of non-farm incomes) Rigg, 2006) .Bernstein's pithy analysis (2010) for instance brings to light the importance of rural differentiation in the current day as being more representative of "classes of labour" for instance instead of rich, small or middle 'peasant' given in particular processes of depeasantisation and increasing reliance on nonagricultural sources of income (discussed in greater detail in chapter 8). In fact, there is growing concern with the relevance of the small/middle/rich peasant terminology that still alludes to the omnipresence of agriculture as the sole criterion for rural differentation (Shah and Harriss-White, 2011; Banaji, 1990) As such, an analysis of conditions of reproduction provides a useful lens with which to analyze processes of rural differentiation that are not determined solely through land based livelihoods and agriculture.

By conditions of reproduction, I refer to the key sources of livelihood that households engage in for their social reproduction. These can include not only agriculture but also non-farm work and income generated through migration. In so doing, it diverges from the conditions of production which is for the most partbased on defining class from thelens of land based livelihoods and thus, agriculture. This is not to be confused with the livelihoods approach discussed earlier in this chapter which attested to the multiplicity of livelihoods that households subscribe to. Focusing on conditions of reproduction takes into account the multiple livelihood options of rural households but emphasises that distinct trajectories of social reproduction still exist that reinforce class formation (see chapter 8) The key question that emerges from the discussion is what distinct conditions of reproduction mean for rural differentiation and in turn, who the poor and non-poor constitute.

CHAPTER 3: EXAMINING THE NEXUS BETWEEN LAND, MIGRATION AND POVERTY

Having provided a conceptual framework with which to understand poverty in the previous chapter, this chapter seeks to examine the relationship between land, migration and poverty as it pertains to rural income generation and overall livelihoods.It is this issue that the thesis seeks to investigate in the context of Bangladesh and so it is relevant to review the wider academic literature. Is land still vital for the poor or are there opportunities outside of land and agriculture such as migration, for instance, which can pull households out of poverty? It is this question that this chapter will investigate in further detailas well as considering how the issue should be studied. For instance, how have academics sought to investigate the relationshipand what are the key factors on which they have focused?

This chapter will begin with a discussion on agrarian political economy and the importance of examining the relationship between land, migration and poverty, not in isolation, but in view of the wider agrarian changes occurring and the effects of those changes on rural differentiation. This will be followed by more recent literature that looks at current changes that are argued to be taking place in rural livelihoods and the implications they have for our understanding of what it means to be poor or non-poor.

3.1 SITUATING RURAL DIFFERENTIATION AND THE ROLE OF LAND WITHIN THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF AGRARIAN CHANGE

As I discussed in the earlier chapter, this dissertation will assess poverty through a relational perspective; this, in turn, implies understanding the causes and processes that lead to both poverty and accumulation. It is centered on the argument that the poor are not a homogenous entity, that rural differentiation exists and that understanding the wider processes of agrarian change are crucial in determining the nature of such differentiation. By agrarian change, I refer to the political economy of change in agrarian production, property, social relations and power (Bernstein and Byres, 2001). The importance of

such research that focuses on agrarian political economy is particularly important in light of existing poverty research that is arguably focused far more on methodological individualism than on class relations and nature of accumulation (da Corta, 2008). In fact, da Corta argues that the research on chronic poverty as discussed in chapter 2 also takes on such a methodologically individualist approach to understanding poverty (daCorta, 2008, p.4).

The classical Marxist political economy centered on the nature and degree of capitalist agrarian transition and the extent of rural differentiation (Ramachandran, 2011). The penetration of capitalism in agriculture was the salient agrarian question particularly as it was inextricably linked with industrial growth. This political economy was reinvigorated by Bernstein and Byres who in turn sought to examine the forces of contemporary agrarian change within the framework of the same agrarian question (Bernstein and Byres, 2001). In particular, the history of agrarian transitions, particularly capitalist agrarian transitions that have taken place were in turn examined in order to understand changes in rural social relations. Such capitalist agrarian transition consisted of both expropriation of land and rural differentiation of classes (Byres, 2003). Byres'cogent analysis has drawn the conclusion that there is no singular path of agrarian transition. Some of the forms of capitalist transition can take the following forms but by no means are limited to these: capitalism from below, for instance, also termed as 'peasant capitalism' whereby a group of middle or rich peasants begin the process of transforming agriculture along capitalist lines; alternatively capitalism from above would be spearheaded by a class of landlords. Such contesting trajectories of capitalist transition can be found in the distinct Brenner (1976) path which rests on an aristocracy transforming itself into a capitalist class in contrast with the Dobb (1946) emphasis on peasants themselves turning capitalist. Both Brenner and Dobb insisted, in turn, that social class, not demographics, was the determining factor in fueling agrarian change.

Byres (2003) provides a comprehensive account of capitalist transitions in agriculture in different contexts including the North American, Prussian and French paths as well as

more recent transitions in Southeast Asia. In so doing, Byres explicitly argues that it is the nature of differentiation amongst the peasantry that determines the kind of agrarian transition that ensues. For instance, in the Prussian experience, it was the feudal landlord class that in fact catalyzed the process of agrarian transition while in the cases of Southeast Asia, it was in fact peasant capitalism from below, though with the state's concerted direction towards that effect. In northwestern India, Byres argues that agrarian transition has come about from below, from within a highly differentiated peasantry, and specifically fueled by rich peasants who in turn have gradually moved out of family based agriculture into wage based agriculture. Thus, it is Byres' contention that capitalist agrarian transition can be successful through a strong form of class consciousness and class struggle, regardless of whether it occurs from above or below (ibid, 2003). In the case of Bangladesh, Byres firmly concludes that it is highly unlikely for a capitalist transition to occur from above based on the historical circumstances of independence from Pakistan during which time the landlord class became enfeebled. Here, of course, whether a Liptoninan smallholder peasantry can lead such a transition is a questionable one indeed.

Bernstein (1998) discusses the case of social change in post-apartheid South Africa, bringing to the fore the complex interweaving of class, race, and vested local power. Bernstein also mentions the role of overtly localized struggles over resources either amongst communities or households as diverting the needed political energy required for more deep seated changes in the countryside. This bears a similar tone to the intense factional competition for resources in the Bangladesh rural landscape (Khan, 2004) which in turn, obstructs more meaningful class based movements from taking place. These are detailed out in the next chapter focusing specifically on Bangladesh.

State sponsored primitive accumulation, or expropriation of land,has historically played a pivotal role in the transition towards capitalism in the countryside. In England, as Byres (2003) mentions, the state-supported enclosure movement paved the way for capitalist transition in agriculture. Primitive accumulation, however, though a

necessary condition, is not a sufficient one in bringing about a capitalist agrarian transition. As an illustration, Byres accounts for the Chinese case in which the conditions for capitalist transition have been met. The state has taken a strong role in regulating the processes of such a transition without succumbing fully to neoliberalism. Where the state has undertaken policies of privatization, it has set the pace. But it is important to note that the state itself is not an anonymous entity imbibed with some divine, exogenous strength. The state is an amalgam of power whose nature dictates the constitution and efficacy of its policies and interventions. In the case of India, for instance, as Raju Das (2007) argues, the state has allied itself with agrarian capitalists and has instituted land reforms that were loyal to the interests of capital.

In sum, the role of rural differentiation and land are an intrinsic part of agrarian transition. As Lenin unveiled, rural differentiation would eventually wipe out the small farmer leaving only the polarised classes of capitalist farmers and wage laborers (M. Ullah, 1996). However, the persistence of the small farmer has also been discussed by Engels and Kautsky (ibid,1996). Byres (2003) illustrates the case of France where the stubborn persistence of the peasantry delayed the transition towards capitalist agriculture. In Bangladesh, as we shall see in later chapters, this persistence of the small farmer has been a subject of much debate (M. Ullah,1996 , Rahman,1986 , Bhaduri et al, 1986).

The dawn of neoliberalism[13] which has withered the state's agency has in fact, brought about a more intense form of primitive accumulation, one that is cruder and leading to a more heightened degree of dispossession amongst the poor (Byres, 2005). This is no doubt a logical result in light of a diminished role of the state in instituting land reforms in support of capitalist development. In tandem with the minimal role of the state, neopopulist agrarian policies such as those promoting land acquisitions for smallholders

[13]David Harvey (2005) offers the following definition of neoliberalism: Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices.

have followed suit, appealing to a wider neoliberal agenda of market driven rural reform claimed to meet both efficiency and equity objectives (Bernstein, 1998). Thus poverty reduction has become tightly linked to neopopulist policies that have emphasized the smallholding farmer. The neoliberal state has in turn found a set of agricultural policies that seemingly support the rural population, though the state itself has begun to roll back its interventions in agriculture. Where the state is minimally involved, it has been in the establishment and subsequent execution of policies to promote privatization, decollectivization, land registration among others, all of which contribute to primitive accumulation though not in the same form as prior to the birth of neoliberal regimes. Coerced non-market transfers such as land grabbing are also increasingly predominant in the rural landscape in countries such as Bangladesh (Khan, 2004).

Within such a backdrop of neoliberal globalisation, the classical agrarian question has been questioned, both within the political economy tradition and outside. At one end, there is the argument that the key agrarian question is that of the struggle between an increasingly pauperised peasantry and a globalized corporate food regime (McMichael, 2008), the proponents of such a position being social movements and networks such as Via Campesina and GRAIN amongst others (Lerche, 2013, p. 384). Within such a position, the differentiation of the peasantry is overridden by an overall pauperization of the peasantry as they struggle against the singular, overarching imposition of corporate food regimes. On the other hand, and arising from within the school of agrarian political economy, there is the argument that the agrarian question of capital has been bypassed (Bernstein, 2006). Such an argument is based in part on the nature of globalisation and the 'circuits of international capital' that it promotes, thus weakening the nexus between agriculture and industry and in particular the role of agricultural surplus in financing industrial development (Lerche, 2013, p.385). Bernstein (1996) contends further that a pre-capitalist agrarian sector, the precursor to a capitalist transition in agriculture is no longer predominant; rather, the norm lies in the existence of capitalist farmers, petty commodity producers and classes of labour (Bernstein, 1996, p. 42-3). Lerche also significantly contributes to this debate

arguing in turn that the 'classical' agrarian question of capital' has been bypassed as Bernstein contends leaving the space for continued examination of agrarian transition and the role of capital in such a transition (Lerche, 2013, p. 400).

The remainder of this chapter explores the nexus between land, migration and poverty and seeks to do so using an analysis of agrarian political economy.

3.2 LAND, FARMING, AND LIVELIHOODS IN FLUX

When capitalist agrarian transition becomes the prevailing phenomenon, it would then be intuitive to assert that the role of land in a poverty reduction trajectory may also diminish as wage employment provides an adequate means of living. Nevertheless, when such transition in agriculture is uneven or sporadic as is demonstrated to be the case for Bangladesh in chapter 4, it may be argued that land remains central to the lives of the poor. Poverty targeting, for the most part however, is still centered on land size as a key variable, particularly in the case of cash and food handouts, though it is a very likely possibility that land owners of similar sized plots may face very different economic circumstances (Ravallion and Sen, 1994). In fact, Ravallion (1989) has argued in the case of Bangladesh that landholding is far from precise in poverty targeting considering that a proportion of rural households with little or no land are not poor and vice versa. Ravallion and van de Walle (2008) have in fact shown in the case of Vietnam that rising landlessness is not associated with higher levels of poverty but in fact is reflective of a process of increased wage employment.

Patnaik (1972) argues in the same manner when pointing out the need to focus on actual scale of production and not land size. What Patnaik refers to is the overall intensity of production; that is, the extent to which a holding uses labor and capital and the output it, in turn, produces, which land size in terms of acreage alone is not fully indicative of) Patnaik, 1972, p.(1614. As such, a greater intensity of production may exist on a smaller size in comparison to what is being produced on physically larger units.

Thus, merely land size cannot be an adequate indicator of levels of production or well-being.

As mentioned earlier, Rigg (2006) also argues that the nature of poverty is in flux amidst the waning role of land in shaping livelihoods of the poor.[1] The following table, as taken from Rigg summarizes his assertion.

Table 3.1 Rural Poverty and rural production: questions, answers and associations

Questions/Issues	**"Old" or established answers**	**"New" or revisionist answers**	**Broken links/associations**
Who are the rural rich?	The land rich	Both land rich and land poor	Livelihoods have become progressively delinked from farming and therefore from land
What is best way to assist rural poor?	To redistribute land To invest in agriculture	To reskill the poor (investment in agriculture is inequality widening)	Poverty and inequality have become delinked from activity and occupation
How do we build sustain able futures in rural South?	Through supporting smallholder farming	Through supporting people's efforts to leave farming by permitting the amalgamation of landholdings and the emergence of large landowners and agrarian entrepreneurs	The association of pro-poor policies with smallholder farming has been broken

Rigg (2006)

As the table above suggests, there exists a longstanding fetish with agriculture and the need to support smallholder farming though what may be required is a move towards non-farm activities. This line of argument is consistent with Bernstein's concept of 'classes of labour' who in turn straddle a wide range of economic activity beyond the confines of agriculture (Bernstein, 2010). Furthermore, Rigg argues that the poor are not necessarily those who are land poor but may also be inclusive of those with land. It is the work of this chapter to explain and evaluate this assertion within the context of agrarian political economy as well as highlight the specific issues for my own case study.

[1] This chapter will refer heavily to this author and therefore, all subsequent references to the said author will draw from the 2006 paper.

From the outset, a few clarifications are deemed necessary with regard to key terms that will be used for the remainder of this chapter. There in fact is a proliferation of terminologies such as farm, non-farm, and off-farm which indeed can be confounding, as there may not be a consistency in the literature with regard to usage of these very terms. For the purposes of this dissertation, the terms will be regarded in a consistent manner. Farm income, to use Barrett et al's definition, consists of 1) the value of retained output from own land; 2) the value of food and cash crop sales; and 3)unskilled agricultural labor on other farms (2001). Non-farm, in turn, will refer to a diverse range of activity from petty trading and commerce, agroprocessing, non-agricultural wage labor and service sector work. These type of activities may have backward linkages with agriculture but they by no means, are directly linked to the cultivation of land. Off-farm income, on the other hand, refers to income generated away from one's own land, though it is still agricultural economic activity. In essence, as Barrett et al distinguish between the terms, the on-farm-off-farm dichotomy is a spatial one whereas the farm- non-farm one is a sectoral classification. Barrett et al's definition in assessing farm and non-farm economic activity is a useful one that will be taken into account for my primary research.

The remainder of this chapter will discuss Rigg's assertions further in order to present a debate about the salient points that govern the relationship between land and poverty.

3.3 ARE LIVELIHOODS BECOMING INCREASINGLY DIVORCED FROM FARMING AND THEREFORE FROM LAND? WHAT THE EMPIRICAL TRENDS SHOW

The first key assertion Rigg makes is to argue that economies of the Global South are in transition; as such, livelihoods are becoming delinked further from farming and the land that supports it. Such an assertion is in fact consonant with the livelihoods approach discussed in the previous chapter that views rural households as taking part in a

multiplicity of livelihoods and not strictly farming alone. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, it is also consistent with the agrarian political economy argument that recognises such multiplicity of livelihoods as part of household reproduction. Rigg's argument is centered on empirical trends that he has drawn from countries spanning the global South[14].

Rigg offers a useful summary of generalized trends in the Global South drawing from in-country surveys such as the DORAS field survey of 45 sites in the Central Plains of Thailand in the late 1990s, the Deagrarianization and Rural Employment (DARE) research program of six African countriesover a similar time period, and the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) surveys in 240 villages across 16 states in India from 1971 to 1999. The DORAS findings indicated that 57 percent of farm households had multiple occupations including those outside of agriculture (p. 183). Similarly, the DARE research covering six African countries including Ethiopia, Nigeria, Tanzania, Malawi, Zimbabwe, and South Africa, and in turn, considered to be one of the most comprehensive account of livelihoods in rural Africa, found that non-farm economic activities contributed a significant percent of rural household income, ranging from 60 to 80 percent (Rigg, p. 184). The NCAER also displayed similar findings, with non-farm incomes as a proportion of rural incomes rising from 19% to 48% over three decades, commencing during the1970s.

In addition to the studies discussed above, Rigg draws from a number of case studies including Bangladesh, Philippines, and Laos. In the case of the village of East Laguna in the Philippines, Rigg uses secondary data to describe a region where the contribution of farming to household income has fallen from 90% to36% while the share of non-farm income increased from a mere 13% to 64% over a period spanning three decades commencing during the 1970s (p.183). In fact, Rigg contends that this particular village shows *in microcosm* what other regions of Southeast Asia are also facing (p.183) For

[14]Rigg use the term 'Global South' to refer to developing countries and the least developed countries of East Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Laos, considered to be one of the most agrarian economies as Rigg discusses, due to increasing marketization and a greater integration into the greater Mekong sub-region, once more transformations are said to be occurring wherein peasants in some regions have become *post-peasants* (Rigg, p.185-186). In fact, Rigg draws from an ILO survey in 2000 based on 1614 families in three border provinces in Laos to reveal that illegal migration from Laos to Thailand in search for low-wage non-agricultural work as well as farm based agricultural labor has been the key driving factor for labor shortages in agriculture within the country. For Bangladesh, Rigg uses the secondary data by Afsar (2003) to argue that there is a structural shift in rural household income towards diversification, but that migration and the associated labor shortages along with remittances have actually reinvigorated the tenancy market and increased agricultural productivity while also raising wages (Rigg, p.187). A further description of this trend is provided in the next chapter.

At first,it may seem that the advantage of Rigg's contentions lies in the fact that they are supported by existing national level and regional studies and are thus, not part of any single cross-country research on agrarian change. Byres (1995) in critiquing cross-country research, states the following:

> *First, by its very nature, it abstracts from complexity and diversity,in its search for the general. Its strengths are many, and as I have suggested,it can yield powerful insights. But if one's aim is to capture complexity, historical contingency and substantive diversity, then it has clear deficiencies. It cuts a swathe through complexity, abhors historical contingency and discounts diversity. It seeks the general at the expense of the particular and the specific (Byres, 1995,p.573).*

Taking into account the passage above, it appears that Rigg's analyses, despite being grounded in national level data and analyses, sacrifices the particular for the general, despite providing important assertions based on empirical data on the composition of rural livelihoods in the Global South. In fact, Rigg's use of terms such as the 'Global

South' and his calling into question the existence of a 'rural South' deny the complexity and richness of agrarian change within a singular context. Furthermore, and as Byres has also discussed (1995), the need to analyse empirical data within theory is of utmost importance. Although Rigg draws from a diverse range of country experiences, his analysis is centered on the empirical without the theoretical framework with which to assess such change. What is the basis for arguing in an across the board delinking of land from livelihoods when countries with little or no capitalist agrarian transition are compared with countries that have advanced capitalist transitions in agriculture already taking place?

The section below discusses the key propelling factors that Rigg argues are the basis for a delinking between land and livelihoods. However, as we shall see, these propelling factors do not constitute any theoretical premise for understanding why agrarian change, if at all, is occurring.

3.4 KEY PROPELLING FACTORS FOR THE DELINKING BETWEEN LAND AND LIVELIHOODS

Rigg uses a number of propelling factors as the basis for this delinking between land and livelihoods. These factors are taken from Rigg and reproduced below.

***Table* 3.2 First and second level propelling forces in rural transformations**

First level propelling forces	**Selected second level propelling forces/factors**
1. Erosion of profitability of small-holder farming	- National policies favoring industry (urban/industrial bias) - "Surplus transfer" from agriculture through taxation - Structural adjustment and neo-liberalism -Declining terms of trade between farm and non-farm
2. Emergence of new, non-farm opportunities	-Foreign investment -National policies of export-led development focused on manufacturing -Improving access and heightened levels of mobility associated with infrastructural improvements -Education
3. Environmental degradation	-Environmental conflicts between farm and non-farm activities in rural areas -Labor shortages hampering essential maintenance of farm infrastructure

	-Over-cropping, over-grazing, and other non-sustainable cultivation practices -Deforestation and associated environmental degradation
4. Increasing land shortages	-Population growth -Sequestration of land by the state and agencies linked to the state -Closing of the land frontier -Concentration of land resources in a small class of landed households -Effects of land reform
5. Social and cultural changes	-Mobility -Media-led consumerism -Education

` Source: Adapted from Rigg, 2006

It is these propelling factors that will in turn be discussed in greater detail in the following sections.

3.4.1 Erosion of profitability of smallholder farming

Rigg argues that smallholder farming is characterized by falling profitability, giving in turn, a host of secondary propelling factors such as urban/industrial bias, excessive taxation of agriculture, and structural adjustment as the impediments therein. Lipton's theory of urban bias which argues that although poverty is in fact a rural phenomenon situated, more specifically, within agriculture, not only investments in agriculture are falling but a whole range of policies are designed to benefit urban industry at the expense of agriculture (Lipton, 2011). There is in fact a huge body of literature covering Michael Lipton's theory of urban bias, his critics, and an interesting account of whether or not urban bias is a policy phenomenon and if so, whether it is justifiable as a means to an end, the end being higher growth propelled by industry (Corbridge and Jones, 2010).

The World Development Report on Agriculture (2008) for instance cites a number of reasons for stagnant agriculture including urban bias, discriminatory macroeconomic policies and reductions in overseas development assistance to agriculture. For instance, the WDR states that developing countries tax agriculture far more in relation to other sectors leading to a 30% decline in relative prices of agricultural products with respect to non-agricultural prices (p.39). Schiff and Valdes (1998) argue in a similar vein,

stating, in turn, that across the board macroeconomic policies also play their part in influencing agriculture, particularly real exchange rates which bear a negative relationship with agricultural performance. Furthermore, the WDR posits that the share of public spending in agriculture has been significantly less in comparison to industrialized countries during their growth spurts. An amalgam of global trade policies and public expenditure patterns within a backdrop of falling commodity prices in agriculture have in turn translated into a lackluster growth potential for agriculture. Throughout such analysis as nuanced in the WDR, however, there is an implicit assumption of the monolithic, representative small farmer who bears the brunt of poverty but somehow holds the engine for agricultural growth and productivity. No discussion is offered on differentiation within these farmers.

A cogent critique is made by Karshenas about the contention that taxation on agriculture as part and parcel of urban bias has been one of the key reasons behind stagnant agriculture(1999). Karshenas argues that stagnation in agriculture has not come about through the widespread belief that other sectors have drained away its resources in what is termed an agricultural squeeze. To make this assertion, Karshenas compares the value added shares in agriculture in different regions and in particular, looks at the v-ratios which measures the value added of an agricultural worker as a proportion of the value added perworkerinthenon-agriculturalsector at current prices (Karshenas, 1999, p. 2). The contention made by urban bias theorists such as Michael Lipton, as Karshenas argues, is that the reason behind low v-ratios for Africa is due to over-taxation of agriculture. However, Karshenas (1999) points out that during the period 1965-1980 when increased taxation burdens were imposed on African agriculture, the v-ratios were showing positive trends (p.4). What Karshenas argues in turn is that there has been more redistribution of income within agriculture through various tax/subsidy mechanisms, not a ‘plundering’ of agriculture by other sectors (ibid, p.15). In furtherance of this argument, Karshenas has also rationalized the differences in agriculture between Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, owing the differences, not to inherent

differences in taxation policies, but rather the combination of taxation, public infrastructure provisioning and productivity enhancing technologies (ibid, p.16).

Apart from the claim of urban bias through sector-specific policies such as taxation in agriculture, it is also important to note that the causes of the agrarian crisis are considered to be manifold. Jha (2007) for instance discusses the reduction in rates of agricultural growth in India as part of a contemporary agrarian crisis characterized by increasing agricultural input prices, greater vulnerability to world market price fluctuations, reductions in rural development expenditure, and weak provisioning of credit mechanisms amongst a host of other variables (p.1) However, this contemporary agrarian crisis, Jha contends, is due to the onslaught of neoliberal policies, not any particular urban bias. To this end, given the state's instrumental role, the neoliberal encroachment into the policy domain has further spawned a deep-seated agrarian crisis, with investments in agriculture shrinking considerably. Van der Ploeg also discusses the origin of the current agrarian crisis to be an amalgam of three factors: (1) a partial but constantly ongoing industrialization of agriculture; (2) the emergence of the world market as the ordering principle for agricultural production and marketing; and (3) the restructuring of these agricultural enterprises into 'food empires' that maintain monopolistic power over the global supply chain (2010, p.99). Firstly, the industrialisation of agriculture, Van der Ploeg argues, with its focus on scale production, has lead to environmental degradation and a move away from sustainable, ecological farming practices. This has been coupled with a dependency on capital markets to feed continual scale increases in production and as a result, growing indebtedness. Such industrialisation in agriculture has also meant a growing dependency on the vagaries of world markets and a commodification of the basic resources such as land, water and seeds. The opening of markets and consequent trade liberalization has made it increasingly difficult for primary producers to compete in both domestic and export markets. As such, commercialization of agriculture, where it has taken place, continues to bear the risks associated with volatile global markets and price fluctuations (Bracking, 2003). This in turn, has lead to what Van der Ploeg refers to as 'food empires' that have

accrued monopoly power over major agricultural commodity markets, thus strippingsmallholder farmers from their livelihoods (2010, p.101). As such, newer forms of alliance or exploitation are also emerging, as Bracking discusses for instance, in the case of agro-business and contract farming where the cultivators bear the greatest risk and receive the lowest return, the lion's share going to the corporatized entities in the supply chain (Bracking, 2003). Technologies, particularly genetically modified crops are also part of the transformations said to be occurring in agriculture, wherein farmers are further exposed to the vagaries of the market (Reddy et al, 2009, Scoones, 2008).

Notwithstanding the pertinence of these factors and the urgency they must receive, Rigg fails to explain explicitly why then should the focus not be on removing, or reversing, those very impediments that have mired agriculture in stagnancy. Implicitly, however, the contention could be made that Rigg has centered his argument, in part, on agrarian political economy as discussed earlier and the Lewis model (1954) which was focused on the move away from a backward agriculture into othersectors.

3.4.2 Emergence of new, non-farm opportunities

A discussion on the non-farm sector merits further attention as it is considered to be a new pathway out of poverty for the rural poor, in the midst of land shortages and small-scale agriculture that is failing. In light of this, this propelling factor will be given a greater degree of space due to the policy implications that follow therein.

The growth of the non-farm economy and its significant contribution to rural income is well-established in the global literature (Haggblade et al, 2009; Barrett et al, 2001; Rigg, 2006; Ellis, 2000; Bryceson, 2002). Both Barrett et al (2001) and Bryceson (2002) discuss the importance of livelihood diversification and the non-farm sector in rural Africa. Bryceson (2002) for instance focuses specifically on the role of structural adjustment as part of a wider process of deagrarianisation that in turn has lead to what she terms a 'scramble' for alternative livelihoods and thus,depeasantisation. Rigg has, as

discussed earlier, provided cases spanning a wider geographical base and reflecting the same trend. The non-farm sector comprises a very diverse spectrum of economic activity ranging from trading, agroprocessing, manufacturing, and commercial and service-related activities. Thus, this sector can include self-employment vis a vis a non-agricultural informal sector as well as wage employment and even salaried employment. However, as Haggblade et al discuss, manufacturing typically accounts for less than a quarter of rural non-farm employment whereas trade, transport, construction and services constitute the bulk of non-farm employment (2009). Again, the danger of such a contention is in its level of generality. How accurately such a contention reflects a particular context and the extent to which 'historical contingency' as Byres (1995) aptly mentions determines the composition of non-farm employment will be important to explore in later chapters.

Nevertheless, what can be maintained is that an observable change has been occurring in agrarian economies in the South[15] and that is the emergence of non-farm work as an increasingly important avenue for the poor in their search for livelihoods. Diversification of livelihoods is on the rise, be it 'distress diversification' or not, and the non-farm economy does represent a source of income for resource poor farmers, so much so that in some cases, households have left farming altogether (Rigg, 2006). Such an argument based directly on evidence from the Global South is clearly in line with the agrarian political economy of Bernstein (2010) for instance who has argued in a similar vein about the increasing prevalence of 'classes of labour'. The key trends that mark this transition are a more heightened diversity of livelihoods, a greater share of income sourced from non-farm as opposed to farm and thus, weaker nexus between land and livelihoods and consequently, levels of poverty. Rigg goes on further to state that occupational multiplicity has led to a composition of rural income that is shifting away from farm income. Remittances, for instance, as a proportion of household income is increasing, Rigg argues, particularly due to increasingly mobile rural populations Rigg

[15] To substantiate his claims, Rigg uses cases and evidence from Nepal, India, Philippines, Thailand, and six countries in Africa: Ethiopia, Nigeria, Tanzania, Malawi, Zimbabwe and South Africa.

also attributes some of this change to evolving social and cultural patterns as will be discussed in section 3.4.5. The conclusion is that, as Rigg (2006, p.16) goes on to state,

> "No longer can we assume that small farmers are better off than landless laborers."

Rigg argues that the landless can in fact be better off (less poor) than farming households who possess land.Such a situation would arise if and when the returns to diversified economic activity apart from land were higher than those that were derived from farming which is clearly possible in a context of stagnant agriculture. Rigg makes a distinction between "old" poverty versus "new" poverty where, given the rise of non-farm employment as a new trend, the claim that the rural rich are landed (as would be made in the old analysis) can no longer be made (ibid, 2006). Thus, in a new analysis of poverty, the rural rich can bear the profile of either the landed rich, the landless or land poor. This implies that the shift to non-agricultural sources of employment can continue to reinforce existing inequalities considering that the 'new' poor can comprise both the land rich and the land poor in just the way the rural rich can comprise the same.

It will be useful to look into other studies for the same regions that Rigg has used as part of his analysis in order to evaluate the arguments thus made. For instance, Sender (1990) also provides ample evidence from surveys conducted in South Africa which indicate that wage labor in large-scale state or agribusiness farms provides a far greater and more secure source of wage earnings than smallholder farming. In fact, as Sender maintains, wage employment is generally a strategy for upward mobility, not self-employment. Deagrarianisation[16] may be too drastic a term to describe the realities on

[16]Deagrarianization is defined as a long-termprocess of occupational adjustment, income earning reorientation, social identification and spatial relocation of rural dwellers away fromstrictly agricultural-based modes of livelihood (Bryceson, 2002). Some of the causes of such deagrarianization that have been discussed in the literature include structural adjustment, urbanization and climate change (Yaro, 2006). Depeasantizationisconsideredtobeaspecificformofdeagrarianizationinwhich peasantries lose their economic capacity and social coherence and shrink in demographic size relative to the nonpeasant populations (Bryceson, 2002,p.727).

the ground, however. Ellis (2006) in his analysis of sub-Saharan Africa discussed returnees from urban areas who in turn imposed increasing burden on households within a backdrop of agricultural liberalisation) Ellis, 2006**,** p.391). Yaro's intensive survey of three villages in Ghana, for instance, indicated reversibility between farm and non-farm livelihood strategies which implies, in turn, that the returns from both livelihood strategies are not adequate on their own for social reproduction of these households (2006). The findings also led to the conclusion that the adaptation process of the poor, of which diversification is part, not only involves a move to the non-farm sector but an intensification of efforts within the farm sector as well. In turn, seasonal diversification is coupled with farm-based activities as a means of adaptation for the poor. Nevertheless, the non-farm sector which is argued to account for anywhere from 30 to 50 percent of household income in sub-Saharan Africa, 80 to 90 percent in southern Africa and roughly 60 percent in South Asia is certainly not one to gloss over (Ellis, 2000).

Lerche (1999), arrives at a similar conclusion to that of Rigg, taking the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh as an illustration of the growing spread of non-farm employment. Uttar Pradesh has witnessed a decline in the number of agricultural laborers, one of the reasons purported to be the higher wages outside agriculture. This diversification, and in turn a lesser dependence on agriculture, has made the relationship between landlord and laborer less exploitive. A more pessimistic picture, however, is presented by Ramachandran (1990) featuring the case of Tamil Nadu. Here, the argument is made that although occupational change is occurring, the shift is not away from agriculture, but rather, a restructuring within agriculture. The scope for industry to absorb labor has been minimal, at best. Thus, the decline in agricultural laborers may not signal a non-farm success, despite there being a greater diversity in income sources. Rather this decline in numbers may be seen as mass unemployment. What such findings imply is that there is a great deal of contention with regard to the role of the non-farm sector in its ability to lift households out of poverty.

During the decade of the 1990s, agricultural laborers in India witnessed a decline in the number of work days coupled with a decline in the rates of growth of real wages. Although this trend has improved in the subsequent decade, such an upturn is attributed to self-employment, not an increase in wage employment. An increase in the casualization of wage labor has also been evidenced, particularly in the state of West Bengal (Ghosh, 1998). Sen and Ghosh (1993) paint an equally disturbing picture of agrarian distress in India, though more complex and wider in scope. They point towards evidence that during the mid 1970s, there was indeed a rise in non-agriculture's share in employment accompanied by an increase in real wages, both in agriculture and non-farm economic activity. Although this may seem to indicate the non-farm sector to be a positive consequence of dynamism in the rural economy, there is a sharp heterogeneity amongst the poor with the rich amongst them moving out of agriculture and into non-farm work. This move away from agriculture has, as a result, provided other sections of the rural poor with employment opportunities in agriculture and an ultimate rise in real wages, albeit small. The poorest, nevertheless, have engaged in 'distress' diversification, thus still pointing towards the non-farm as a residual sector. In fact, despite the diversity of experience amongst Indian states, Sen and Ghosh attribute overall changes in rural employment patterns to the hand of the state's exchequer, not the internal dynamism of the rural economy. Though not discounting for regional diversity across states within India, Sen and Ghosh, in turn, have argued that macroeconomicstabilization policies that commenced in the early 1990s actually lead to drastic reductions in many public sector interventions such as the fertiliser subsidy, rural development programes, investments in infrastructure, health and education, and the public distribution system (Sen and Ghosh, 1993, p.65). Thus, changes in patterns of income and employment that have occurred, in large part, are due to public resource flows, and not due to a dynamic agricultural or non-agricultural sector.

Some evidence also points to agrarian distress in India, characterised byrising landlessness and a decline in the proportion of cultivators (Jha, 2007). Patnaik (2007) points towards the same conclusion, arguing in turn that falling agricultural growth

coupled with rising unemployment and a decrease in the number of days worked is the direct result of deflationary macroeconomic policies taken on by the government. However, more recent evidence for India has demonstrated that 'agrarian crisis' is not wholly an accurate term considering stable agricultural growth rates since 2003-4 (Lerche, 2013, p.392). A number of studies either focusing on specific states or throughout India have also discussed the rising trend of non-farm incomes for rural livelihoods (Unni, 1996; Saleth, 1997; Lanjouw and Sharif, 2004). However, there has been a growing consensus that the poverty reducing effect of non-farm income varies a great deal across states and is contingent on factors such as levels of education, preexisting assets such as landholdings, and extent of agricultural productivity (Lanjouw, 2000; Ravallion and Datt, 2001; Kijima and Lanjouw, 2005).

This section has so far presented some of the key evidence that points towards an emergence of non-farm economic opportunities. It is Rigg's contention that there lies a distinction between our old analyses of poverty with that of the new, all triggered by transformative changes taking place in rural economies that nevertheless reinforce existing inequalities. As such, there is ample reason to proceed with caution, particularly with regard to confounding its very existence as representative of a dynamism that may or may not exist. A number of caveats may exist with regard to the non-farm sector. For instance, those with greater mobility and a heightened involvement in non-farm activities are considered to benefit from higher income streams, regardless of their level of land acquisition. As discussed, Rigg himself cautions that these non-farm opportunities may preserve existing inequalities in the sense that the higher return non-farm opportunities have greater barriers to entry, opportunities in turn, which only the better-off households may be able to avail of. Using the example of North Suband in Java, Rigg discusses how empirical studies have illustrated that entry into high return non-farm sector activity hinges on access to capital. Thus, although this region is facing a similar diversification of livelihoods, the reproduction of poverty and wealth still retain the same pattern (Rigg, p.194).

Toufique's analysis of Bangladesh, as we shall see in chapter 4, presents a similar finding where entry into the non-farm sector is clearly divided based on existing access and control over resources such as land (2003). In the case of India or selected states in India, both Sen and Ghosh (1993) and Ramachandran (1990) have argued that diversification more a sign of distress than representative of any successful pattern of accumulation. There is also empirical evidence for India, for example, that suggests that the non-farm sector may have only an indirect effect on poverty through an increase in agricultural wages (Lanjouw,2000 ; Kijima and Lanjouw, 2005). In the case of India, for further illustration, Chandrasekhar has argued that the growing non-farm sector was not engendered from a robust agriculture due to the Green Revolution but rather was a reaction to the widespread exclusion from that process of advancement (1993). Nevertheless, it is also important to note the complexity and differentiated nature of both agriculture and non-agricultural livelihoods without relying upon wholesale labels such as agrarian crisis or a lack of dynamism, a point made later by Ramachandran (2011, p.56) and as the data suggests on the overall contributions of farm and non-farm incomes to households in India over specific periods of time (NCEUS, 2008). In fact, as Lerche discusses using the NSSO data for India, in 2003, the average income for farmers operating less than 4 hectares of land was actually negative (Lerche, 2013, p.397).

Rigg points out the following with regard to the non-farm sector:

> *To begin with, without the growing availability of low-paying non-farm work it is hard to imagine how poor rural households, landless or with sub-livelihood holdings, would have managed to maintain their rural presence at all…Even when livelihood diversification has been based on distress diversification, it has delivered an income of sorts and while non-farm work may not provide wages much higher than farm work (but rarely lower), such employment has increased the amount of work available to a poor household as they creatively combine farm and non-farm.* (*Rigg, p.194-195*)

Firstly, if non-farm opportunities provide a return that is not higher than that of farming, particularly for the poorest, and as a result, are seen as an activity to be taken in

conjunction with farming and not in isolation, it could well be argued that land's importance in the livelihoods of the poor still remains valid. It may be true that non-farm opportunities provide a financial hedge for the poor but whether this sector can provide a regular and steady income stream for the poor to leave farming altogether is questionable. Furthermore, given that differentiation does exist amongst the rural population and the poor are faced with unequal access to non-agrarian opportunities, it would seem likely that the extent of possession of agrarian assets such as land would ultimately determine the types of non-agrarian assets generated. This could be through the selling of land or through the utilization of surplus retained through farming the land. In fact, a study conducted by Barrett et al from three different agroecologies ranging from arid to semi-arid north central Kenya, highlands Rwanda and humid to sub-humid Cote d' Ivoire found that the poor are in fact more likely to depend heavily on the farm sector than richer households (2001, p. 27). In Rwanda, for instance, the total non-agricultural income of the lowest three quintiles combined hardly exceeded the top quintile. This is not to say that distress diversification of the type accorded to India as Sen and Ghosh (1993), for example have alluded to is not valid; rather the contention is that the returns from such diversification are not very high. Neverthless, more recent evidence for India in particular has shown that marginal farmers (in comparison to small farmers) actually derive a greater share of income from wages than directly through cultivation (NCEUS, 2008,p.20). As such, it is important not to make sweeping generalisations such as 'agrarian crisis' or 'distress diversification' and in turn to recognise the complexity and heterogeneity of these sectors across regions and over time.

The venture into non-farm opportunities may in fact reinforce class differentiation as Rigg himself proposes in his consideration of 'new' poverty, a position shared within the political economy approach. However, the central contradiction in his paper lies in the assertion of the landless becoming better off than small farmers. Such a position is far more in line with a World Bank centric position that emphasises the pro-poor nature of involvement in the non-farm sector without taking into account significant barriers to entry and the inequalities that persist despite entry into this sector (Lanjouw and

Lanjouw, 2001). It may be that these landless took advantage of opportunities outside of agriculture based on their pre-existing asset and resource base, one of which could be land. It is further doubtful to assume that the non-farm economy can have such transformative effects in the absence of capitalist agrarian transition and robust industrial growth. Kautsky did discuss how transformative effects within the peasantry could occur without or precede any capitalist transition in agriculture (Mahbub Ullah, 1996). Such a process could occur due to the growth of capitalism in urban centers and the move amongst the peasantry towards such lucrative opportunities. But there is a distinction between non-farm and industry and whether the growth of the non-farm sector, or any specific non-farm activity such as migration, for instance, has the capacity to transform rural trajectories of poverty, needs to be investigated.

This also calls into question the nature and type of non-farm opportunities that do exist and whether some types of non-farm economic activities do have the transformative power to generate mobility across class. In addition, the question of whether the non-farm economy can lift the poor out of poverty is more than a purely economic question. In fact, the scope of the non-farm sector in fostering distinct patterns of accumulation or accentuating old patterns of poverty cannot be discussed without a fuller understanding of the specific context of agrarian change. Thus, it will be important to observe how these embedded relationships of class, power, and patronage link with one another and influence the overall relationship with land and poverty.

Rigg asserts that maintaining a presence on the land in conjunction with non-farm work may not necessarily be the best route out of poor and in fact confine the poor to poverty (p. 195). Thus being tied to the land, what I will refer to as landlockedness, may restrict households from more viable and lucrative non-farm opportunities, migration being one such option. As such, the transformation of farmers into non-farmers altogether may be what is required in the pursuit of poverty reduction as Rigg argues in the following passage:

> ...it may be that policies should be aimed at oiling and assisting the process of transformation of farmers into non-farmers...rather than shoring up the livelihoods of smallholders through agricultural subsidies, land reforms and piecemeal employment schemes...(Rigg, p.195).

Such a policy prescription goes directly against Rigg's initial conception of 'new' poverty as embodying both the land rich and the land poor and thus, agrarian and non-agrarian poverty. Rigg, however, warns that such a policy of promoting entry into the non-farm sector is only possible when there exists a dynamic non-farm sector. The author, nevertheless, does not discuss how such a dynamism can come about. In fact, within Rigg, we see a tension between an approach that is reflective of an older political economy debate about the role of the non-farm sector and whether it retains the same inequalities as in agriculture.

The process of complete transformation of farmers into non-farmers does appear to be doubtful given that the poor may not be able to avail of the higher return non-farm activities in the first place considering the high barriers to entry. As such, to fall back on the land they own or have leased may be the only recourse. The only way in which a household's persistent hold over minimal landholdings may confine them to further poverty is perhaps due to their limited geographic mobility and in turn, limited access to economic opportunities that arise out of migration.

Griffin et al provides a contrasting view to the conception of landlockedness, the argument being that the focus on small landholdings and in turn, agriculture, will in fact raise the reservation wage in other sectors such as industry and the non-farm sector, thus having a dampening effect on overall levels of poverty (2002, p.20). The underlying rationale is that if the minimum floor of income streams from land and agriculture rises, and hence the opportunity cost of labor, the minimumwage at which the poor will be willing to service their labor in other sectors outside of agriculture will also rise. Such a viewpoint, however, negates the complex ways in which labor markets function and the incentives that shape labor market decisions which go far beyond just the reservation

wage. As Johnston and Sender have pointed out, the contention that access to land will increase the bargaining power of those seeking wage employment and in turn, enhance reservation wages has not been empirically proven (2004, p.148).

Rigg, on the other hand, argues that policies should aim at improving the opportunities within the non-farm sector such that rural households do not feel the need to remain partially rooted in agriculture and to their land. Although such arguments shed new light on the changing nature of the constitution of poverty, Rigg fails to situate such arguments within the context of the larger historical and political factors that have brought about such changes in the first place. For instance, is it possible that land plays an equally marginal role in two economies thatcanbedistinguishedbased on their differing level or type (if any) of capitalist transition in agriculture?

In Asia, there is the argument that wage rates within the non-agricultural sectors tend to be a mere fraction of the average product of labor in agriculture and with relatively elastic supply of labor (Karshenas, 1999) although more recent evidence, atleast in the case of India does display a greater dynamism in wages for this sector (NSSO, 2010). In Africa where the reservation wage or opportunity cost for labor in the non-agricultural sector is close to the average product of labor in agriculture. In fact, it is stated that the non-agricultural reservation wage rate in sub-Saharan Africa could be at least 100 percent higher than from Asia (Karshenas, 1999, p.7). Karshenas suggests that one reason for this could be that individual farmers tend to appropriate the entire farm product as leasing markets are relatively undeveloped. Thus, given higher wage rates in the non-agricultural sector in Africa, Rigg's hypothesis about land's diminishing role in livelihoods and the heightened role of non-farm opportunities is clearly plausible. In Asia, the same argument may also be relevant considering more recent trends, particularly as the Indian data suggests.

The Nigerian Middle Belt region provides a specific case in point: Bryceson (2002) discusses an inverse correlation between landholdings and household income, with non-

agricultural income forming 74 percent of the income of the landless in this region. These trends based on DARE data, the same data set that Rigg uses as part of his analysis (see section 3.3) Bryceson argues, are telling in that they indicate that land is not vital for income generation, though it may be relied upon for immediate food needs in the event of surge in food prices. Bryceson does not explicitly state that land and the income thus derived can constrain pathways out of poverty. In the presence of a robust non-farm sector with a high absorption capacity, landlockedness behavior of the rural poor would indeed seem irrational given their chances of securing much higher income in sectors apart from agriculture. In the case of Nigeria, the oil boom of the early to mid 1970s played a major role in the rise of the non-farm sector's importance and perhaps delinking land from livelihoods in the form of a greater share of income coming from non-farm economic activity. And as Bryceson goes on to state, this oil boom lead to a massive migration away from rural areas to the urban centers and thus, a massive neglect of smallholder agriculture (Bryceson, 2002, p.727). Thus landlockedness was replaced with a process that Bryceson has repeatedly referred to as depeasantisation (2002).

In establishing the relationship between land, migration and poverty, it is equally important to assess the contribution of both land based livelihoods and migration to incomegeneration. Landlockedness versus mobility - as two conditions for reproduction, the question that emerges is how such processes fit into the larger picture of rural differentiation.

3.4.3 Environmental degradation

Rigg also argues that environmental degradation due to a wide range of factors such as overcropping and deforestation also propel this rural transition where land is no longer central to livelihoods. Rigg mentions the examples of semi-arid regions in Africa, irrigation systems falling into disrepair in the Philippines and land degradation in Bangladesh as being indicative of such a process (p.188). Bracking also discusses in

a similar vein in her discussion of the commercialization of agriculture and its implications on poverty in rural Africa (2003). She cites the example of Malawi, for instance, where close to half of Malawians have no food security due to an amalgam of factors including land degradation, small landholdings,and constraints in the acquisition of farm inputs (Bracking, p.14). Collier and Dercon's account of Africa also presents a similar backdrop of deteriorating environmentalconditions fueled by current practices in agriculture and climate change (2009). Other studies such as that by Van der Ploeg have also discussed on the repercussions of commercial and industrial agriculture have on the environment and particularly, the long term productivity of agrarian resources (2010). For instance, Van der Ploeg provides an example of how the longevity of milking cows has drastically gone down from seven to eight lactation periods to only three (p.100). He also discusses how the use of energy and irrigation has increased considerably as part of the production process, though their efficiency of these resources has actually decreased (ibid, 2010).

The World Development Report on Agriculture (2008) also discussed the far-reaching processes that lead to environmental degradation and the consequences of such a process on global food security. The loss of forest lands and wetlands, soil degradation and water pollution are also discussed in this report. The example of the rice-wheat farming system in India and Pakistan is given where monoculture of rice in the summer season and wheat in the winter has led to massive soil and water degradation (ibid, p.188). The WDR, however, maintains that sustainable agricultural practices is what is needed, centered on integrated, natural resource management. However, and in keeping with the ideology that markets can keep such processes in check, the WDR proposes the need to foster mechanisms that ensure 'payments for environmental services' (WDR, 2008, p. 197). For example, the WDR argues that policies should be designed to compensate for environmental externalities such as biodiversity and clean water.

The adverse effects of climate change are also an important aspect of overall environmental changes that significantly alter the nexus between land and livelihoods.

For instance, the rise of sea levels that have lead to inundation of coastal areas, and the degradation of land and freshwater resources are all evident to varying degrees in different regions (Reuveny, 2007). In fact, Reuveny cites Bangladesh as one glaring example of land degradation, coastal erosion and erratic climatic conditions (ibid, p.658). Alam (2003) has also referred to the nature of climate-induced migration from rural areas that is occurring in Bangladesh. In fact, Bangladesh provides a unique case of environmental volatility through the recurring phenomenon of river and tidal erosion, an important point that will be discussed in the next chapter. Meze-Hausken paints a different scenario of climate change in the form of desertification in Ethiopia, for instance, where significant out-migration from dryland regionshas taken place (2000).

In sum, the role of environmental degradation has fueled two divergent camps on how to respond to such widespread, immeserating processes: one, as championed by the World Bank (WDR, 2008) is to promote smallholder agriculture in such a manner that is conducive to environmental sustainability; the other, as Rigg proposes is to focus on the non-farm as a channel out of such vulnerable livelihoods. Tacoli offers the same policy conclusion to that of Rigg, arguing in turn, that mobility coupled with income diversification provides the best solution to the risks associated with environmental change (2009). Collier also argues in a similar fashion, particularly in light of the current swell of concern about climate change. In particular, Collier argues that the move away from land based livelihoods to non-agricultural ones should be part of an overall adaptation policy, specifically in the case of Africa (2009, p.10).

3.4.4 Increasing land shortages

Another propelling factor that Rigg discusses is intertwined partially with demographics. Land shortages, then, are propelled by secondary factors such as population growth as well as concentration of land resources by a small class of landed households. Vested inequalities in land ownership may thus obstruct the channels for land ownership by the poor. The shortages that Rigg claims to be occurring are induced partly by the legacy of

land reform policies that have either created such concentration or have been unable to ameliorate such concentration. Furthermore, the closing of land frontiers as Rigg discusses, all of which fall under the rubric of legal and political barriers, can contribute to acute land shortages in the countryside. In Kenya, to draw from a historical example, by 1914, the Maasai tribe was already confined to less than 20 percent of their formal lands as a direct result of colonial policy. By the 1930s, over half of all productive agricultural land was reserved for some 2000 settler farms (Bracking, 2003, p.16). Thus, the process of landlessness and land shortages, though exacerbated by demographic factors, may hold its roots in the legacy of colonization. In countries such as Bangladesh, the rates of landlessness far exceed rates of population growth as will be discussed in chapter 4. Inheritance laws, though principled on the notion of access to land from generation to generation, may in fact spark landlessness with the conflict that ensues from continual fragmentation of landholdings. Thus, land shortages can be attributed to both demographic factors as well as legal and political barriers.

Rigg's assertion, however, falls prey to generalisation, the same generalisation that Byres has warned belies a greater complexity of the particular (1995). For example, as Karshenas maintains, surplus labor and intense population pressure are both predominant characterizations of agriculture which is clearly not the case in Africa where there is generally an abundance of land alongside periodic labor shortages (Karshenas, 2001). In fact, even within a region such as Africa, there may be wide differences in terms of demographics and the extent of land shortage or surplus. Land shortages, and consequently, the lack of income streams that can be derived from land, could perhaps provide a compelling reason for its loss of centrality in the livelihoods of the poor in the case of some countries, but not all. For the sake of clarification, it is important to note that when the reference is made to income streams that can be derived from land, it is inclusive of self-cultivated income, income generated from tenancy and agricultural wage income. In fact, from an intuitive standpoint, it would seem redundant to argue that land is losing its centrality because of population pressure and lack of land. It may very well be that land is no longer the *central* asset required by the poor in moving out of poverty

due to a more diversified portfolio of economic activities; nevertheless, land-based livelihoods may still be an important strategy for the poor and it will be necessary to determine under which circumstances and for whom it remains important. Rigg's assertions seem to accommodate the presence of land-based livelihoods but with a vague assertion about the growing 'centrality' of the non-farm:

> Livelihoods in the Rural South do, in many places and for many households – perhaps even in most places and for most households – continue to depend on small-holder agricultural production...The argument pursued in this paper is that not only are non-farm activities becoming *central* to rural livelihoods but also that an increasing number of rural households have no commitment to farming whatsoever (Rigg, p.181, emphasis mine).

Although the emprical trends Rigg uses do reflect a growing livelihood diversification into the non-farm sector as the section below further discusses, it does not appear to follow suit that the non-farm sector is 'becoming central' to rural livelihoods as Rigg proposes.

3.4.5 Social and cultural change

The final propelling factor of social and cultural change as Rigg argues has been the least documented, owing perhaps and, in part, to the importance given to other factors of rural change that are more amenable to measurement such as access over landholdings and income diversification. Furthermore, and as Rigg, argues, the rhetoric of NGOs and government agencies has sought to glorify rural life and all that is associated with it including farming (Rigg,p.187). Rigg cites the examples of Thailand and Malaysia to illustrate how farming has become so inextricably linked with national identity and a steadfast, immutable image of the rural that is predominantly agricultural or land-based despite evidence to the contrary (ibid, p.188). The 'yeoman farmer fallacy' as Farrington refers to, in consance with Rigg's arguments, is based on what is considered to be the falsely contrived ideas amongst NGOs that they can employ technical change to make

farming a successful enterprise (Farrington, 1998, p.4). Farrington (1998) goes on to argue that NGOs ignore the livelihood diversification of rural households and falsely view them through the singular occupational lens of farming. However, Rigg, in turn, contends that the role of media and consumerism has vastly changed rural life and rural aspirations. Agriculture is no longer considered to be the desired occupation as a result of what Rigg refers to as 'cultures of modernity' (ibid, p.189).

It could be argued that migration also plays a significant role in shaping new patterns of consumption and occupational changes. Similarly, the causes of migration may not be limited to only economic reasons as standard models of migration may focus on(Gidwani and Sivaramkrishnan, 2003). These theories of causes of migration are taken up in the next section. As an example, Shah (2006), for instance, has illustrated how seasonal migration from Jharkhand, a state in India, to the brick kilns of a neighboring state is fueled more by the need of the younger population in the predominantly tribal state to taste freedom rather than from dire economic need. Gidwani and Sivaramkrishnan (2003) have also pooled together cases from different parts of India that reflect the same need for cultural assertion amongst migrants. This reflects the generational change that may be occurring to forfeit a tradition centered on agriculture to one based on modernity where agriculture appears incompatible.

There is no reason to doubt the powerful influence that the ideal of the modern can have on rural spaces and mindsets. However, it is perhaps also important to frame the argument of social and cultural change within a wider understanding of social relations, particularly class relations, as the studies by Shah (2006) and Gidwani and Sivaramkrishnan (2003) have pointed to. What this means is that the culture of modernity that Rigg discusses may be mediated and actualised to different levels and degrees based on preexisting levels of accumulation. For example, an agricultural laborer household vis a vis a household with land and migrants (either internal or external) will perceive and seek to access the modern ideal differently,if at all. A resurvey of Purnia in rural Bihar spanning over twenty years is a case in point: although

changes did take place in terms of increased monetization of the rural economy, certain institutions such as sharecropping for instance, still remained in existence (Rodgers and Rodgers, 2001, p.1982). Although the purported existence or absence of sharecropping in different regions is a contentious issue with contenders on both sides of the debate, there is still reason to believe that rural change is not pervasive for all classes and that while social and cultural change amongst other factors may drive divergent occupational trends, there still may be facets of rural existence that are still rigid. A further illustration of the point is Breman's account of South Gujurat in India where he discusses how bonded labour patterns may not be the same as they were earlier during the1960s but they retain similarities in what he terms as 'neo-bondage' (Breman, 2010) Such studies are particularly important as they highlight what has not changed and for whom.

Thus, any rural changes in terms of livelihood diversification must be observed and assessed through an analysis of rural differentiation. What is perhaps more important to ask is who is affected by the wider social and cultural changes that turn households away from farming, for example. And furthermore, who bears the brunt of the status quo and remains embedded to agriculture and why?

3.5 ASSESSING THE ROLE OF MIGRATION IN EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LAND AND POVERTY

I will now turn the discussion to the role of migration in framing the relationship between land and poverty. Thusfar, the discussion has centered on the traditional relationship between landholdings and poverty and how changes in livelihoods may have altered the nature of this relationship. Rigg proposed five propelling factors as driving the 'delinking'of land from livelihoods, each of which were discussed in this chapter. I intend to investigate the emergence of the non-farm sector in detail given the depth of the academic debate about this sector as discussed earlier . Within the non-farm sector, I will focus specifically on migration as part of a livelihood diversification strategy and

the potential it has in changing the composition of rural differentiation and in turn, patterns of income generation. This section begins with a discussion on theories of migration, how these have evolved to encompass new empirical features of the migration phenomenon. This is followed by an overview of the prominent causes and impact of migration.

3.*5.1 Migration Theory*

Both the terms migration and poverty are indeed complex concepts to grapple with, particularly considering the vastness of what encompasses such dynamic processes of human mobility and change. Lucas (2007) has discussed this complexity, particularly when dealing with a definition of migration that encompasses a wide range of different features, particulary in terms of duration, for instance. Thus, seasonal migrants, short-term contractual migrants, those who migrate for the long-term and forced migrants or refugees all fall under the migration label. There are also the increasing numbers of transnational migrants who maintain ties with both host country and country of origin as discussed in detail by Levitt (1998) and Basch et al (1995) amongst others. When attempting to theorize migration, particularly why migration occurs and why the duration of migration differs, features such as transnational migration that are characterized by a heightened mobility may make theorization far more difficult. Given this vastness, Skeldon (2003) has also discussed the difficulty in defining migration so as to encompass the totality of all of its features. In fact, it is only the long-term internal migrant who in turn migrates once from the rural (or agriculture), to the urban sector (or industry) making, in turn, a permanent migration decision that is found in the early theoretical models that seek to rationalize the migration choices of individuals. The seasonal and short-term migrants, particularly those who migrate internationally are nowhere to be found in the Lewis or Harris Todaro models, for instance, which focus on how variables such as wages and levels of uncertainty affect migratory decisions for prospective migrants (Lucas, 2007, p.100).

The Lewis model (1954) went far in encapsulating the dualism in developing countries and the mechanisms by which surplus labor is transferred from agriculture into industry, thus leading to far reaching transformations in the wider economy. However, what this early model and its neoclassical successors such as the Harris Todaro model (1970) lacked was an explanation of the totality in which migration takes place, its causes, and the overall heterogeneous impacts of such migration. The Harris Todaro model, for instance, was centered on rational individual agency and a modernization ideal of development as De Haas argues has become the basis for neoclassical theory on migration (de Haas, 2007, p.12). For instance, the scope for repeat migration, or circular migration is yet to be theorised. To establish the nexus between migration and poverty is also ridden with vagueness as poverty is so overarching a concept that includes both the material needs of direct consumption but also variables that are not so easy to measure such as the freedom sassociated with Sen's notion of capabilities, those features in particular, that have not yet materialized and are yet to be manifested. A discussion of the concept of poverty is found in chapter 2.

Yet another hurdle in migration research is a methodological one and as discussed in chapter 5, deals with the problems associated with household surveys that in fact, in large, part miss migrant members as they are not present within the household (Cramer et al, 2008). Information, in turn, on these migrants has to be supplied by other household members who may or may not be able to satisfactorily provide reliable information. This is exacerbated further by definitions of household (also discussed in chapter 5) that do not include migrants as existing members of the household based on the traditional definition of a household as centered on physical presence within a geographical space. As mentioned in the methodology section of this dissertation, however, these problems were overcome by using a definition adopted by Pincus and Sender (2008) and M. Ullah (1996) amongst others who defined a household as including all those who are both physically present as well as those who may be absent but financially contribute to the common earnings of the household. Such a conceptual definition of household bypasses to a great extent the problems associated with dearth of information on, for instance,

migrant remittances and their subsequent utilisation towards different ends or other pertinent questions related to who migrates and the factors that lead to such migration.

3.5.1.1 Causes and impacts of migration: a synopsis of prominent debates

Traditionally, migration has been perceived as a strategy taken on by the poorest, a way out or escape from the clutches of poverty. Such a view, although not wholly untrue, has largely been shaken to the ground based on a wealth of empirical studies that have shown that it is not always the poorest who migrate (Skeldon, 2008). In fact, Skeldon rightly maintains that migration is clearly multidimensional, involving variegated groups, some who are highly skilled as well as semi-skilled and unskilled labor. Chapter 6 and 7 in fact will corrobarate that in the surveyed villages, it is not the poorest who migrate overseas. There are also other causes for migration such as marriage or even the very basic need for mobility and the freedom associated with it as empirical studies in Bangladesh and India have pointed out (Gardner, 2009; Shah, 2006). Interestingly, Skeldon has also discussed how migrants flow from concentrated regions thus exacerbating regional inequalities; for instance, in Bangladesh, 95 percent of migrants from Bangladesh to UK up to the late 1980s originated from one specific area as also was the case for Pakistan and India (Skeldon, 2008).

The role that migration plays in fostering development is perhaps the most widely discussed and debated in the literature with key swings in direction with respect to the nature of this relationship. The early theoretical models, like the seminal Lewis model clearly linked the internal migration from agriculture to industry with economic growth as it was through migration away from agriculture that industrial expansion could occur, without any loss in agriculture. This was based on the assumption of low to negative marginal products of labor within agriculture in a typical developing country setting. Although these early models' focus was limited to economic growth, the neoclassical migration theory (and the institutions such as the World Bank that brandish such positions) that have these models as their starting point have largely taken a similar positive outlook, viewing migration as leading to an optimum allocation of productive

resources (de Haas, 2010). Furthermore, return migrants were seen as agents of change and innovation, who could in turn bring in new skills and both innovative technological and entrepreneurial practices (Cassarino, 2004). As far as overall macro effects, migrant' remittances were viewed to be important sources of foreign exchange for poor countries.

The World Bank's position as expressed through the World Development Report (WDR) (2009) has explicitly articulated the importance of migration in both fostering economic growth and development, albeit with spatial inequalities across regions. The WDR has also distinguished between 'push' and 'pull' factors in that migration is generally beneficial when migrants are pulled into migration as a way of enhancing economic outcomes rather than pushed into it as a result of deprivation. Nevertheless, the overall outlook on migration is a positive one that sees migration as a way of inducing convergence across regions once unequal. UNDP's Human Development Report (2009) argues in a similar vein the importance of mobility in improving health care and education but does so through the lens of capabilities and human freedoms. It sees mobility in both its intrinsic importance as a dimension of freedom but also a process that clearly has instrumental value. However, even the HDR acknowledges that "movement does not always lead to better human development outcomes...vast inequalities characterise not only the freedom to move but also the districution of gains from movement (HDR, p.10). Despite these acknowledgements from both the reports, both express a view that is for the most part a positive one.

De Haas's summary of the key swings in debates related to migration is indeed a comprehensive one (de Haas, 2010). Over the decade of the 1960s, de Haas discusses how the optimistic views on migration over the previous decade began to wane with more pessimism rooted in barriers to development such as 'brain drain' and 'brawn drain'. Not only was it increasingly observed that the most highly skilled workers were leaving for better prospects outside but that the young male population was also leaving, thus leading to a brawn drain and thus, a loss in agricultural productivity. Another key account of pessimism was founded on the premise that migrant remittances are used

mainly to feed habits of conspicuous consumption of mainly imported goods and non-productive activities such as housing construction (see chapters 6 and 7 for how these link to the field level data) thus making little headway in fueling local economic growth and development. Numerous empirical studies have sought to determine the effectiveness of remittances on the reduction of poverty and in turn, have argued that remittances can smooth consumption instability (Combes and Ebeke, 2010; Adams and Page, 2005; Brown, 2006). For instance, Adams and Page (2005) found a statistically significant relationship between remittances and the level, depth and severity of poverty based on data of 71 low and middle income countries since the 1980s. Yang (2011) has pointed out the insurance role of remittances in terms of smoothing consumption. Other studies have focused on some of the negative ramifications of remittances such as inflationary trends fueled by increases in consumption (Stanton Russell, 1986). Thus, although the link between remittances and investment and growth are inconclusive, there is a great deal of agreement that the flow of remittances can smooth consumption and in turn reduce poverty.

These studies, though important, do not shed light on who migrates, whether they are the poorest, and the role of land in the migration process. Furthermore, such contentions, particularly those based on cross country research, as de Haas argues, are fundamentally flawed in that they make sweeping generalizations about processes that are inherently dependent on local contexts. Skeldon (2003) has also remarked on the danger of making such overgeneralizations that sidestep the richness of diversified outcomes in localized contexts. In fact, de Haas has noted how the empirical work on migration has been contradictory, which may reflect not only divergent ideological leanings but actual heterogeneous impacts of migration in various local contexts (deHaas, 2010). De Haas's summary concludes with the period of the 1980s and 1990s with more emphasis on heterogeneous empirical work as well as the advent of the New Economics of Labour Migration (NELM). This latest wave of migration theory has sought to merge the gaps between the neoclassical and historical-

structural schools. As key points of departure from the neoclassical school, NELM focuses on relative deprivation as a rationale for migration, meaning in turn, that households will gauge interpersonal income in order to determine the choices they make. Furthermore, within the NELM school, households represent the central unit of analysis, not the individual. Thus, households may seek to send off individual members of their household to seek migration opportunities as a way in which to hedge risk (Abreu, n.d.). The household then pools its resources and diversifies risk by way of having selected members migrate, akin to the livelihoods approach (discussed earlier in chapter 2).

However, as Abreu states, the NELM school has very little to offer outside of the same neoclassical stance of methodological individualism, albeit with a slightly more complex picture of how households may function. In fact, our earlier hypothesis about landlockedness would not hold true within the NELM theory, as households would maximize returns through both migration and land-based livelihoods. Migration based on household centered agency still does not provide a forceful account of the wider structural factors that may drive households away from agriculture and towards non-agricultural opportunities. The NELM, in turn, has sought to theorise household economic decisions within a framework of imperfect markets. However, just as with the livelihoods approach, such a school of thought merely sidesteps more compex factors that underplay economic decisions, particularly as Pontara (2010) has articulated to be those deeper concerns related to class structure (see chapter 2). Abreu (2012) also provides a compelling critique of the NELM, demonstrating in turn how this school still remains methodologically individualist despite its shift of focus to the household and loses sight of the larger processes such as proletarisanisation and capitalist accumulation that foster migration (p.59). Additionally, Abreu also gives a useful historical account of the genesis of NELM that arose in reaction to the shortcomings of the neoclassical and historical structuralist schools of thought that have dominated the migration literature. Neverthless, as Abreu quips, the NELM is nothing short of “neoclassicals bearing gifts” (2012).

The theoretical backing that can substantiate the strength of the non-farm economy in absorbing the poor and providing a viable means of sustenance in comparison to solely land-based livelihoods is weak. Neoclassical migration theory has centered on individual migration agency based on rational choice (Abreu, n.d.). For instance, in the Lewis dual sector model, it was the higher wage in the modern sector that propelled the poor to leave traditional farming and at least in monetary terms made them better off. The same was true for the Harris-Todaro migration model though with a new variable of uncertainty of securing modern sector employment included in the analysis. Thus, migration would occur in a manner similar to that of the Lewis model, but in this case, migrants would not only consider the wage differential between traditional farming and modern sector manufacturing but would also weigh in to their decision making the possibility of actually finding a formal employment opportunity.

The wage rate or overall return in the non-farm sector may not be high enough to propel complete rejection of farming. The non-farm economy includes a vast range of economic activity outside of agriculture including transport, construction work, and trading amongst others. Whether the returns generated from these forms of economic activity are substantial enough, in the absence of widespread capitalist wage labor generation, to change prevailing notions of the nexus between land and livelihoods is a question that must be explored further. In the Harris-Todaro model, migration from agriculture to manufacturing would occur so long as the present value of the net stream of expected urban income over the migrant's planning horizon exceeded that of expected rural income (Todaro and Smith, 2009). Whether the poor would be willing to leave farming altogether for non-farm work based on a similar logic is not compelling. Other contrasting theories on migration such as the historical-structural school have focused on structural factors that lead to migration, those factors being processes related to the emergence of capitalist relations of production in pre-capitalist contexts.

The question that comes to the fore is to what extent the degree and nature of non-farm income becomes the explanatory variable in distinguishing the poor from the less poor or from the poor and the new rich. Or are there other underlying variables that can explain more adequately why some are able to diversify and others are not? Rigg's arguments assume that the extent of diversification into non-farm holds with it the power to raise incomes and transform poor households into non-poor ones. There is, however, reason to investigate whether it is the degree of non-farm exposure that transforms the income profile of households or rather, the nature of differentiation amongst the poor that in turn determines extent and depth of diversification and the income trajectories that ensue.

3.6 Initial Conclusions and Summary

This chapter has used Rigg's contentions (2006) to structure the key factors that govern the relationship between land, migration and poverty. This chapter started off with a discussion on the importance of assessing any relationship between land and poverty through the lens of the political economy of agrarian change. In assessing Rigg's paper, this chapter pointed out that the diversification of livelihoods in the Global South which in turn has lead to new forms of poverty sourced from both agrarian and non-agrarian livelihoods clearly falls into the political economy approach of agrarian change. However, the policy conclusions prescribed in the same paper directly contradict such an understanding by way of suggesting that the non-farm sector can pull households out of poverty and prescribing the facilitation of such a transition.

The empirical data that displays livelihood diversification was also presented in this chapter. The livelihoods framework (as discussed in chapter 2) to a certain extent applauds the diversity in the livelihoods of the poor, envisioning the expansion of choice and the further straddling of economic activity as a sustainable trajectory out of vulnerability and poverty. The framework itself heavily draws from a neoclassical foundation which focuses on maximizing returns on resources based on preference maps in the absence of wholly functioning markets. A set of push and full factors influence the

livelihood strategies the poor undertake. For instance, the push factors may include risk reduction, response to diminishing factor returns on any given strategy or resource use, and high transaction costs that force peasants into self-provision of certain goods and services. The pull factors may include specialization due to comparative advantage in certain areas (Yaro, 2006). Thus, livelihood strategies center on ex ante and ex post risk reduction and maximization of returns per unit of labor (Pontara, 2010).

However, as an analytical framework that can explain trajectories of status quo or change, the livelihoods framework does very little in situating the underlying political or historical circumstances that compel the poor to diversify. The livelihoods framework presupposes a homogenized rural poor differentiated only with respect to their levels of capital as part of their asset pentagons. As a static framework, it cannot explain the processes that may lead to landlessness outside of the ambit of vulnerability and shock.It is thus integral to place our analysis within the larger framework of agrarian change and differentiation of the poor. Although these political economy theories can be interpreted as explaining changing positions vis a vis the means of production in agriculture rather than changing dependence on agriculture for income, such a political economy perspective is helpful in illuminating the need to understand the wider social, political and economic context of rural change.

This chapter has discussed the established 'old view' that is still agriculture and land-centric with the more recent literature that sees the non-farm sector as having a greater impetus in shaping the livelihoods of the poor, albeit still continuing to reinforce existing inequalities. Although the empirical trends within countries of the Global South signals a move towards livelihood diversification and what Rigg calls a 'delinking between land and livelihoods', there is still reason to explore these trends further before making sweeping conclusions about the role that land may or may not play in income trajectories. Firstly, this move towards deagrarianization has actually been found to be reversible in certain cases as was described earlier in this chapter. Secondly, the non-farm sector presents differential opportunities to different groups of poor, thus meaning that land may

have varying degrees of importance based on this differentiation. Land may even determine the nature of entry into the non-farm sector, particularly in the case of migration as will be discussed in chapters 6 and 7. Thus, the role that land plays in either advancing livelihoods or constraining them must take into account the nature of differentiation and the wider political economy of agrarian change.

Theories on migration with exception to the historical structural school provide only a rational choice basis for decisions to migrate, be it geographic or sectoral migration. Even the new surge of thinking known as NELM has done very little in providing a synthesis between the historical structural school and the neoclassical theories. Similarly, the livelihoods frameworksuffers the same setback in that it also views the poor as straddling a range of diversified economic activity based on a combination of factors including risk and returns. Both NELM and the livelihoods framework suffer from an absence of analysis of the wider structural forces at play that impinge on the livelihoods of the poor and in turn, have bearing on the nexus between land, migration and poverty. It is keeping these drawbacks in mind that this dissertation will emphasize on differentiation of the poor and take to understanding the wider political economy of agrarian change in order to assess more comprehensively whether land is being delinked from livelihoods and if so, what the implications of such a trend are.It is important to keep in mind that farming done in conjunction with other multiple livelihoods may actually signify that households require both as a condition for their reproduction. It will be important to identify those livelihoods that alter the conditions of reproduction to the extent where farming and land based livelihoods lose importance - hence, the focus on migration.

To sum up, the relationship between land ownership and poverty is no longer a straightforward one to answer. Rigg raises five propelling factors of which the rise of non-farm opportunities such as migration is by far the most complex. In the last chapter, the question was raised as to what distinct conditions of reproduction are and how they determine who the poor and non-poor are. This chapter has focused specifically

on migration as a condition for reproduction. In considering the relationship between land, migration and poverty and how it has bearing on rural differentiation, the following questions will be tackled in the subsequent chapters in my case study of two selected villages in Bangladesh.

1. How is the relationship between land and poverty changing? Is rural landlessness still an indicator of poverty or has migration or other off-farm and non-farm opportunities altered this assumption?

2. Does landlockedness hinder the achievement of higher incomes? Why do households seek to maintain a landholding?

3.Does migration signify a sufficient condition of reproduction on its own? If so, then what form does this migration take?

CHAPTER 4: EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LAND, MIGRATION AND POVERTY: BANGLADESH CONTEXT

The previous chapter investigated the relationship between land, migration and poverty by providing an overview of the global literature. In so doing, it raised a pertinent question with regard to landholdings and whether it serves as an impediment or a factor conducive to income generation and poverty reduction. Where migration fits in to rural trajectories of change and differentiation was also discussed. This chapter seeks to assess the relationship between land, migration and poverty in the context of Bangladesh based on the existing literature. At the outset, this chapter will provide a backdrop of poverty in Bangladesh and how it relates to overall trends in growth and inequality. A discussion will follow on the political economy of agrarian change as it pertains to Bangladesh and what this means for rural differentiation. This chapter will then delve into some of the key areas of focus including the distribution of land and the nature of the non-farm economy.

4.1 Poverty and Growth in Bangladesh

Shortly after independence, the incidence of poverty was a staggering 74 percent. Bangladesh has experienced a faster pace of poverty reduction in the decade of the 1990s as compared to the 1980s which is when structural adjustment reforms commenced (Sen and Hulme, 2006). However, this rate of poverty reduction in the 1990s amounted to only an annual one percent decrease, despite accelerated levels of GDP growth during this period in comparison to the prior decade. On a more optimistic note, more recent data indicates that the poverty rate has declined by two percent annually between 2000 and 2005, albeit with a poverty rate remaining at 40 percent in 2005 representing 56 million people (Mahmud and Chowdhury, 2008). Please refer to chapter 2 for a discussion on the key flaws of standard poverty measurements including problems with lack of change in the base year that is considered to underestimate poverty.

During the period of 1991-92 to 2000, poverty incidence was reduced from 58.8 percent to 48.9 percent and from 2000 to 2005, from 48.9 to 40.0 percent (Bangladesh Economic Review, 2008). The poverty gap[17] also declined from17.2 percent to 12.9 percent over the same period. It has also been observed that there has been a faster pace of poverty reduction in urban areas in the 1990s as far as headcount index of poverty. This, however, has been associated with a rise in inequality with the Gini coefficient rising from 0.259 to 0.306 over the same period of time. Thus, Bangladesh exhibits relatively high growth with poverty reduction but with rising inequality as Khondker and Chaudhury (2001) also suggest. The Bangladesh PRSP is also in agreement with this position as the passage below suggests.

> *The growth-poverty link underlying the observed poverty trends show that Bangladesh has moved from a situation of lower growth with equity having a smaller impact on poverty reduction in the 1980s to a situation of higher growth with inequality having a larger impact on poverty reduction in the nineties. (Bangladesh PRSP, 2005, p.15)*

Whether the above features would qualify Bangladesh as having a set of pro-poor policies is nevertheless a point to ponder. What actually qualifies a state as 'pro-poor' is vague and rhetorical. One interpretation is to determine the growth elasticity of poverty which is defined as the ratio of the percentage change in the poverty headcount to the percentage change in the growth rate; thus, the higher the elasticity, the higher the extent of 'pro-poor' growth (Chhidder and Nayyar, 2007). However, as J. Mohan Rao (2002) discusses, focusing entirely on reducing inequality can also be considered 'pro-poor' as the poor will benefit proportionally more than the rich. Rising inequality has in fact been the norm in developing and industrialized countries alike throughout the 1990s (ibid). However, as Rao indicates based on empirical data, the rate of poverty reduction was only a seventh as large during periods of growth accompanied by rising inequality in comparison to similar

[17]Poverty gap is the mean shortfall from the poverty line (counting the nonpoor as having zero shortfall), expressed as a percentage of the poverty line. Thus, it measures both the incidence and depth of poverty.

growth episodes tied to declining or stable levels of inequality. Rao goes on to argue that growth with redistribution has greater poverty reduction effects in comparison to distribution-neutral growth. Mahmud and Chowdhury argue in a similar vein, contending that more progress would have been made in poverty reduction had income distribution not worsened in both rural and urban areas (2008). Such an argument goes against the Dollar and Kray (2002) contention of 'growth is good for the poor' in all cases. Donaldson's study of exceptions to the sweeping assertion made by Dollar and Kray (2002) provides a strong reminder that growth is not necessarily always poverty reducing (Donaldson, 2008). McKinley also argues in a similar vein, pointing out how, regardless of whether growth is pro-poor or distribution neutral, the basic structure of inequitable distribution may remain the same, if not worsen as incomes between the rich and the poor widen (2008). The passage from the Bangladesh PRSP as mentioned above however implies the opposite; that is, growth with equity has had lower poverty reduction effects. How much this is actually the case for Bangladesh and the dynamics of growth and inequality is, however, outside the scope of this thesis but forms a backdrop to the discussion.

Bangladesh's progress, nevertheless, is indeed considered remarkable in the area of social development. Some of the key areas where the country has succeeded are female school enrolment, child mortality and contraceptive adoption rates (World Bank, 2002; Bangladesh PRSP, 2005). Public expenditure programs such as safety net programmes targeted to the poor, low-cost innovations and the vast NGO sector in Bangladesh contributed to this success. According to the Bangladesh PRSP, the human poverty index which is an aggregate index of deprivations in health, education and nutrition stood at 61 percent in the early 80s, declined to 47 percent in early 1990s and has more recently dropped even further to 35 percent. As such, Bangladesh's ability to meet some, though not all, of the Millennium Development Goals is considered feasible (World Bank, 2002). The overall positive picture of improvements in social development in Bangladesh is thus largely an uncontentious one.

Agriculture's contribution to the economy is at 20 percent of GDP though its share in the labour force is reported to be much higher at 48 percent of total labor force. The accuracy of these statistics can be called into question, however, particularly considering the inadequacy of food production estimates as discussed below. Thus, a huge repository of labor exists within agriculture or in its vicinity in the rural non-farm sector. A decline is also occurring in agriculture's sectoral share in GDP, alongside an increase in service's share, albeit small. It may also be mentioned here that Bangladesh is a food grain importing country despite an oft quoted label of improvements in food self-sufficiency (Daily Star, 2013). In fact, the latest evidence indicates that rice production figures have been grossly inflated over the years (ibid, 2013). In FY 2007-08 imported 34.7 lakh[18] metric tons of food consisting primarily of rice and wheat, although domestic production for the same year stood at over 300 lakh metric tons (consisting of rice, wheat and maize) (Bangladesh Economic Review, 2008). The Bangladesh PRSP, however, states that the country has in fact witnessed a moderate surplus in cereal production though punctuated by yearly fluctuations leading to the need for import. Within agriculture, with an overall growth rate hovering at close to 4 percent in 2007/08, the crop sub-sector forms the largest share accounting for 73 percent of agriculture and forestry sector GDP (Statistical Yearbook, 2008; Bangladesh PRSP, 2005). Wages have also been rising in agriculture, going from a real daily wage of Tk 20 in 1983/84 to Tk 24 in 1991 to Tk28 in 2003.[19]

4.2 SITUATING THE LAND, MIGRATION AND POVERTY NEXUS WITHIN THE WIDER POLITICAL ECONOMY OFAGRARIAN TRANSITION IN BANGLADESH

An investigation into the relationship between land and rural poverty and how migration alters such a relationship cannot be undertaken in isolation of the wider political economy of agrarian change. It was Byres (2003) who contended that the nature of differentiation of the peasantry will ultimately determine the extent of agrarian transition. In so doing, and

[18] 1 lakh is equivalent to 100,000. Note that this figure is inclusive of both private and public sector import.
[19] This wage is specifically for male laborers. The prevailing exchange rate is Tk110 = 1GBP

as mentioned earlier, Byres concluded that either a strong landholding class could potentially be conducive to such a capitalist transition or a rich peasant group with a strong class-for-itself solidarity. In the case of Bangladesh, the case of stark differentiation has been illustrated by Rahman (1986). Byres (2003) also briefly points out that despite the existence of rural differentiation in Bangladesh, there appears to be an absence of a strong landholding class that can incite a 'capitalism from below.'

Such doubts have been confirmed by Mushtaq Khan (2004) who argues that the necessary 'class-for-itself' consciousness that is vital to capitalist transition is largely absent in Bangladesh. For capitalism to spread, a process of primitive accumulation must precede it, where dispossession of land concomitant with a widespread transfer of land to a potentially capitalist class takes place (Khan, 2000, p.26). Such a process of primitive accumulation, as Khan argues, particularly in the case of Bangladesh, is occurring, but is not concerted and sizeable enough to bring about capitalist transitions and is more likened to what Mahbub Ullah (1996) describes as a 'change in changelessness.' In the case of Bangladesh, Khan (2004) further brings the notion of an intermediary or residual class whose members including rich and middle peasants, petty bourgeoisie and urban professionals to explain why class-based politics that could potentially lead to a capitalist transition is absent. It is these members of the intermediary classes who, armed with the skill of organizational ability, lead multi-class factions that ultimately become part and parcel of political parties. Thus, it is not the capitalists nor is it the poorest landless groups who take the helm of such factions, which in and of itself, represents a characterization of an incomplete transition to capitalism, as Khan lucidly depicts the interrelationship between primitive accumulation, class interests and patron-client factions (ibid, 2004). In fact, the very sparseness of a group of capitalists who can dominate politics is self-evident in a society that has not fully transitioned towards capitalism. In turn, it is the intermediate class that represents a significant force through their sheer numbers. It is in fact evidenced that the majority of large and middle farms[20] are owned by members of the

[20] Large farms are generally over 7.5 acres meaning that they would even be considered as small or middle sized farms in a different geographical context.

intermediate class, not capitalist farmers (Khan, 2000). This is not to say that members of the intermediate class are anti-capitalist per se, but rather that they may not be strictly capitalist.

The poor also align themselves amongst competing multi-class factions due to the potential payoffs they may receive in the form of protection, particularly in the case of land grabbing, lower interest rates on loans and a ready army of 'foot soldiers,' likened to a local militia. For this reason, the most marginalized groups of poor may not necessarily ally with the interests of their original class, the incentives being far greater in setting alliances with multi-class factions. Thus, with the absence of a class-for-itself, and an active role of the state in fueling such change, a full-scale capitalist agrarian transition becomes thwarted, albeit leaving space for sporadic, small-scale capitalist initiatives (Khan, 2004). The state's role in fostering primitive accumulation is then obstructed by this intense competition for resources. As the state represents a group of multi-faction, multi-class loyalties, it cannot swerve, wholeheartedly, in favor of capitalist class interests. Thus, redistribution in the form of subsidies, loans and other forms of redress towards the capitalist sector will only form a minor channeling of resources to the interests of capital.

Prior to British conquest, rights of land ownership belonged to the cultivating masses, not the state nor the zamindars, who were the official revenue collectors of the Mughal state during the pre-colonial period. The rights of the zamindars lay in the revenue they collected from their jurisdictions prior to the British period of colonization. These were often hereditary rights passed down through the generations (Ray and Ray, 1975). During the period of colonization by the British, a process of landlordism was established in which the zamindars were conferred ownership over the land. Such a process which came under the Permanent Settlement in Bengal in1793, similar to the Permanent Settlement Act in England the same year, was seen as a path towards agrarian transformation in which the newly established landlords would spearhead a process of capitalist transition in agriculture and provide a source of annual revenue (Mahbub Ullah, 1996). This never occurred, however, as this landlord class ultimately degenerated into a class of exploitive absentee

landlords who in turn, furthered the immiseration of the poor. Moreover, there were also religious tensions as the zamindars were largely higher caste Hindus while the tenants in East Bengal (now Bangladesh) remained for the most part Muslims.

Following partition, a series of land reform measures were passed including the East Bengal State Acquisition and Tenancy Act that abolished the Zamindari system[21]. Though the Zamindari system was successfully weeded out, the jotedars who were the former tenants under the zamindari system managing sizeable portions of land and renting out the land for cultivation to sharecroppers and hired laborers remained intact. As such, this act and those that followed did little to transfer land from a landholding class to landless laborers, and in fact only deepened the insecurity of tenancy (Makita, 2007). Although land ceilings were instituted at 60 bighas, or roughly 20 acres, they were often circumvented by large landholders who also held entrenched positions within the state (ibid, 2007). Policies were thus not implemented or enforced allowing landholders to bypass the ceiling laws by way of registering their excess land under different names. Ceilings were often kept very high to the point where very little land was actually accumulated by the state for the purposes of redistribution. The land that was collected which represented a mere 1 percent of cultivable land was often fragmented and of poor quality as other lands that should have been redistributed were tightly held on to by existing landlords in collaboration with revenue officials.

The 1950 Act also propelled landowners to discharge tenants in order to practice self-cultivation (ibid, 2007). Fear of tenancy reforms on the part of existing landholders served as the major cause for this wave of landlessness that ensued. This was only exacerbated by the lack of access to institutional credit mechanisms for the poor who in turn relied upon usurious moneylenders. In fact, it was the jotedars who wielded an enormous degree of

[21]Abu Abdullah (1976) provides a comprehensive account of land reform measures in Bangladesh from the Permanent Settlement of 1793 to the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885 with its subsequent amendments in 1928, 1938, and 1949 prior to the East Bengal State Acquisition and Tenancy Act of 1950 and the East Pakistan Ordinance of 1961. Kamal Siddiqui's work also provides a useful analysis of the overall land management architecture in Bangladesh including the manner of consolidation and acquisition of landholdings and the overall administration of land records and land revenue (1997).

power as their tenants relied upon them for credit. Moneylending and grain dealing were in fact occupations of the jotedars, serving only to consolidate their hold over the rural economy (Ray and Ray, 1975). Continuous eviction and replacement of sharecroppers also became common practice. Although the Land Reforms Ordinance of 1984 sought to strengthen the legal status of sharecroppers, requiring a written contract for all sharecropping agreements, once more such ordinances were rarely implemented on the ground.

In Noakhali, where my fieldwork was carried out, jotedars have wielded a great deal of power and influence which has been used to seize landholdings, particularly those public char lands that were up for grabs due to official corruption (see later section for more detail on the state's role in these kind of de facto land acquisitions). With de jure possession of public lands taking place, mostly within an environment of corruption, de facto possession was occurring simultaneously. As contiguous large tracts of land are scarce in the context of Bangladesh with its prevailing small farms, these char lands provided an opportunity to seize vast amounts of newly accreted land (Adnan, 2011). As Adnan explains, char lands were characterized by many river and sea channels thus making it very difficult for local institutions to make an effective presence in those are as and as such, making it conducive for jotedars with their armed militias and in many cases political connections spanning both the local and the national to take control of these areas (ibid, 2010). These jotedars even went further to allow migrant landless cultivators to retain squatter status on these lands but with a heavy extraction of rent.

During the 1990s, many of the forests that were planted in these char areas began to mature, thus making these char lands, now consolidated, attractive for cultivation and other economic purposes (Adnan, 2010). During this period in Noakhali, powerful forest bandits known as bandasyus took control over these lands in defiance of the Forest Department and brought in many migrant landless migrants from surrounding regions to cultivate these lands and remain squatters in these char

areas. Noakhali being a coastal area is also a site for shrimp cultivation for export. Many jotedar groups in the region, upon seeing the forest lands being cleared, found an opportunity for further economic profit through these lands (ibid, 2010). Many of these jotedar groups lobbied the government to allot these lands for the purposes of shrimp cultivation. The Shrimp Zone Rules was enacted by the government in 1992, thus providing a legitimate rationale for allotment of lands to wealthy and influential jotedar groups. As such, the time period spanning 1992 to 2003, many state lands were allotted to wealthy groups in Noakhali region for the purposes of shrimp farming. This process involved competing interests between the poor peasants who had originally squatted on these lands with the help of the bandasyus, the bandasyus themselves who did not wish to lose their power and influence over the region without a fight and the jotedars with their newfound de jure rights over the lands. Forced evictions and violence ensued over this period. The process halted somewhat during the regime change in 2007 when a countrywide campaign was launched to seize these lands.

This entire process depicts a concentrated and localised scenario of primitive accumulation, more acute in this region due to char formations. It also reveals the intense competition for land that bypasses the formal buying and selling of land . Such land grabs are not restricted only to char areas but cover the length and breadth of Bangladesh, fueled by the vulnerability of powerless groups who cannot rely fully on de jure titles to land and also by processes of overseas migration where the male household members are overseas. How these overseas migrants fit into this picture is further described in later chapters. This entire process of landgrabbing also shows that although primitive accumulation is occuring in the Noakhali region, it is at times promoted and at other times curtailed or impeded by the state depending on the regime in power, a point discussed by M. Khan in his work on factional patron client relationships in Bangladesh and the ensuing instability that results (2004).

Thus, land policies in Bangladesh have fluctuated a great deal, thus making any process of capitalist agrarian transition an uneven and irregular one. Within this backdrop, it will

be important to assess what role land plays in routes out of poverty for the rural poor and what this means for rural differentiation. The acute competition over land by competing interest groups signals that despite migration overseas and the proliferation of non-farm opportunities, land appears to be inextricably linked with livelihoods.

4.3 POVERTY AND RURAL DIFFERENTIATION IN BANGLADESH CONTEXT

The homogeneity of the poor has long been discredited in the case of Bangladesh, dating as far back as the colonial period. Atiur Rahman's work on differentiation of the poor (1986) has pointed out that during this period, there existed distinctions within the Bengali peasantry, one such distinct group being the Muslim *Raiyats,* who were those within the peasantry that produced a surplus. For the period spanning close to four decades, from the 1950s to late 1980s, other distinctions have also been expounded: landowners (zamindars), rich farmers (jotedars), self-sufficient peasants (raiyats), sharecroppers (bargadars) and agricultural laborers (krishans) (Rahman, 1986). Rahman also discusses an interesting aspect of differentiation, that being the pace with which differentiation takes place (ibid, 1986). In so doing, the argument is made that the speed of differentiation amongst the peasantry was greater in relatively advanced areas where there was a greater access and absorption of Green Revolution technologies. This is based on thecontention that Green Revolution technologies were utilized in most part by the richer sections of the peasantry, as has been widely discussed and debated both in academic and policy circles (Ladejinsky, 1970; Rigg, 1989; Harriss-White and Janakarajan, 1997).

Partha Chatterjee's comparison of differentiation between West Bengal and Bangladesh for instance has sought to explain the differences in agrarian structure between these two regions divided since the days of Partition (1998). Chatterjee writes,

> *The region of Bengal which in the early years of this century was already at a relatively advanced stage of differentiation among the agrarian population seems now to have developed a structure with a significantly low concentration of landownership at the top and a general preponderance of small peasants with rights of ownership to small*

holdings. On the other hand, the region which at the beginning of this century was generally recognized as containing the largest proportion of undifferentiated small peasants has apparently, in the course of half a century, come to a stage where land concentration at the top is high and nearly half the peasantry is landless (Chatterjee, 1998, p.52)

Chatterjee refers to a possible paradoxical reversal of concentration when comparing West Bengal which he argues was once highly differentiated but no longer the case and Bangladesh which seemingly is far more concentrated in the present period. The explanations Chatterjee provides for these shifts in agrarian structure are also compelling; for instance, Chatterjee argues that jute was an important additional crop cultivated by small farmers of East Bengal (now Bangladesh) and may explain the endurance of small farms up to the 1920s in this region. However, with the onslaught of the Great Depression in the 1930s, the price of jute plummeted so much so that indebted farmers began to lose their agricultural lands. In fact, Chatterjee uses data on land transfers between 1930 to 1938 to argue that regions such as Noakhali (area of present research) amongst other regions of then East Bengal reported far higher land transfers than other regions. The great Bengal famine of 1943, Chatterjee argues, also played a key role in this concentration of land ownership at the top as East Bengal was hit far more severely. WestBengal, on the other hand, with the Leftist party at its helm, maintained populist policies of preserving the small farm, thus precluding large-scale concentration to occur (Chatterjee, 1998). Chatterjee's compelling explanations of the divergent agrarian structures in the two Bengals do account for concentration in landholdings in Bangladesh and support the processes of polarisation that A. Rahman has referred to for the period up the 1980s.

Another important work by Harriss-White and Bose (1995) comparing West Bengal and Bangladesh since the 1980s has examined differences across the regions as far as agricultural growth and agrarian structure. However, they have expanded the concept of 'structure'and in so doing focused on structures of ownership and exchange

arrangements not only in land but also water and labour. This provides a more useful analysis particularly in the context of fragmentation of landholdings where control over other resources such as tubewells is also important. The same study has also highlighted structures of bureaucracy and the networks of patronage taken forth by specific peasant classes as another significant element to understanding agrarian structure and whether such a structure impedes or fosters agricultural growth.

Other studies on rural differentiation in Bangladesh have argued that demographic factors lead to fluctuations in poverty and wealth. Such intercategory mobility has been noted by VanSchendel (1981) who surveyed households in four villages of Bangladesh during the period between 1933 to 1977. His research covering Rangpur, Bogra and Comilla districts came across four categories of households which included the following: the poorest who were unable to provide for themselves for up to twelve months, households who just barely managed to get by, those who could manage subsistence up to twelve months and from time to time even generate surplus and finally the most well-off households who could provide for themselves througout a given year and generate surplus in excess of three months. Van Schendel noted that over a longer survey period, households generally were not stable within any particular category. Another work that focuses on this lack of stability of rural farmers in Bangladesh was that of Bertocci (1972) who examined the relationship between land ownership and political power in selected villages in Comilla district. Bertocci's conclusion was that large landowners lack stable political power due to their rise and fall in association with variations in agricultural output and fragmentation of land over the generations brought on through Islamic law. Thus, both the studies allude to a cyclical, almost neo-Chayanovian movement of households that combines demographic factors of differentiation with the classic Leninist pathways of accumulation as Shanin's (1971) differentiation schema alluded to. Shanin argued that both the centrifugal forces of wealth and the centripetal forces of land fragmentation through inheritance are equally important in understanding differentiation of the peasantry. These aforementioned conclusions go directly in contrast to A. Rahman's work which posited that differentiation clearly exists and particularly so in

areas with a greater infusion of Green Revolution technologies. Furthermore, Rahman contended that these differentiable classes are in fact polarizing through concentration of rural assets by rich farmers and the simultaneous dispossession of others rendering them landless.

Later work on differentiation of the poor, however, has moved away from differentiation of the kind discussed and debated since the 1970s to one that flatly characterizes poverty as 'multidimensional,' meaning that the poor are also multidimensional, but not due to underlying economic relationships, be they symbiotic or exploitive, but rather due to the multifarious profiles that the poor take on: healthy versus ill, literate versus illiterate, entrepreneurial versus risk averse and so on. These conceptualizations on poverty have been further addressed in chapter 2. Sen and Hulme (2004) have identified different groups of poor in Bangladesh using a rural panel data set which reveals the following: the chronically poor, the never poor, the ascending poor who were poor in 1987 but non-poor in 2000, and the descending poor who were initially non-poor but plunged into poverty in later years.

Chronic poor refers to households who have remained poor for a long duration; although no specific time period is specified, the empirical research in Bangladesh has generally used a cut-off period of 13 to 15 years roughly corresponding to atleast one generation (ibid, 2004). Their data sets reveal that the largest group, by far, represents the chronic poor but also sheds light on the precarious nature of existence in the proximity of the poverty line. In keeping with the conceptual work on chronic poverty versus transient poverty done by Green and Hulme (2005), the latest literature pertaining to Bangladesh has sought to assess poverty and its causes through the lens of time. The standard poverty line measurements do not provide a temporal account and thus, do not answer important questions such as duration of poverty and movements above and below the poverty line. However, as mentioned earlier, these classifications of ascending, descending and chronic, though potentially useful in determining the nature and causes of poverty, have remained categorical descriptions, like saying a poor person is poor because

of his poverty. In other words, the classifications describe within a larger set, the subsets of the poor, and ultimately confound a mere description or symptom with causality. Although chronic poverty research was intended to focus on the wider dimensions of political economy, ironically, the emprical research on chronic poverty that followed suit was largely centered on methodological individualism as da Corta has argued and as discussed earlier in chapter 2 (da Corta, 2008).

The actions and strategies of the ascending poor, then, are taken as the pathways out of poverty; the profiles of the chronic poor, in turn, become the causes of poverty. That is to say, these classifications (and the profiles that bear those classifications) bear such a close simulacrum with cause that they, in fact, are taken as cause. For example, households who diversified into non-farm were found to be ascending households thus leading to the policy conclusion that livelihood diversification should be promoted without distinguishing across why households take on multiple livelihoods and whether distress diversification occurs. Such conclusions appear to subscribe to the livelihoods framework (discussed in chapters 2 and 3) that seeks to support the multiplicity of livelihoods without taking into account the compex processes of political economy that render diversification a necessity. In just the way Bujra (2006) cited the problem of classifications such as 'urban poor' as discussed in chapter 2, a similar problem arises in the case of labels such as 'chronic' or 'transient' which may not reveal more deep-seated, structural differences amongst the poor, particularly with their relation to the means of production. Although duration is an important factor that sheds light on poverty dynamics, it may conceal other determining factors that spawn poverty and movements out of poverty.

4.4 LAND, LIVELIHOODS AND POVERTY: THE BANGLADESH CASE

As we shall see in this section, Bangladesh is characterized by high levels of landlessness in conjunction with land inequality within a very narrow range of landholdings. High population pressure and the prevalence of inheritance laws have also contributed to the fragmentation of landholdings.

4.4.1 Land, Demographics and Population

Bangladeshis characterised by river erosion and recurrent flooding; these, alongside the recurrence of natural disasters makes life particularly for the poor a precarious one (Alam, 2003). River erosion alone is considered to inundate approximately 25,000 acres of land each year, leaving in turn a trail of destitution and homelessness behind and contributing to migration to cities (Streatfiled and Carar, 2008). Furthermore, with one of the highest population densities in the world, and very little land frontier, land scarcity is a common phenomenon that leads to intense competition for existing resources and processes such as landgrabbing as we shall see in later chapters. The pressures of population growth have lead to worsening land to man ratios; for instance, a ratio of 0.35 acre in 1961 which plummeted to 0.27 acre in 1974 and further deteriorated to 0.25 acre in 1980 (Mahbub Ullah, 1996). With close to 9 million hectares of cultivable land of which 88 percent is already cultivated, there appears to be little scope for expansion of cultivable area (Streatfield and Karar, 2008). It is considered doubtful whether agriculture can absorb the pressures of population growth (ibid, 2008).

As we will see below, landholdings are small and fragmented, with a rising tide of landlessness as a central phenomenon in rural poverty dynamics. From the period spanning 1960 to 1984, the rate of increase in rural landless households was stated to be 2.5 percent, higher than the increase of rural households which stood at 2.2 percent. This in turn signifies a rate of increase in landlessness to be greater than population growth. Thus, landlessness may be considered to be only a partially demographic phenomenon. However, landlessness trends in Bangladesh are contestable owing to the differing definitions of what constitutes landlessness and the different methodologies used to collect data (Abdullah and Murshid, 1986; Hossain, 1986). For instance, as Cain thoroughly discusses, landlessness could either refer to owernship of land or operated land which in turn would be determined by tenurial arrangements and access (Cain, 1983). For one, there was very little in the way of data on landlessnes prior to 1977 when the first Land Occupancy Surveys (LOS) were carried out. These surveys, in turn, suggested an increase in landlessness but as Hossain has argued, landlessness may have been underreported in

1977 thus leading one to conclude that landlessness has increased rapidly (Hossain, 1986). Currently, according to the Agriculture Census (2008), approximately 4.48 households are absolutely landless meaning that they own no land whatsoever. Of these 4.48 million landless households, 3.26 million households are recorded as rural landless households (Chowdhury and Baten, 2010). A discussion on more recent trends in landlessness and the nexus between landlessness and poverty is provided in the next section.

In addition to landlessness, rural Bangladesh is also characterised by small and fragmented landholdings (FAO, 2010). The average size of agricultural holdings in Bangladesh, for instance, is only 0.3 hectares (ibid, 2010). Factors such as inheritance laws and the splitting of households which have triggered a continual sub-division and fragmentation of landholdings have also played a due part in rendering households landless or functionally landless (M. Ullah, 1996; M. Khan, 2004). According to Islamic law, land is to be divided in equal shares, but with the daughter receiving one half of what each of her brothers receive (Harris, 1989). A number of studies have focused on partition, the timing in which it occurs and how household structure determines when subdivision occurs (Foster, 1993) as well as how partition affects economic well-being (Van Schendel, 1981). Harris (1989) sums up the effects of the gradual division of land through inheritance on economic mobility. There are indeed differing views on the role of inheritance, with one set of arguments focusing on the role of subdivision that leads to pauperisation and the other that allows for a cyclical pattern of wealth generation and pauperisation in what constitutes a Chayanovian pattern as I shall discuss further in later chapters.

In sum, a number of trends emerge that must be considered when investigating the relationship between land and poverty. Firstly, population growth has triggered an increase in landlessness, although it cannot be the sole reason for this trend. Secondly, landholdings are small and fragmented due to the partitioning and sub-division of

landholdings over time due to inheritance laws. Finally, the nature of environmental hazards has exacerbated the situation further.

4.4.2 Landlessness and poverty

As discussed in the previous section, rising landlessness has been widely recognized as a common, widespread phenomenon in South Asian countries including Bangladesh. In Bangladesh, according to the Agricultural Census (2008), landlessness hovers at approximately 4.48 million households. The extent of landlessness and consequently the growth of landless households hinges on how the term 'landless' is defined. As Cain (1983) pointed out, the term 'landlessness' is a cause for confusion as it could refer to households without any homestead land, meaning noncultivable dwelling space including a house and the land on which it is built. It could also refer to those households who own no cultivable land. Classifications such as functionally landless and marginally landless amongst others abound in the data sources.

Table 4.1: Trends in Landlessness, 1983-1996

Category of Households/landless	1983-84	%	1996	%	Growth
Landless: category I	276,977	2.0	162,229	0.91	-2.93
Landless: category II	2,713,969	19.64	5,003,042	28.06	5.23
Landless:category III	3,898,181	28.21	5,191,979	29.12	2.42
Near Landless: category IV (marginal)	1,702,652	12.32	2,494,606	13.99	3.23
Remaining households:category V	5,225,867	37.82	4,979,326	27.91	-0.39
All	13,817,646	100.0	17,828,182	100.0	2.15

Source: BBS(1986,1999)

Note: Category I: households without homestead land
Category II: households with homestead but without cultivable land
Category III: households with homestead and cultivable land (up to 0.2 ha)
Category IV: households with homestead and cultivable land (0.2 -0.4 ha)
Category V: rest of households with homestead and cultivated land (0.4 ha and above)

Table 4.2:Changes in the distribution of land ownership, 1987-88 to 2007

Area of land owned (ha)	1987-88		2000		2007	
	Percent of households	Share(%) of land	Percent of households	Share (%)of land	Percent of household	Share (%) of land
Up to 0.2	47.2	3.9	54.0	8.7	59.1	12.9

0.21- 0.4	11.8	5.5	13.3	7.3	11.7	7.5
0.41-1.0	21.6	22.8	17.7	21.3	16.8	22.8
1.0 to 2.0	11.2	25.8	9.7	25.6	8.2	24.9
Over 2.0	8.2	42.0	5.2	37.0	4.2	31.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Average land owned (ha)		0.61		0.53		0.47

Source- Mahbub Hossain, 2009[22]

As Table 4.1 illustrates, there has been a sharp increase in the Category II landless grouping as well as sizeable increases in the functionally landless and marginally landless groups. Only the number of landless without any homestead has diminished which could reflect migration of these groups. Table 4.2 does not provide data on landlessness but shows that the percent of households owning up to 0.2 hectares of land rose from 47.2 percent in 1987-88 to 59.1 percent in 2007. Those in the 0.21 to 0.4 hectare category have remained fairly stable over time whereas the percentage of households in all other categories has experienced an observable decline. In fact, both the tables indicate that the share of larger size landholdings is in fact in decline; on the other hand, the proportion of marginal landholdings is rising.

Statistical findings of Household Expenditure Surveys conducted by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) have also pointed out that the incidence of poverty is greater for the landless in comparison to their landed counterparts (Makita, 2007). As the Tables 4.3 and 4.4 illustrate, there appears to be a strong inverse relationship above 0.05 acres between land ownership and poverty with the greatest incidence of poverty lying with the landless and functionally landless groups with landholdings of less than 0.05 acres. The nature of differentiation within these separate landholding categories nonetheless is a matter for exploration. In other words, it will be important to assess those within the landholding category below 0.05 acres who are not poor and the reasons therein and vice versa for those landholdings above 0.05 acres Land's importance in the determination of

[22]This is based on data drawn from longitudinal surveys of 1239 households in 62 villages covering 57 out of 64 districts beginning in 1988-89 under the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS). The repeat surveys were conducted by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in 2000-2001 and the same households were revisited for poverty mapping in 2005 and again in 2008.

income seems to be intact but a further exploration of data will be needed to uncover the validity of the data presented above.

If we take a closer look at the data presented in Tables 4.3 and 4.4, we find that over the decade spanning 1995 to 2005, the relationship between land ownership and poverty is in fact weakening. For instance, in 1995, the incidence of rural poverty for households owning less than 0.05 acres was roughly 63 percent (using the lower poverty line); this same figure in 2005 was down to 47 percent. Similarly, rural landless households had an incidence of poverty in 1995 that was over 57 percent; in 2005, this dropped to 49 percent. This means that in 2005, about half of landless households in rural areas did *not* fall below the (lower) poverty line.

Table 4.3 Incidence of Poverty, 1995/1996

Size of landholdings (acres)	**National**	**Rural**	**Urban**
Lower poverty line			
All size	35.6	39.8	14.3
No land	39.9	57.9	19.4
<.05	50.5	63.1	22.1
0.05-0.49	47.0	53.1	13.2
0.50-1.49	30.9	33.5	4.5
1.50-2.49	21.4	22.9	3.6
2.50-7.49	16.0	17.4	0.6
7.50+	2.4	2.6	0.0
Upper poverty line			
All size	53.1	56.7	35.0
No land	58.2	69.0	45.8
<.05	68.9	80.0	43.6
0.05-0.49	64.2	69.8	32.9
0.50-1.49	51.0	53.6	24.2
1.50-2.49	40.6	42.8	13.8
2.50-7.49	30.9	32.4	13.1
7.50+	9.3	9.1	11.0

Table 4.4: **Incidence of Poverty (CBN) by Ownership of Land – 2005 (in percentage)**

Size of landholdings (acres)	2005			2000		
	Using the Lower Poverty Line					
	National	Rural	Urban	National	Rural	Urban
All size	**25.1**	**28.6**	**14.6**	**34.3**	**37.9**	**20.0**
No land	25.2	49.3	17.8	30.4	53.1	20.5
< 0.05	39.2	47.8	23.7	43.3	48.8	22.3
0.05-0.49	28.2	33.3	11.4	40.0	41.7	12.6
0.50-1.49	20.8	22.8	9.1	29.6	30.6	15.4

1.50-2.49	11.2	12.8	2.7	21.9	22.9	1.4
2.50-7.49	7.0	7.7	3.0	11.5	12.4	0.0
7.50+	1.7	2.0	0.0	4.0	4.1	0.0
Using the Upper Poverty Line						
All size	**40.0**	**43.8**	**28.4**	**48.9**	**52.3**	**35.2**
No land	46.3	66.6	40.1	46.6	69.7	36.6
< 0.05	56.4	65.7	39.7	57.9	63.0	38.3
0.05-0.49	44.9	50.7	25.7	57.1	59.3	27.3
0.50-1.49	34.3	37.1	17.4	46.2	47.5	27.4
1.50-2.49	22.9	25.6	8.8	34.3	35.4	10.2
2.50-7.49	15.4	17.4	4.2	21.9	22.8	9.1
7.50+	3.1	3.6	0.0	9.5	9.7	0.0

Source: BBS, HIES-2005

Thus, although it can still be argued that the higher the landholding, the lesser the incidence of poverty based on the tables presented in the previous page, within the lower land size categories, a higher percentage of households exist who in turn are not poor based on the poverty line. Interestingly, the 1995 data indicates that those households who own less than 0.05 acres have a higher incidence of poverty than landless households using either poverty line as the measure of incidence of poverty. However, the 2000 and 2005 data do not reflect this same trend. Given this data, it appears as though landlockedness (as discussed in chapter 3) served as an impediment to poverty reduction during the 1990s though not in later years. Further case in point: A World Bank country study for Bangladesh also revealed over a decade ago that those groups most likely to be poor were not necessarily landless households but those who owned less than half an acre of land (1999). More recent studies on the relationship between land and poverty in Bangladesh still reflect an overall inverse relationship between land ownership and levels of poverty, although with the caveat that land possession alone cannot be adequate in identifying the poor but rather a combination of occupational profile, housing characteristics and land ownership must be used (Sen and Begum, 2008). This same study also stated, however, that the more land a household owned above half an acre, the less likely it was to be poor. Whether this holds true for my case study will be investigated in chapter 6 and 7.

A work done by Binayak Sen (1995) based on earlier Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) findings, for instance, showed that landless households are not uniformly in a chronic deficit situation, that is, unable to meet minimum consumption requirements, and some may actually incur no deficit at all. The same situation was also proven for functionally landless households. Although these BIDS reports have still shown land to be an important discerning factor in determining levels of poverty, they have also indicated that it is not always the case that land size is the clear demarcator when distinguishing food deficit households from surplus or break even households who in turn are able to meet minimum consumption requirements or even consume beyond the minimum level. As such, it is still possible for the chronic poor to belong not only to the category of functional landless but also to landed categories of different sizes. Ravallion and Sen (1994) have also argued that landholding as a proxy for poverty targetting can lead to leakages to non-poor households belonging to the lower land size categories.

4.4.3 Dwindling agriculture and the rise of the non-farm sector

Agriculture's share in GDP has been dwindling in Bangladesh from the decade of the 1990s onwards with a concomitant increase in industry's share of output. Agriculture contributed only a quarter of GDP in 2000 in comparison to 32 percent in 1981. A number of studies in Bangladesh also reveal that the non-farm sector is of growing importance in terms of the income composition of rural households (Hossain, 2002; Hossain, 2004; Towfique and Turton, 2003). Rural incomes now bear a growing non-agricultural component, more prominent in economically advanced areas in comparison to backward regions. For instance, 27 percent of households were engaged in non-agricultural activities in 1984 in comparison to a 34 percent in 1996 (Towfique, 2003). Toufique includes the following in the non-agricultural sector: manufacturing, processing, repairing of manufacturing goods, trading activities, transportation, construction and all other service activities done commercially (2003, p. 57). It was also evidenced that the proportion of non-agricultural income for the non-poor was higher in comparison to poorer groups.

Table 4.5: Distribution and annual growth of households by farm, non-farm and agricultural labourers

Sector	1983-84		1996		Annual growth rate (%)	
	% of households	% of agricultural labourer households	% of households	% of agricultural labourer household	households	Agricultural labourer households
Farm	72.7	57.08	66.18	47.18	1.35	-0.26
Non-farm	27.30	43.41	33.82	52.82	3.98	2.89
All	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	2.15	1.28
	(13,817,646)	(5,495,300)	(17,828,187)	(6,401, 453		

Source: Bimal Kumar Saha(2003), taken from BBS(1986, 1999)
Note: figures marked in parentheses indicate number of households

According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, the head of household who has no land or has land less than .05 acres and is mainly engaged in activity in other's farm for wage in cash or kindis classified as agricultural labour. The household could constitute a farm holding which for census purpose, is a techno-economic unit of agricultural production comprising all livestock kept and all the land whichis used wholly or partly for agricultural purposes and is operated under a single management by oneperson alone or with others, without regard to title,size or location. Households with less than 0.05 acres of cultivated area were treated as non-farmhouseholds.

What the figures above indicate is a clear increase in the percentage of households engaged in the non-farm sector, the rate of growth being higher in comparison to households working in the farm sector. However, it is important to note that policies of structural adjustment which entailed drawing back from public investments in agriculture commenced during the decade of the 1980s (Hossain et al, 1998). This may provide some explanation to the decline in farm based and agricultural labourer households as Bangladesh witnessed an overall decline in both the agricultural and manufacturing sectors' share of employment during this time. Thus, a declining share in agriculture's share of employment was not met with a proportionate increase in the share attributed to manufacturing, signalling in turn a growing casualisation of labor) ibid, 1998). The increase in non-farm households, however, is not easily explainable. For one, the health of the non-agricultural sector has generally been associated with the health of agriculture,

the two sectors growing in a symbiotic manner (Toufique, 2003). However, Toufique also notes that during a period of significant agricultural decline in Bangladesh during the early 1980s, the non-agricultural sector remained resilient and continued to grow. This only goes to show the complexity and overall vagueness in which the non-farm sector operates.

In fact, Towfique argues along the same line as that of Rigg (2006) whose discussion of livelihood diversification is discussed in depth in the previous chapter. For the case of Bangladesh in particular, Toufique and Turton (2003) contend that sources of rural incomes are multiplying. Their findings are based on extensive field research carried out in Bangladesh involving a number of prominent research institutions in Bangladesh such as the Bangladesh Institute of DevelopmentStudies (BIDS. Under the heading of non-agricultural, Towfique (2003) includes manufacturing, processing, repairing of manufacturing goods,trading activities, transportation, construction and allother service activities done on a commercial basis in therural economy (p.57). Towfique also notes the demarcation of various non-agricultural activities in relationship to levels of landholding, observing that those with greater landholdings tend to be involved in the range of non-agricultural activities that reap a greater return (Towfique, 2003). He notes the following (p.60):

- Landless and functionally landless households (< 0.2 hectares) are heavily involved in transport, rural industry, construction and trade.

- Marginal and small farmers (0.2 – 1 hectares) are more involved in the formal and informal services sector. They are also, to some extent, involved in construction and services (formal and informal)

- Medium and large households (> 1 hectare) are more involved in the formal and informal services sector

Despite the growing non-farm sector, its vastness has led to differing definitions of what it constitutes, with imprecise and often interchangeable use of different terms such as non-farm and non-agricultural to refer to the same type of activities. First, under the

rubric of the non-farm sector fall a wide range of activity, including both self-employment and wage employment, both within a rural setting and outside. More specifically, non-farm activities are inclusive of (a) income earned from non-agricultural activities in rural areas, either within household or outside, in self-employment or wage employment; (b) income earned from non-agricultural activities in small rural towns through self-employment or wage labor; (c) income earned by rural households through commuting to work in large cities; (d) income obtained through remittances from overseas (Islam, 1997). Furthermore, as Islam has discussed, both push and pull factors may operate in the growth of the non-farm sector. Households may be pushed into non-farm opportunities due to inadequate wages in agriculture and lack of employment but at the same time may be pulled into the sector due to higher returns from non-farm activity. Hossain (2004) also includes roughly the same type of activities as explicated by Islam (1997) such as salaried positions, business and trade, and agroprocessing to fall under the rural non-farm sector . However, in the midst of such dual processes, the non-farm sector seems averse to theorization, particularly when both self-employment and wage employment are lumped together. Confusion is also created when considering that the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics defines a non-farm household based on the amount of landholding that is in their possession and not the nature of economic activity in which they are engaged (see Table 4.5).

A further problem, particularly with the figures above, is that it does not reveal the nature of such diversification and whether or not it is part and parcel of a wider stream of distress diversification. A similar conclusion has been drawn by Ramachandran in the case of India who took the rise in non-farm activities as a sign of distress diversification in cognizance of the nature of such diversification within a vacuum of more structural and transformative changes in the rural economy at large (1990). Simply put, whether the growing importance of the non-farm sector in the livelihoods of the poor underscores the need to discuss new narratives on ‘old’ versus ‘new’ poverty is one that needs to be investigated

A series of nationally representative studies done by Mahbub Hossain (2009) in Bangladesh have yielded very intriguing results regarding the nature of transition in the rural economy (see footnote 14). Hossain actually discusses an inflow of households into farming as a more predominant trend than the outflow from farming. This Hossain rationalizes by arguing that many of the better educated and affluent households have moved away from land based livelihoods towards high return non-farm activities. This is still consistent with earlier evidence presented by Toufique (2003). However, Hossain argues that as these households have moved away from land based livelihoods, they have initiated a process of renting out land, thus spawning a surge in tenancy in cultivation. Rigg (2006) in fact has acknowledged that increase in non-farm sources of employment through migration and remittances have increased tenancy in agriculture in Bangladesh and heightened agricultural productivity through mechanisation (p.187). Hossain, notwithstanding his acknowledgement of an increase in non-farm incomes as a total proportion of rural household incomes, also makes additional notes about occupational mobility in Bangladesh, pointing out that agricultural labor and non-agricultural labor represent the most unstable economic activities in terms of number of labour days that households are actually involved in these activities (Hossain, 2004, 2009). Farming and non-farm services, in turn, represent the most stable primary occupations. Thus, it will be important to determine, through an analysis of rural differentiation, for which households the non-farm sector represents a source of distress diversification; that is, their conditions of reproduction require both agricultural and non-farm sources of income. Again, it will be equally important to assess for whom the non-farm sector represents a delinking of land from livelihoods to the extent that a non-farm activity is a sufficient condition of reproduction, (as discussed in chapter 3) and for whom agriculture remains the most important source of livelihood and why.

In Bangladesh, livelihood diversification forms an integral part of survival strategies of the poor. In a comprehensive study done by Mahbub Ullah on land and livelihoods, it was found that rural households need both agricultural sources (including off-farm) of livelihood as well as non-farm sources for their reproduction (1996). This is in part due

to land scarcity making land accumulation on its own an unviable path out of poverty as well as the lack of adequate non-farm opportunities. As such, Mahbub Ullah based on surveys of two selected villages in Bangladesh, the same two that I will be using for my case study, defines a range of diverse economic activity which the poor rely upon to ensure a steady flow of income. These include the following:

- Self-cultivated land income which is income earned from cultivating the whole or part of one's own land
- Sharecropping income which refers to the value of the portion of agricultural output that is retained on land that has been leased in
- Leasing out income or money rent received from the tenant
- Other agricultural income or income earned from selling poultry, livestock, forestry and fishery products.
- Agricultural wage income refers to wages earned in cash and kind for hiring out labor in agricultural activities
- Non-agricultural wage income or wages received from non-agricultural activities, again both in cash and in kind.
- Trading income refers to profit margins in trading activities
- Remittance and service income is salary income earned from the provision of services rendered to private individuals or companies within Bangladesh
- Foreign remittance income is money remitted by any member working abroad
- Income from new types of activities refers to earnings from new types of economic activities such as from transport, or renting out of irrigation equipment, etc.
- Artisanal income refers to the value of artisanal products net of input cost in the form of raw materials

Though this is not an exhaustive list, it is indicative of the variegated nature of economic activity of the poor. Moreover, the income composition of these poor households cannot be neatly categorized into farm and non-farm as the lines that divide them are not precise.

What it further indicates is that households are engaging in diverse non-agricultural sources of livelihood though this may not be permanent and clearly not irreversible. Mahbub Ullah's work has focused on land transactions and economic activity in two villages in Bangladesh over a period of 14 years spanning the decade of the 1970s and early 1980s. The study villages were located in Feni and Laksmipur districts of the greater Noakhali region.

In order to compare the landholding position of households over time, Mahbub Ullah used what is referred to as the index of variation which is the ratio of land currently owned with the land owned at the time of inception of the households. Based on this index, the author identified a number of categories including growing households whose land possession increased with that of stable and declining households. Mahbub Ullah points out that the "growing" and "upper stable" categories of poor were those who had a strong footing in both agricultural and non-agricultural activities, the non-agricultural including migration, trading and salaried jobs. These households, in turn, were found to be less poor or non-poor households. The author has also indicated a possible weak inverse relationship between agricultural and non-agricultural income implying that those with poor footing in agriculture are likely to diversify the most into non-agricultural activities as a survival mechanism. In Bangladesh, it has been found that the poor hold on to the land they own as a contingency measure for hard times (Mahbub Ullah, 1996). Land in turn, serves as an insurance - a resource to cling to in the face of prospective adversity which is why stability amongst landholdings is found to be the most common trend. In one of the most comprehensive studies on land done to date in Bangladesh, Mahbub Ullah has shown that land accumulation and decline has been found over a range of initial land sizes, stability nonetheless being, by far, the most predominant trend.

An interesting point is also made by Mahbub Ullah drawn from the findings of other studies. The author notes that over the span of the 1980s, though the poorest have lost land due to growing population pressure and consequent fragmentation, their income situation has not deteriorated; rather it has in fact improved. The middle group, however, has lost

both in terms of landed property and income while the uppermost group has gained both in terms of landed property and income (Mahbub Ullah, p.46). The explanation given for this is that the poorest were able to take advantage of off-farm activities while the middle category could not reap the income stream from non-farm activities to an extent required to offset the loss in income arising from a loss of land. Non-farm opportunities have varied in their nature and have reaped differential returns based on the existing status of the poor as explicated by Toufique earlier (2003). Such complexity in the livelihoods of the poor only goes to show that the lines that divide 'growing' from 'stable' or 'stable' from 'declining' and so on are not cut and clear. There may be households who sell land in order to finance migration as we shall see in chapters 6 and 7. These households are clearly not the same as those who sell land out of distress (ibid, 1996).

Rigg's argument as mentioned in the earlier chapter is that the rich can in fact constitute both the land rich and the land poor. In light of this assertion, the nature and level of return generated from such diversification is clearly important to assess. As discussed in chapter 3, it has been found that the well-off poor and non-poor take the lion's share of high return non-farm activities, leaving the residual petty, low-return activities for the poorest (Sen and Ghosh, 1993). It is also important to mention that graduation from low skill and low return activities to high return ones is not an easy one to make for the poor considering large skill gaps. In the case of migration which represents an important exit route for the poor in Bangladesh as we shall see, it is generally the better off who manage to garner such opportunities (Afsar, 2003). Thus, it is essential to examine the trajectories and circumstances that actually make households land rich or land poor. If the poorest are still not able to reap benefits from diversification due to the sparsity of such diversified activities and the high competition for such opportunities, it may be premature to make the argument that land is no longer a vital component to the livelihoods of the poor. Furthermore, it will also be important to investigate under what circumstances (of diversification) the land poor manage to be better off than those who possess higher landholdings. For instance, is it only in the case of migration, particularly overseas migration, that the land poor may also constitute the rich?

4.4.4. Migration as a distinct livelihood strategy

Migration from present day Bangladesh has existed since the 18th century when the British brought in indentured laborers from India to work on the tea estates. Historical anecdotal evidence also indicates that many of the ancestors of the Sinhalese Sri Lankan population migrated centuries ago from present day Bangladesh to the island nation (Sikder, 2008). During the 18th and 19th centuries, sailors from East Bengal, particularly Chittagong and Noakhali (Noakhali being the survey region) found jobs in the British merchant navy. The same was also true of many landless peasants from Sylhet who also joined the British merchant navy and some who even jumped ship, in turn being some of the pioneer migrants to reach the United Kingdom or the United States of America (Sikder, 2008). Large scale migration from Bengal to Assam in India also occurred when the jute and cotton industries began to fail as a direct consequence of colonial policies (Siddiqui, 2003). For the same reasons, migration also took place from East Bengal to Burma. Currently in Bangladesh, rural to urban internal migration remains by far the most common type of migration and in the case of overseas migration (as observed in the surveyed villages discussed in chapters 6 and 7), short-term contract migration remains the dominant pattern (Afsar, 2003; Siddiqui, 2003). The long-term migration that takes place is primarily to the United Kingdom or the United States. Although internal migration is predominanty rural to urban, rural to rural migration has taken place and continues, particularly by landless households in coastal areas due to recurring flooding and river erosion which in turn spawn a great deal of internal displacement. For instance, transmigration of Bengali settlers took place from the coastal areas of Chittagong and Noakhali and the river eroded areas of Chandpur to the Chittagong Hill Tracts, a tribal region in Southeastern Bangladesh as part of agovernment sponsored resettlement during the decade of the 1970s and 1980s despite armed resistance (Roy, 2004; Mohsin, 2003). The greater Noakhali region also consists of many chars which are newly accreted lands formed as a result of river and tidal activity[23].

[23]These chars can add to preexisting stock of land or take away from it depending on whether land is undergoing submergence or not. See Adnan (2010) for an account of char formations in Noakhali region.

Migration by poor, landless households to these new lands also occurs albeit at a cost (The scenario of landgrabbing in the context of char lands is discussed in section 4.5).

Overseas short-term contract migration is mainly to countries in the Middle East and South East Asia. Migration to these countries commenced in the aftermath of Bangladesh's Liberation in 1971 around which time the oil boom lead to massive infrastructural booms in these countries and in turn, a heightened demand for labor (Siddiqui, 2003). As Siddiqui goes on to explain, such contractual migration differed starkly from migration to the West which was far more long-term or even permanent. However, overseas migrants to the Middle East and Southeast Asia are known to renew their contracts and spend longer periods of time abroad ;nevertheless, the nature of their migration is still considered short-term in comparison to longer term migration or permanent immigration (Interview with RMMRU[24], 2012). Such migration, in turn, has purported to keep the unemployment rate stable, notwithstanding the burgeoning population growth in excess of the labour force. Siddiqui's detailed account of overseas migration reveals also the specific countries that host such short-term contract migration. Saudi Arabia accounts for half of the total number of migrant workers from Bangladesh since the 1970s; United Arab Emirates (UAE) is the second largest employer replacing Malaysia since the 1997 Asian financial crisis (ibid, 2003). These migrants are mostly semi-skilled and unskilled workers, predominantly young males with education ranging from Class 1 to SSC (secondary school certificate). Female migration does exist in minute proportion though the exact figures are difficult to estimate. The Bangladesh government has in fact banned certain categories of female labor migration; unofficially such migration may continue but are clearly not reflected in official statistics. According to official statistics, the yearly annual flow of migrants to these countries stands at over 200,000. These official statistics, however, may not fully capture the full extent of migration considering that specific categories of migrants such as female labor migration may take place through unofficial channels (Siddiqui, 2003). Needless to say, the annual growth rate of remittances is much less than the growth rate of migrant workers, this despite the value of remittances

[24]The Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit of Dhaka University focuses specifically on migration issues in the context of Bangladesh

increasing. This could be due to the time it takes for migrant workers to settle into jobs and earn enough to remit. Since 1976 to 2002, based on figures presented by the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET), approximately three million Bangladeshis have migrated overseas; however, more recently, migration has actually declined due in part to stiff competition from sending countries and the increasing costs of migration (Siddiqui, 2003). Sikder (2008) and Farid et al's work (2009) also note a similar declining trend in migration in the more recent past.

Table 4.7 shows the trends in overseas migration from the late 1970s to the present period based on skill category. As the data indicates, the highest number of overseas migrants currently belong to the less skilled category followed by the skilled category. Professional migrants are by far the least in number. The decline in professional migrants has been refered to in all the key migration literature pertaining to Bangladesh (Siddiqui, 2003, Sikder, 2008, Farid et al, 2009). The table however reveals a great deal of fluctuation without a clear trace of any secular increases or decreases. However, as Farid et al have shown, if the three year averages are taken, as shown below in Table 4.6, there is a clear trend of increase with exception to the time period between 2000 to 2003 and more recently from the year 2009 due to the worldwide economic recession (2009). The three year average is more useful given the annual fluctuations. Farid et al's explanation for the dips in migration is attributed to increased competition from new labor exporting countries such as Nepal, Vietnam and Cambodia, increase in unemployment in Arab countries leading to a lesser demand for foreign labor and the increase in unofficial channels of migration on the part of Bangladeshi migrants (2009).

Table 4.6: Trends in Overseas Migration in Bangladesh, Three Year Averages

Year	No. of Workers Employed Overseas	Percentage change
1976-1979	69116	-
1980-1983	207842	200.71
1984-1987	277083	33.31
1988-1991	420790	51.86
1992-1995	806501	91.66
1996-1999	978640	21.34
2000-2003	891097	- 8.95

2004-2007	1739785	95.24

Figure 4.1 (page 127) reveals the district wise overseas migration. As expected, out of the rural districts, Noakhali reports a far higher incidence of migration in comparison to other similar districts with exception to Tangail, Comilla and Brahmanbaria districts. The others such as Chittagong for instance are urban centers and as expected would exhibit higher degrees of overseas migration.

Table 4.7

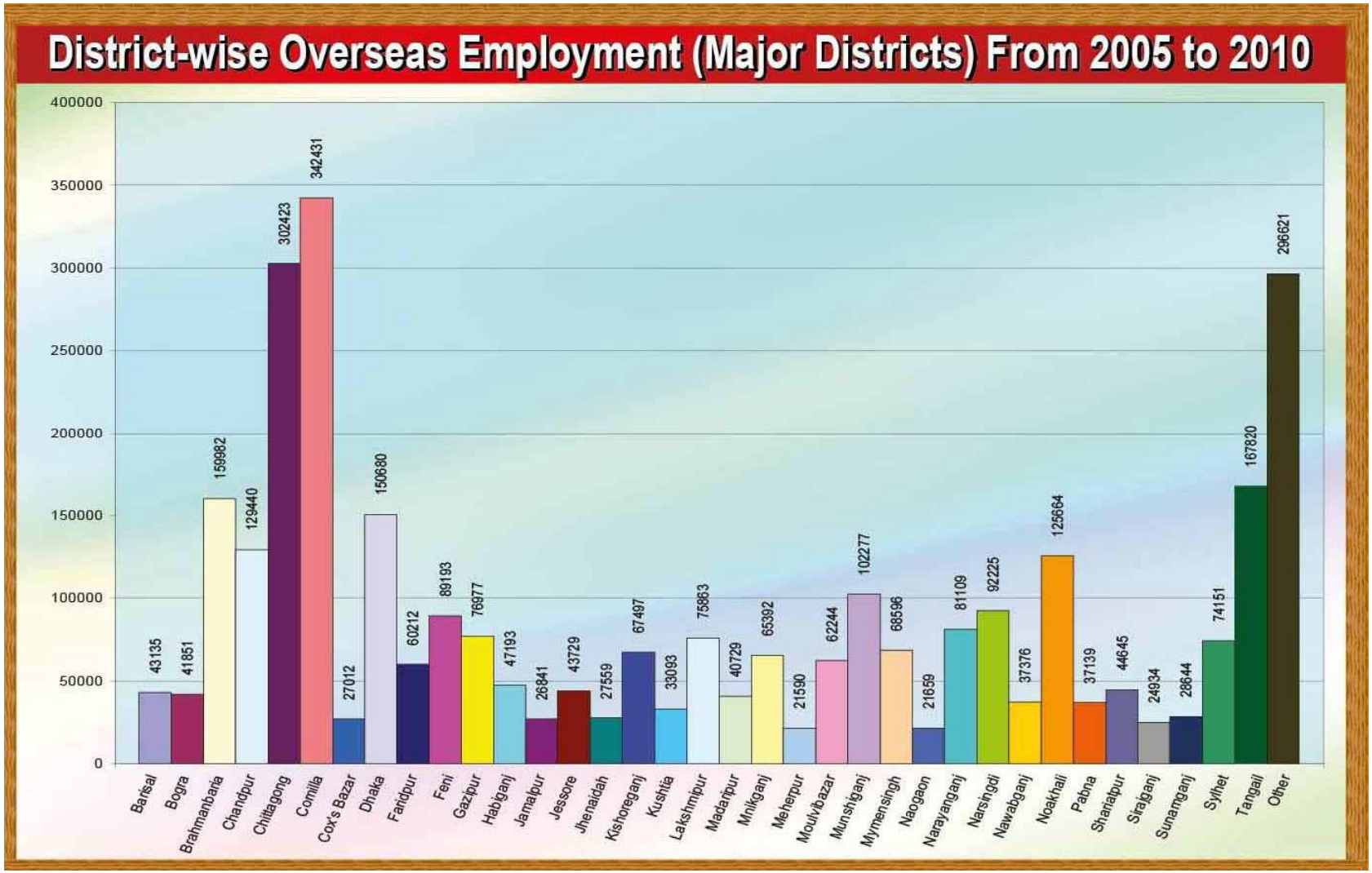
Category-wise Overseas Employment from 1976 to 2011

Up to December 2011

Year	Worker's Category				Total
	Professional	Skilled	Semi-skilled	Less-skilled	
1976	568	1,775	543	3,201	**6,087**
1977	1,766	6,447	490	7,022	**15,725**
1978	3,455	8,190	1,050	10,114	**22,809**
1979	3,494	7,005	1,685	12,311	**24,495**
1980	1,983	12,209	2,343	13,538	**30,073**
1981	3,892	22,432	2,449	27,014	**55,787**
1982	3,898	20,611	3,272	34,981	**62,762**
1983	1,822	18,939	5,098	33,361	**59,220**
1984	2,642	17,183	5,484	31,405	**56,714**
1985	2,568	28,225	7,823	39,078	**77,694**
1986	2,210	26,294	9,265	30,889	**68,658**
1987	2,223	23,839	9,619	38,336	**74,017**
1988	2,670	25,286	10,809	29,356	**68,121**
1989	5,325	38,820	17,659	39,920	**101,724**
1990	6,004	35,613	20,792	41,405	**103,814**
1991	9,024	46,887	32,605	58,615	**147,131**
1992	11,375	50,689	30,977	95,083	**188,124**
1993	11,112	71,662	66,168	95,566	**244,508**
1994	8,390	61,040	46,519	70,377	**186,326**
1995	6,352	59,907	32,055	89,229	**187,543**
1996	3,188	64,301	34,689	109,536	**211,714**
1997	3,797	65,211	43,558	118,511	**231,077**
1998	9,574	74,718	51,590	131,785	**267,667**
1999	8,045	98,449	44,947	116,741	**268,182**
2000	10,669	99,606	26,461	85,950	**222,686**
2001	5,940	42,742	30,702	109,581	**188,965**
2002	14,450	56,265	36,025	118,516	**225,256**
2003	15,862	74,530	29,236	134,562	**254,190**
2004	12,202	110,177	28,327	122,252	**272,958**
2005	1,945	113,655	24,546	112,556	**252,702**
2006	925	115,468	33,965	231,158	**381,516**
2007	676	165,338	183,673	482,922	**832,609**
2008	1,864	292,364	132,825	448,002	**875,055**
2009	1,426	134,265	84,517	255,070	**475,278**
2010	387	90,621	20,016	279,678	**390,702**
2011	1,192	229,149	28,729	308,992	**568,062**
Total	**182,915**	**2,409,912**	**1,140,511**	**3,966,613**	**7,699,951**
%	2.38	31.30	14.81	51.51	

Source: BMET

Figure 4.1: District-wise Cumulative Flow of Overseas Employment from 2005 to 2010



Source: BMET

In a study conducted by Hossain and Bayes (2009) covering 62 villages in 57 districts (out of 64 districts) over a period of time spanning twenty years and covering the period from 1987 onwards, it was observed that over half of the rural households had atleast one migrated member. The data from these repeat surveys also indicated that the incidence of overseas migration has doubled but internal inter-district migration (not within district) has fallen (Hossain and Bayes, 2009, p. 150.) Such studies indicate that overseas migration is a prevailing trend, not just a distinctive trend for specific regions within Bangladesh. Other findings included a higher incidence of migration from coastal and flood-prone areas as would be expected. The authors in fact cite Noakhali as an example of a flood prone region with a high incidence of migration. Another important finding from this study which will later be shown to coincide with my own survey findings is that overseas migrant households, though once coming from more well-off families, now also originate from medium and small landowning households (see chapter 6 and 7 for a discussion of my survey findings). As a nationally representative series of surveys, these findings are clearly revealing and show that overseas migration is a phenomenon not only restricted to the two surveyed villages of Hasanpur and Purbalach but are evident in other regions of Bangladesh. Noakhali is one such region amongst other regions of Bangladesh to have a high incidence of migration (as shown in Figure 4.1)

The causes of such migration would ineluctably hinge on the muldidimensional nature of such migration. River erosion and flooding in Bangladesh, for instance, still lead to internal migration which then are taken on by the poorest as a coping strategy. However, internal migration is not excluded to the poorest and many forms of domestic non-farm employment are taken on only by less poor households as Toufique has reflected on (2003). The same will be shown to be the case for overseas migrants whose initial economic position was and remains better than other households (see chapters 6 and 7 for a discussion of the survey findings). As far as the impact of migration on development, the literature has for the most part taken a positive outlook on the link between the two, citing in turn the importance of remittances on sending household incomes. An IOM study for instance stated that for Bangladesh, remittances accounted for more than half of household income of recipient families (Ghosh, 2006). This same study reflected on

empirical studies in other countries in South Asia and the positive links between remittances and children's education, micro-enterprise development and investments in farm equipment. A recent DFID paper focused on the importance of workers' remittances in alleviating poverty in sending regions, citing Bangladesh amongst a number of other countries as one of the top countries to receive worker remittances. To cite an example from this paper, in the year 2005, Bangladesh received approximately US $2.2 billion in workers' remittances, a value that was nearly double the amount recieved the same year in international overseas development assistance (DFID, 2007, p.13). These remittances, despite their diversion away from investment, clearly must play an important role in smoothing out household consumption and reducing poverty.

Moreover, in Bangladesh, for instance, a number of returnee migrant associations have been formed directly by return migrants to promote migrant rights and facilitate the process of migration for prospective migrants. Migration remittances seem to play an important role in smoothing consumption as discussed in chapter 3. In Bangladesh, evidence also points in a similar direction with remittances having a positive, poverty reducing effect (Afsar et al, 2002; Mamun and Nath, 2010; Khan, 2008). There has also been the argument made that through the multiplier effect, even where remittances are mainly used for consumption, they can still generate positive changes within local economies (van Doorn, n.d.). These multiplier effects would only be greater if remittances were directed towards productive investments (ibid, n.d). Despite a host of literature on the impact of migration on development, what the literature glosses over is the impact of migration on rural differentiation and power structures. Chapter 8 discusses the impact of migration on processes of rural differentiation with respect to the two surveyed villages. As de Haas contends, the overall migration literature has neglected the effects of migration on social change, opting, rather, for bifurcated analyses of either the causes of migration and the impact of migration on development (de Haas, 2010). Short-term migration from Bangladesh has been taking place for roughly five decades running; thus, the impact of such migration, regardless of its short-term duration, should bear some repercussions on changes in power structures, particularly rural power structures once rooted in land possession. Although the link between migration and changes in power and status are outside the purview of this

dissertation, this may be an important and intriguing arena for further exploration, particularly in regions where the proportion of return migrants is relatively higher as a proportion of all categories of migrants (which was not the case for the surveyed villages).

4.5 THE STATE'S 'PRO-POOR' POLICIES

A state riddled with such a pyramidal amalgam of competing interests and thus, fiscally straitjacketed, as discussed in section 4.1, will indeed have trouble in either of the goals of poverty reduction or fostering a process of capitalist transition in the countryside. This section explores the nature of current state policies in Bangladesh as they relate to land, migration and poverty reduction.

Bangladesh's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) titled as *Unlocking the Potential: National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction* (2005) illustrates the problem of competing interests well. As the key strategic document for poverty reduction, the PRSP in Bangladesh highlights the importance of a number of strategies including macroeconomic stability alongside what seems a host of attractive policies focusing on agriculture, the informal sector, small and medium enterprises, good governance amongst a host of others. Ironically, though the strategy paper explicitly rejects an encyclopedic wish list, it does just that.

On poverty, the paper states the following:

> *Poverty is a broad front. It is about income levels. It is about food security. It is about quality of life. It is about asset bases. It is about human resource capacities. It is about vulnerabilities and coping. It is about gender inequalities. It is about human security. It is about initiatives horizons. It is each of these and all of these together*. (xii)

As a rhetoric infused document, it performs well. A cloud of vagueness and contradiction, however intentional, remains, in passage after passage. At the outset, poverty is straightforwardly proclaimed as multidimensional, going beyond mere income, in sync with the capabilities approach and the livelihoods framework. The tools with

which to attack (or rather cope with) such poverty remain the same, however, with livelihood diversification, coping mechanisms and microcredit as the instruments for poverty reduction. With regard to causes of poverty, the PRSP goes to argue, in line with the work by Sen and Hulme, that households whose heads are literate and have acquired skills are less likely to be poor (2.21, p.18). On strategies, the document stresses the expansion of 'human, physical and financial capital' thus bringing 'capital' to the doorsteps of the poor, but in a diluted package comprising literacy, skills, technology, microfinance, and to a lesser degree, unused and for the most part, fallow lands known as *khas* land.

Land reform is outright rejected and supported by the rise of the rural non-farm economy and a weaker linkage between land and livelihoods that Jonathan Rigg has discussed and as mentioned in the earlier chapter. The declining role of land remains a key message reiterated within the Bangladesh PRSP as follows:

> *Land used to be the source of both wealth and income and of power and status in rural Bangladesh. This centrality has undergone drastic changes. Land is no longer the principle basis of power and status, neither does it serve to limit the livelihood opportunities of the poor. The subsistence orientation of production too has given way to a more complex and fluid livelihood strategy. Land has assumed a new multi-functionality within this multiple livelihood strategy far removed from its earlier connotation of power and dominance (PRSP, xvi)*

Thus the official standpoint of the Bangladesh state is in fact in line with new thinking about the shrinking importance of land as presented in chapter 3. However, the government maintains a policy of distribution of public lands to the poor. The Bangladesh PRSP makes the following statement:

> *Given the paucity of land, its intense utilization and the predominance of small-holders, classical notions of land reform based on large scale redistribution of private land do not represent meaningful policy options in Bangladesh reality. Yet, this is not to deny that land remains important in a variety of ways in the economic and social life of the country. There has been a growing realization that the critical policy issues pertaining to land have to do with land*

administration reform and a rational land use policy including ensuring both access to khas[25] land by the poor and community groups (p xix)

This official policy belies the true nature of landgrabbing that takes place in regions such as Noakhali where char formations are widespread) as discussed earlier in this chapter) . As far back as1972 , a land law was implemented that allotted khas lands to landless or near landless households having up to 1.5 acres of land including homestead lands. By 1974, the government had changed its policy to allow households owning up to 33.3 acres of land to be eligible for state lands. A decade later, a land reform order to distribute khas lands to landless households on a priority basis was enacted. By89-1988 , as Adnan discusses, land reform selection committees were formed in the sub-districts of Noakhali to oversee this distribution process. However, these laws and ordinances left a great deal of room for corruption thus making it far more difficult for the poor to benefit from them. When de jure methods of land acquisition did not work, the poor turned to de factopossession of these lands. Adnan (2010) cogently writes that "most landgrabbing is the result of domestic machinations by both public and private sectors, a distinction that at times seems rather meaningless since private interests are often enabled by public irresponsibility, support or collusion, a point shared by Feldman and Geisler (2011). In fact, the state machinery in Noakhali was biased towards aiding de facto occupation of khas lands by influential interest groups and not the poorer social groups also competing for access to these lands (Adnan, 2010). TheVested Property Act[26]has only propagated it the phenomenon of landgrabbing allowing in turn the state to confiscate property deems to be held by "enemies of the state" (Adnan, 2010, Feldman and Geisler, 2011).

Labor markets and the labor intensive units of production are also seen as prospective channels of employment for the poor in the PRSP. Nevertheless, a discussion on employment generation of the kind needed amidst a rising tide of landlessness is largely missing. Rather, small-scale non-farm ventures are glorified, an example being irrigation equipment and power tiller repair service (p.100). In keeping with the "old view" on poverty reduction as mentioned in chapter 1, the policy focus remains focused on raising

[25]Khas lands are public lands such as newly accreted lands or chars. However in addition to char lands, khas lands can also be lands appropriated by the government due to land ceiling laws.
[26]Before independence of Bangladesh, this act was known as the Enemy Property Act.

agricultural productivity without significant land redistribution and through rice intensification, integrated pest management and provision of agricultural inputs in a timely and adequate manner. Integrated farming which involves rice-fish farming is shown as another example of how agricultural productivity may come about. Take the following excerpt from a case study for instance:

> *Shafique and his family members started collecting leafy vegetables and gourd for household consumption. They grew plenty of vegetables on the new dikes. The large family of Shafique consumed much of the vegetables grown on the rice field dikes and also sold some for Tk. 1200 in one season.*[27] *They harvested 13 maunds (43kg) more than in the previous years, the value of which was Tk 3, 250. They started harvesting fish from June 2003…(p.91)*

The focus on the smallholder is, in fact, made explicit in the National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction despite a global body of evidence that has torn apart the prior theory and evidence pertaining to the inverse relationship between size of landholdings and productivity as discussed in chapter 1. Rahman's work on Bangladesh dating back to1986 came to the same conclusion that the inverse relationship between land size and productivity is, by no means, a fact in all circumstances.

There is, nevertheless, a focus on commercialization of agriculture in the PRSP, specifically the role that high-value added crops can play in steering agricultural growth. Contract growing, of which there are smatterings of in the rural areas of Bangladesh, is envisaged as an opportunity in the agrarian sector. Contract farming essentially involves a contract farmer and larger agribusinesses working in tandem towards the production, marketing and distribution of high-value crops. The farmer, then, is responsible for production based on predefined agreements on the technology to be used and output prices. There is still a lingering attachment with the small farmer, even within such a scenario, though linked vertically with agribusiness.

The following case study from Bangladesh illustrates:

[27] This is approximately 11 GBP

Aftab Bahumukhi Farm Ltd.(ABFL) in Kishoregonj has started contract growing of poultry birds since the early 90s. The number of parent stock birds housed per year increased from 2000 in 1995 to 220,000 in 2001. Similarly, the number of birds in broiler contract farms increased from 12,500 to 235,000 in 2001. The company imports day-old chicks of parent stock from abroad and distributes them straight away to the contract growers along with provision of essential support services such as quality poultry feeds, medication and vaccination, poultry raising training, credit and technical support. The company then buys back hatching eggs from the contract farmers at a guaranteed price of Tk.2 per egg, meaning a net grower's profit of approximately Tk.30,000 per month from 2500 parent stocks. The day-old chicks are then distributed to the contract broiler growers, who are also provided with high quality poultry feeds, medication and vaccination, poultry raising training and other technical support. On an average, some 12,000 broilers are sold per day (10,000 as live birds and 2000 for dressed boilers to be sold in Dhaka city). The contract growers make an average income of Tk.5 per kg of broiler (production cost per kg is Tk.55 as against the guaranteed price of Tk.60 per kg). In 2001, 1500 rural households benefited directly with another 600 households benefiting indirectly from broiler contract farming. (Bangladesh PRSP, p.94)

The question of whether such recent developments can be equated or lead to agrarian transition is doubtful and unlikely as Byres suggests in the case of Latin America (2003). Agrarian transition could take place either through smallholder accumulation or reinvestment of agribusiness profits back to agriculture (within the same country in the case of multinationals). But as the Byres paper indicates, these smallholders may in fact be bound to a certain degree of unfreedom, despite their links with the supply chain. A similar point is made by Carlos Oya (2012) with regard to contract farming serving as a potential catalyst for overall agrarian transition. Oya argues that contract farming, owing in part to the diversity of arrangements in which it is found, cannot be considered a distinct analytical path to agrarian transition. This is with particular reference to Africa and Latin America where contract farming is becoming a more pervasive phenomenon (ibid, 2012). Moreover, contract farming cannot be viewed in isolation from the neopopulist smallholder logic. In fact, they are part and parcel of the same logic that views 'smallholders' as the key agents in a transformative process in agriculture, strengthened, in turn, as Oya suggests by links to global value chains.

Overseas migration is also discussed as an important avenue for income generation for rural households. As the Bangladesh PRSP states, the share of remittances in household income has risen from 3.7 percent in 1987-88 to 18.5 percent in 2005 (p.47). The PRSP focuses on the need to develop services targeted towards temporary migration including the following:

- projection plans of feasible labour demand in targeted markets
- pre departure orientations
- supportive institutions to improve migration management and to disseminate information on job prospects and skill requirements
- More active returnee migrant associations

The Bangladesh government's policies on female migration have been more mixed however. In 1981, through a Presidential Order, only female professional and skilled workers were allowed to migrate; semi-skilled and unskilled women were not allowed to migrate without an accompanying male guardian. Furthermore, in 1997, a government ban was imposed on female migration with exception to highly qualified professionals such as doctors, engineers and teachers. Other occupational categories such as nurses, typists, secretarial assistants and factory workers were not allowed to migrate. It was only in 2003 that this ban was removed (Sikder, 2008). The current PRSP and overall state policies in the present however are far more inclusive and recognise the importance of migration regardless of gender.

4.6 SUMMARY

This chapter has presented the patterns of rural change with respect to land in the context of Bangladesh. Atiur Rahman's work dating back to the late 1980s, for instance, has revealed significant differentiation amongst the rural poor within Bangladesh. Later works by Mushtaq Khan (2004) have analytically shown the processes whereby wholesale capitalist transitions in agriculture are not occurring although Adnan's work centered on Noakhali depicts an acute, localised process of primitive accumulation albeit, irregular. It will be important within this backdrop to investigate what role land plays in the selected survey areas in making substantial contributions to rural incomes.

There continues to be a directed emphasis towards agriculture, particularly smallholder agriculture, as the Bangladesh PRSP suggests, thus maintaining land's leading role in poverty reduction strategies. This is despite the increase in non-farm economic activities and their growing importance as discussed earlier in the chapter. However, it has also been noted that the non-farm sector is not equally accessible by all, thus signifying sharp differences in access. It will be important to take existing research further and look into what actually determines this access and what role land plays in entry into the non-farm sector. Mahbub Ullah's seminal work on land and livelihoods has also brought to light important aspects of a non-farm economy that serves as a supplemental source of income though not one, as the author discusses, that can free poor households from land-based livelihoods. Thus, a process of pauperization, not proletarianization, was being said to occur, wherein accumulation of land remained the dominant strategy for sustenance amongst the rural poor. In keeping with the questions raised in the previous chapters, it will be important to analyze household trajectories and pathways out of poverty through the lens of conditions of reproduction. The dissertation will investigate whether the non-farm sector, or certain activities within the non-farm sector, can in fact significantly curtail the need for land based livelihoods and even make land a constraining factor in pathways out of poverty.

CHAPTER 5: METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES AND CONCERNS

5.1 Introduction

This dissertation relies upon both secondary data and field surveys to inform its key findings. Some of the main data sources include (1) Household Income and Expenditure Surveys (HIES) and (2) Agriculture Census. These represent the official data sources collected by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics. It was equally pertinent to evaluate findings derived from non-official sources; tothis end, the dissertation draws from key scholarly works done in Bangladesh such as those done by Mahbub Hossain (2004), Mahbub Ullah (1996), Toufique and Turton (2003) on the non-farm sector,land and poverty. The final component of the research involved household surveys spanning two villages in rural Bangladesh as many of the existing sources of household data such as HIES do not gather data on migration and sources of finance. This chapter focuses on the field data collection process, key problems that arose during this time, and the manner in which they were overcome or minimised.

5.2 The Research Process

The research process involved both preliminary research into what information was already available in connection with the hypotheses set out in the dissertation and what new information would need to be collected through household surveys. This section summarises the overall research process.

Chapters 2 and 3 brought forth some of the key questions that this dissertation seeks to explore further and Chapter 4 discussed these questions at length with reference to Bangladesh. For instance, in the discussion on poverty and measurement, it was deemed necessary in Chapter 2 that poverty must be conceived and understood from a relational perspective taking into account conditions of reproduction of households. Chapter 2 also brought into focus some of the problems with using income as a measure of poverty. Chapter 3 raised the importance of landlessness and landlockednessas processes that may or may not signal wholesale distress, economic stability or movements out of poverty. Finally, Chapter 3 also raised the potential importance of the

non-farm sector and, in particular, migration as a condition of reproduction that could bring households out of poverty.

In light of the questions raised in the earlier chapters, it was important to determine how to go about collecting the requisite data. For instance, to understand processes of landlessness and landlockedness, data on why households sell land and whether it is out of distress or the need to finance migration was required. Data on extent of landholdings over time was also required along with a measure of poverty using the asset index. Although it was determined early on that collecting income data would be cumbersome and error prone, sources of income was required in order to investigate conditions of reproduction. However, even sources of income alone would not be sufficient in understanding conditions of reproduction as these conditions represent the minimum requirements for the renewal of household production (Adnan, 1985). Thus, simple commodity production[28] represents one such condition that is dependent solely on production at the same scale without the profit motive that would define the conditions of reproduction for the capitalist producer (ibid, 1985). This same simple commodity production does not preclude engagement with markets but remains centered on households who are tied to the means of production which is mainly land (Adnan, 1985). If migration represents a condition of reproduction, data would have to be collected in turn on the utilisation of remittances. For instance, are remittances being used to send more migrants overseas? Is landlessness through the sale of land to finance migration) occurring in which case simple commodity production is being forfeited. It was important to work with caution as not all livelihood diversification is indicative of changes in conditions of reproduction; as M. Ullah (1996) has noted, livelihood diversification has in fact been used to reproduce simple commodity production. Thus, it was deemed necessary to identify households who still engaged in simple commodity production though their livelihoods were diversified as well as households whose conditions of reproduction were significantly altered through specific livelihood

[28]Households engaged in simple commodity production are considered to be mainly engaged in agricultural production outside the purview of the market for the most part though they can engage in product markets. However, these households may still own land as their primary means of production and thus do not need to engage in lease of labour markets (Adnan,1985, 54).

trajectories. Although data on crop choice, land quality and other conditions of production would have been useful, as the focus was on conditions of reproduction, such data was not collected.

5.2.1 Research hypotheses and the data requirements therein

As discussed above, the first task at hand prior to commencing field work was to identify the key data requirements based on the main research hypotheses. In order to determine land's role in the migration process, it was deemed necessary to collect information on land transactions of households and the reasons for those transactions. Another key aim of the research was to compare landless households with landed ones to determine whether land is still the predominant unit for determining welfare. Thus, it was not only necessary to collect the land profiles of households but an asset profile which would serve as a proxy for overall wealth. Moreover, a cross section of households was needed that included landless and landed households with a diverse set of occupations so as to compare and contrast land's heightened or diminished role in determining levels of poverty or wealth.

The following table summarises the key research hypotheses and the methods for obtaining the data needed to answer those hypotheses.

Table 5.1 Investigation of Hypotheses					
HYPOTHESIS	WHAT I NEED TO FIND	HOW DO I INVESTIGATE THIS?			
		Quantitative method	Data requirement and availability	Qualitative (observation/interview)	What do I ask?
Research question: How is migration altering the relationship between land and poverty?					
Land is sold to finance migration opportunities, particularly those that involve moving abroad	A summary of land transactions of migrant households	Part of purposive survey	Same limitations as above, will draw upon Mahbub Ullah's study of land transactions in two villages for longitudinal analysis of land transactions dating back to the 1980s	Interviews with local union porishod chairmen, NRDS	What are the different reasons for households selling land and frequency of each of these causes? How are these land transactions linked to migration?
The link between land ownership and poverty breaks down when considering landless households with migrants overseas	Landlesshouseholdswithmigrantsoverseas	Compare the economic situation of different landless or near landless groups with landed groups using indicators such as level of education,	Need to identify groups of landless or near landless who became so for different reasons including migration and distress	Investigatingthis question required use of the asset index to measure poverty and review of statistical data; no qualititative data was required	What was the household land position before migrating abroad and after/during; are the landless or near landless in all cases poorer than those with possession of land? If not, under what specific circumstances can it be ascertained that the landless or near landless can in fact be better off? Does landlockedness or clinging to the land hinder or promote better economic outcomes? Is there a threshold within the 'near landless' category wherein those who have land possession below a certain amount are in fact poor?

		type of housing, nature of assets such as land, and health			
Research question: How is rural differentiation changing as a result of migration?					
Overseas migrant households constitute a distinct strata of rural households who cannot be subsumed under the traditional classes of rich, middle and small peasant	A comparison of wealth and relationships across these groups	Asset indices of migrant categories and land size categories	Wealth cannot be equated with class; thus additional data that can shed light on conditions of reproduction such as remittance utilization is needed.	Interview with key informants, research organisations such as RMMRU and returnee migrant associations	What is the relationship between traditional landed rural elite (rich peasants) with overseas migrant category? Why can overseas migrant households not be subsumed under small or middle peasant categories?

5.2.2 Key dates

The process and timing for data collection proceeded as follows.

Table 5.2 Key Activities for My Research

Activity	Time Period	Remarks
Revision of survey questionnaire; discussions with local supervisor on data availability; logistical preparations for field visit, explore field grants	October 2010	Required approval from SOAS supervisor and discussed with local advisor
Initial field visit to two villages to carry out focus group discussions with local NGOs, academicians, landlords (if any), and other concerned persons	November	Noakhali Rural Development Society (NRDS) was the focal point for this field trip and all subsequent field visits
Formation and training of research team	November	A team of 2 researchers was required
Field visit with team to pilot survey questionnaire	December	
Revisions to questionnaire, compilation of existing field notes based on FGDs	December	Revisions to questionnaire and field notes was discussed with supervisor
Data collection from Hasanpur village	Mid-January to February 2011	With support of research team, NRDS
Recording of data using SPSS computer package	February- March	Discussion of data findings from first village with supervisor in case of changes that were needed as far as research design
Data collection from Purbalach village	April-May	
Recording of data from Purbalach village	May	
Data analysis and compilation of field report	June – July	Discussed findings with supervisor

5.3 Sample Design

As Bangladesh is characterized by 30 different agroecological zones, it was not possible to obtain samples for each of these distinct areas within the time period considered. It was considered important to survey areas with high incidence of migration in order to determine the role that migration plays in rural economies. Whether a random sample would be able to cover households with migrants abroad posed an initial methodological concern. The general weakness of a random sample lies in its inability to capture the totality of a rural economy, particularly specific occupational or land size categories (Pincus, 1993). However, as earlier data based on a random stratified sample conducted in 1986 was made available that covered households with varied land portfolios, it was envisaged that such a sample would include to a large extent households with both local migrants and migrants overseas. The initial random stratiied sample was

divided based on levels of cereal sufficiency, those levels being upper cereal sufficiency wherein households could meet their cereal requirements from the output of their own land for more than twelve months, medium cereal sufficiency implying sufficiency between six to twelve months and lower cereal sufficiency of less than six months. A total of 25 households were randomly selected from each aforementioned category. Thus, households were demarcated based on their ability to meet their consumption needs from agriculture, thus bringing in a wide range of households with either surplus consumption, break even, or an inability to meet consumption needs. The two villages from the earlier sample also are known for their high incidence of migration, thus ensuring that migrant households would indeed be covered. A weakness of selecting villages with such a high incidence of migration is that they may not be representative of what is happening throughout Bangladesh. However, as the previous chapter has discussed, migration is evidenced throughout the majority of districts in Bangladesh. Another point of concern was whether to survey one or two villages but as earlier data was made available on two villages, it was decided that both the villages could be resurveyed within the considered time frame. Surveying both the villages would then provide a basis for comparing processes of agrarian change over both time and space. The problems with probable sample attrition in dealing with a longitidunalresearch (see section 6.3.3) also lead to the conclusion that covering two villages was necessary. Furthermore, as the two villages differ with respect to degree of urban encroachment, studying both of them would provide a lens into the role of land in livelihoods in both a largely agrarian setting as well as a more urbanized one. As such, two villages from Noakhali region in Feni and Lakshmipur districts were selected for which a total of 120 households were surveyed using a purposive semi-structured questionnaire.

5.3.1 Profile of Villages

The selected villagesof Purbalach and Hasanpur have been carefully studied since the period of the 1980s by Mahbub Ullah culminating in a comprehensive study on the changing context of land and livelihoods in rural Bangladesh. A detailed look at the Noakhali region in which the villages are located is found in chapter 4. Hasanpur village is located in the Anandapur Union of Fulgazi Thana in the Feni district. As this

village is located in the basin of two rivers, it is generally prone to flash floods.In contradistinction, Purbalach village which is located in the Raipur Union of Raipur thana in the Laksmipur district also part of the flood plan is generally flood-free. Both villages have a very high density of population and thus exert great pressure on land that is already prone to floods though in varying intensity. The comparison of these two villages may bring out differences in levels of migration and consequently, varying relationships and levels of importance of land in livelihoods.

5.3.2 Discussion on logitudinal aspects of research

The data generated from the earlier study by M. Ullah was used as a starting point for further probing in the said villages as it provided a longitudinal perspective spanning close to thirty years. Resurveys such as these have been used elsewhere to assess long-term changes in rural economies; a case in point is the resurveys done by Ramakumar and Raut (2011) in India. Similar resurveys were also conducted in Pakistan based on original household surveys completed by the International Food Policy Research Institute (Lohano, 2009). Longitudinal studies are particularly important in assessing the dynamics of poverty such as movements in and out of poverty spanning more than one generation and the duration of poverty, aspects which are not captured in static panel surveys unless recall is used, a method ridden with problems particularly when the span of time to be recalled is longer.

Despite the clear advantages of a longitudinal study, it is duly important to note the main weaknesses of this methodology. In the case of resurveys, there exists the problem of dealing with different methodologies and varied aims of research which may in some cases provide a wealth of information on a sample not necessarily required for the purposes of the present research and vice versa. This was certainly the case for this research but the researcher did not face a paucity of information on the most important aspects of the research which included data on nature of livelihoods and landholdings. Another problem with longitudinal research lies in making income comparisons over time. Such comparisons are prone to a large degree of error thus making welfare comparisons from a longitudinal perspective more complex especially when

different metrics of welfare are used. The M. Ullah study did use income as a measure of welfare but due to the overriding problems with collecting data on income, an asset index was used for the current research as discussed in section 6.4.2. This meant that welfare comparisons could not be made; rather the focus was on comparisons of landholdings and occupational shifts. Another problem with longitudinal research lies with the comparison of households over time which can become problematic as households either fuse or more likely, split over time (Jenkins and Siedler, 2007). As this research did cover two generations of households, the process of identifying original households that had split over time and tracing back to the original household was indeed a cumbersome and time consuming task though certainly not an insurmountable one. In addition, sample attrition did occur, as expected for a longitudinal study spanning two generations and is discussed further in section 6.2.3.

From the outset of the field research, a link was established with Professor Mahbub Ullah from Dhaka University who agreed to provide the raw data from his research in two villages in rural Bangladesh from the period of the 1980s. His data covered a wide range of issues including a historyof land transactionsfor sampled households from 1972 to 1986, occupations and incomes, and cereal sufficiency. This research provided a strong empirical backing to the claim made by Bhaduri, Rahman and Arn (1986) that persistence of the small farmer is the ultimate, albeit contradictory, rural phenomenon in Bangladesh at the time despite or due to a process of polarisation. The index of variation represents the ratio of landholdings of the current period with the level of landholdings at the period of inception of the household or a base period. This index was originally formulated by Bhaduri, Rahman and Arn (1981) who in turn demonstrated that in rural Bangladesh, particularly in Noakhali during the period 1979-1980, the process of persistence of small farmers was occurring. Out of 772 small owner households sampled by Bhaduri, Rahman and Arn, nearly 47 percent were stable households. A value ranging between 0.9 to 1.1 represents a stable household, with values greater and lower than the range representing growing and declining households respectively. Both M. Ullah (1986) and Bhaduri, Rahman and Arn (1981) showed that during the period of the 1980s, persistence

and overall stability of landholdings was the norm with the index being close to unity in the majority of households surveyed.

Thus, M. Ullah reached the same conclusion that land stability is the norm wherein households cling to the land amidst a backdrop of concentration of landholdings and dispossession. That is to say that as dispossession occurs, households begin to cling to what remains of their remaining land possessions. The formidable criticism against the claim of persistence was made by A. Rahman (1986) who argued that the small and narrow range of landholdings would naturally create a bias towards stability as such small landholdings can only be homestead land, not cultivable land. Furthermore, Rahman argued that newer households would certainly tend to be stable households simply because they are newly formed households. In turn, Rahman argued that differentiation is an observable phenomenon in rural Bangladesh, a phenomenon which is pronounced by polarisation between those with increased land ownership and the landless. The census data for Bangladesh from the 1980s to the present period, however, points towards a complete absence of polarisation (see Chapter 6, 7 and 8 for a more detailed discussion).

Other criticism focused on the index and the need to compare across a longer timeframe in order to encompass multiple generations of households and accurately measure the process of polarisation (Feldman et al, 1987). Feldman et al argued in a similar vein to that of Rahman, contending that the time lapse between the period when land was inheried to the current period would have to be controlled as newer households would indeed have an index of variation closer to unity. Notwithstanding the counterclaims, both M. Ullah and Bhaduri et al's work shed important light on the pace of differentiation and indicate a slow moving process of rural differentiation within the context of polarisation. Nevertheless, the criticisms have been taken into regard in the present analysis. For one, only changes in cultivable land, not homestead land, has been used as the metric for analysis. Secondly, as this study is able to utilise the data from the 1980s, the change within two generations of households has been assessed and the newer

households of the second generation can be analysed separately from the original households of the previous generation.

5.3.3 Identifying households for resurvey

M. Ullah's study involved an initial census of each village wherein 320 households were enumerated. This was followed by a random stratified sample of 75 households in each village based on cereal sufficiency. The groups were upper cereal sufficiency where the households could meet their cereal requirements from the output of their land for an entire year or more, medium cereal sufficiency where households could not meet the cereal requirements completely though they could manage for up to 6 months or more, and the lower cereal sufficiency group that could only meet cereal requirements for less than 6 months. Given the high incidence of migration in these villages, it was determined that a purposive sample was not necessary to obtain adequate information on migration in the present period. Thus, the same sample of households originally based on M.Ullah's random stratified sample was used.

The first and foremost task was to identify the 75 households in each village from the original survey and confirm that these households were indeed the same households that were surveyed or descendants of the original households. Although my sample size for each village was 60 households, I tried to identify all of the 75 households from each village as part of the original survey. This turned out to be the most difficult task considering the names that were on the original list corresponded with many names of heads of households. In Bangladeshi villages, households are clustered into baris which are groups of households with common ancestry. It was a common occurrence to find a name of a respondent in more than one bari thus making it all the more necessary to reconfirm both the name of the respondent with the bari in order to ensure that the household on the original sample was indeed the same household to be surveyed. This process was made even more time consuming considering the lack of street names and signposts (aside from nature's signposts) to mark out the households' exact locations. Only a primary school in the village served as a marker. All that the

reseacher and the reseach team had to go on was the directions given by village dwellers who knew the location of different baris and even the households we were seeking to identify.

Repeat visits were required in some of the cases where the respondents and their families were not available and the homes were under lock and key. In one of the cases, the researcher alongside the team had to make a visit to another home in Raipur bazaar where a respondent was visiting at the time to be with his daughter and her family. This respondent was one of the original respondents still living from the original sample. In this case, the process of identifying the respondent was a prolonged one and one for which the survey would remain incomplete as the asset index could not be done. In other cases, the original respondent with family had migrated but a close relation, distant family member or once neighbor now occupied or purchased the home. These households were surveyed as they could provide details on the original household's reasons for migration.

The 60 household sample in each of the villages was then categorised into still living which represented those households from the original sample that were still intact with the key respondent still living, passed away but their children with inheritance rights were identified, migrated, and finally unidentifiable or unwilling. In the case where the orginal respondent had died but their children were identified, only one inheritor was chosen randomly for the purposes of the survey. Generally, as many as three to four inheritors were present and though it would have been useful to collect data for each of these households, due to time limitations, only one inheritor was surveyed. In Purbalach village, a sample of 60 households was drawn consisting of 25 households where the principal respondent from earlier survey was still living, 24 households where the respondent had died but the land remained with an inheritor(s), and 4 migrant households where it was ascertained that the land was indeed that of the original respondent. In order to complete the sample, 7 new households were randomly selected. As the initial Purbalach sample consisted of 71 households, a total of 18 households were unidentifiable withonly a single household out of these 18 unwilling to respond.In

Hasanpur, a sample of 61 households was taken consisting of the following categories: 28 households with original respondent still living, 28 households where the original respondent had died, and 5 households where the original respondent had migrated. The remainder of the original sample was unidentifiable.

Table 5.3: Sample categories

Sample category	Purbalach	Hasanpur
Still Living	25	28
Partitioned	24	28
Migrated	4	5
New	7	0
Unidentifiable	18	14
Total	71	75

A full-fledged cohort analysis like that of Shanin's comprehensive framework for example which included the categories of partitioned, merger, emigration and extinction could not be completed within the time frame of the dissertation (Shanin, 1972). Firstly, it would have required that data be collected on each of the inheritors of those households surveyed during the 1980s by M. Ullah which, as pointed out earlier, would have been a time consuming task. Van Schendel's study (1982) in Bangladesh based on a similar methodology to that of Shanin demonstrated that mergers were quite insignificant in terms of their contribution to either polarisation or persistence. Finally, causes of extinction amongst households were difficult to trace considering they were unidentifiable. As such, inter-temporal comparison of landholdings was done separately for the still living and partitioned categories only and not for the remaining households using the index of variation as used earlier by M. Ullah.

5.3.4 Sample attrition and the need for new households

Considering the time frame between the first survey and the resurvey and the historical incidence of migration in the region, it was inevitable that not all the households would be identified or traced. When households could not be identiftied, the research team did try to search for them a second time or atleast inquire about their whereabouts. As villages are very tight knit in Bangladesh, village residents generally know the wherabouts and personal family histories of neighbors and others residing in their

localities. However, in the case of the households that were not identified, even inquiries into their whereabouts were unsuccessful. Villagers in most cases had never heard of the names of the households that were unidentifiable. This could imply that migration had occurred so long ago that their names were no longer recorded in the oral memories of current households living in the village.

As the sample from the earlier study contained anywhere between 71 to 75 households, a size only slightly larger than my sample of 60 households per village, I decided to make the attempt to identify all of the households from the earlier sample. However, as all of the orginal sample households were not identifiable, to meet the 60 household sample for each village, new households were selected randomly. This occurred only in Purbalach, though in Hasanpur, new households were not required. This is not to say that all of the households in the original sample for Hasanpur were identifiable. As the current sample required only 60 houseolds as opposed to 75, the sample size for Hasanpur was met with households for the original list. In fact, 61 households were enumerated in Hasanpur as an additional household was identified. Surveying 'new' households for Purbalach was, however, not seen as a drawback for the research as it could still shed light on overall village dynamics and the role that land plays in accumulation and immeserisation processes. Not being able to identify the remaining households however did leave certain questions on the whereabouts of these households, reasons for migrating, and current status unanswered.

5.3.5 Data comparisons across surveys

In order to maintain consistency across the surveys, some questions on cereal sufficiency and the extent of indebtedness were added to the current survey. The occupation code used in the first survey was adopted for the current survey. However, the original survey relied more on income data in comparison to the current survey which used the asset index. The asset index was used for the current surveys as the income data for the set of surveys conducted during the 1980s relied on imputing values to agricultural ouput and calculating costs of production thus making the process of determining income, particularly agricultural incomes cumbersome and prone to error. When visiting

households, particularly those respondents who were still living during the period of the first survey, there was a natural inclination to provide information on costs of agriculture and incomes which were not required for the purposes of the resurvey. The first survey also contained information on inception of the household which was not deemed necessary for the current survey. Information on cultivable land holdings, homestead land holdings and history of land transactions since the period of the last survey in the case of still living households or over the past ten years in the case of younger households was collected in tandem with the original survey. Thus, landholdings as well as occupational changes could easily be compared over time in the two villages. Income based comparisons were deemed too cumbersome and prone to error for comparison as discussed earlier in chapter 2.

5.4 Questionnaire construction

A structured questionnaire (see Appendix 1) was developed with a range of close ended questions regarding household demographics, history of land transactions and the reasons therein, and occupational and asset profiles. Some of the key areas covered in the questionnaire include the following:

- age, sex, level of education
- composition of household including both residential and non-residential members who make a financial contribution
- extent of homestead, pond and cultivable land currently and prior summary of land trasactions over past ten years including reason for purchase or sale and method of financing
- migrant members amount of remittances and the manner in which these remittances are used
- the source of finance for migration and costs of migrating both abroad and within country
- occupation from a range of agricultural and non-agricultural forms of livelihood
- household assets including livestock/poultry, electronic devices, housing material, etc.

The questionnaire was first piloted in a nearby village that was not part of the study area though in close proximity to on of the surveyed villages. This was done primarily to

assess whether the questions were relevant and to ensure that households were able to understand and answer the questions. It was during the piloting that it was deemed necessary to add the amount of pond land owned as part of the homestead. The homestead generally includes a communal pond that is jointly owned by the common inheritors within a family. Some missing occupations were also added to the occupation code. Please refer to annex 1 for the final version of the questionniare.

5.4.1 Definition of household

In order to obtain household-wide data, a definition of 'household' was used that incorporates nonresidential household members in consonance with the definition used by M. Ullah (1986), Johnston (1997) and Pincus and Sender (2008). Such a definition was used in order to include migrant members who still contributed to the household but no longer lived regularly in the surveyed area and to establish a conceptual alternative to the definition of a household that centers on financial contribution rather than the habitation of a commonspace. More limited definitions of households that included only residential members would not bring in the information on migrant members and their contribution to the household. Sender and Johnston (1996) discusses how the World Bank Living Standards Measurement surveys have failed to take into account migrant laborers due to the application of a narrow definition of 'household'. In a similar vein, Pincus and Sender (2008) discuss the failure of national household surveys in Vietnam that were unable to capture migrant members, in turn losing sight of processes of urbanisation and migration among the poor in search of wage employment. The definition of household used for the Bangladesh surveys thus negated the assumption that poor, rural households remain confined within a small geographical space.

Such a definition, as it differs from the traditional, mainstream definition of household did lead to initial problems for the enumerators. Although briefed on who should or should not be included in the household, mistakes did occur leading to revisits to a small number of households. One common mistake was to include the married daughter that no longer lived at home although the purpose of this definition was to include migrants

who resided elsewhere but gave financial contributions. In these cases, the households were revisited to reconfirm whether or not certain members should be counted as part of the household. These problems, however, occurred only during the initial phases and were averted throughout the remaining duration of the survey.

5.4.2 Asset index

The questionnaire focused further on the occupational and asset profiles of the household including their current and previous land position) homestead and cultivable land) and a range of other household assets that would serve as a proxy for wealth. Asset indices which are weighted indices that measure overall household ownership of assets have been used widely as a proxy measure for household wealth (Wall and Johnston, 2008; Sender and Smith, 1990; Booysen et al,2008 ; Filmer and Pritchett, 2001). In the absence of accurate income data, asset indices have also been used as a valuable tool to determine levels of household inequality (McKenzie, 2005). USAID, for instance, has adopted the asset index in its Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS). The rise of the asset index as a methodological alternative in determining levels of welfare is due to the difficulties that arise in collecting income data, particularly when they involve non-salaried, irregular, or seasonal work or income that must be imputed based on levels of agricultural production and their market values minus the costs of production. Household assets, on the other hand, can be more easily measured without the same degree of error resulting from recall periods and withdrawal of accurate information.

This is not to say, however, that asset indices are immaculate methodological tools in determining household welfare. From a conceptual standpoint, the accumulation of assets over time may not accurately indicate a household's current welfare and sudden dips in consumption due to hardship as assets are generally more stable than income (Booysen et al, 2008). There are also problems in defnining the assets to be used as part of the index across rural-urban divides or different cultural contexts given that assets may not hold the same link with welfare across a spectrum of households in varying contexts (Wall and Johnston, 2008). Asset indices when aggregated may also fall into the trap of reflecting improvements in welfare triggered by accumulations in private goods such as

televisions and fridges even though there may be significant falls in the standard of living due to the lack of other assets such as proper water and sanitation facilities (Booysen et al, 2008). Furthermore, as Booysen et al states, assets can be considered to be intrisnically urban in nature, thus creating an innate bias against rural areas that are not well-disposed to markets and the assets that can be obtained from such markets (2008, 21). Such a critique however negates the fact that rural households do have access to markets to varying degrees and do own a wide range of consumerdurables. If it were the case that rural households do consume consumer durables to a lesser degree, it would be reflected in the weights assigned for those assets. In fact, the asset index actuallycanilluminateon the diverse patterns of accumulation that households take on and not simply to determine cumulative asset holdings based on a static inventory of assets. Consequently, it was deemed that the asset index could still do justice to determining levels of welfare, especially as the assets used in the index were chosen to have a greater relevance in the rural context. For instance, some of the assets included in the index include livestock and rickshaws which carry a great deal of importance in the rural context in Bangladesh. Furthermore, the comparison was across two rural areas, thus eliminating any potential bias towards an urban area.

The list of assets employed to formulate asset profiles for the households were similar to those used in the 2007 Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) in Bangladesh. The asset profile was far easier to collect as it required merely a view of the residence in addition to a few questions regarding assets that could not be seen. It was deemed early on during the piloting phase that questions regarding assets such as tables, chairs and other such amenities should be kept to a minimum as it made some households, particularly the wealthier households, uneasy. Rather, it was determined that the majority of the asset profile could be collected through a simple viewing. In larger homes, however, this posed more of a difficulty as viewing the entire home was not considered appropriate nor was it deemed appropriate to inquire about basic assets such as cots, tables and chairs. This posed a methodological problem in relation to the asset index which was partially overcome by way of inquiring about the

remaining assets that could not be viewed, despite receiving responses in jest at timesfrom respondents.

The following table lists the assets used for the asset index. The majority of the durable goods used to construct a wealth index for the DHS were used for the survey with exception to non-mobile phone, a rarity in rural areas of Bangladesh. Land ownership was a major part of the survey but was not used for the asset index as it was used to assess longitudinal changes in landholding, not current welfare levels. Also certain household characteristics such as the number of rooms were also included as they could be fairly easily collected. Other household characteristics such as access to electricity and type of cooking fuel used were not used as these are more closely linked to health related concerns. Electricity provision may reflect the overall development of a geographical region and the extent of public sector provisioning, not the well-being of an individual household (Wall and Johnston, 2008). Cooking fuel, though it could reflect on level of welfare as poorer households may use cheaper varieties, it was decided that to obtain accurate information would be difficult. Other household characteristics such as wall material and type of toilet used were also collected for the asset index. Apart from the asset index, other indicators of welfare such as educational attainment were collected as discussed earlier in this section.

Table 5.4 Household Possessions as Employed by DHS and my field surveys

DHS		Field surveys in Noakhali
Durable goods Almirah) wardrobe) Table Chair Watch Radio Television Bicycle	Motorcycle/scooter Mobile phone Non-mobile phone Refridgerator Animal-drawn cart Car/truck Boat with a motor Rickshaw/van	Each of the DHS durable goods items was used for the asset index with exception to non-mobile phone as mobile phones are far more common in rural settings in Bangladesh than land lines.
Land Ownership Homestead Other land) cultivable)		Land ownership of both homestead and cultivable land was obtained to determine longitudinal change in land ownership but was not used as part of asset index construction.
Livestock Ownership Cows, bulls, buffalo Goat, sheep Chicken/ducks		All of these were included in field survey asset index.

5.5 Fieldwork and data collection

An extensive period covering twelve months was spent in fieldwork in Bangladesh in order to cover 120 households in two villages in Noakhali. The initial period was spent in collecting secondary data such as census reports for the said villages and other research completed in those villages by NGOs, academicians and government agencies. In so doing, research reports from RMRRU, BRAC and the Agriculture Extension Department of the government were collected. Professor M. Ullah's extensive data on the same two villages over the period of the 1980s was also collected which formed the basis of the sample that was drawn. Those households that were identified from the earlier sample in Purbalach fell short of the target sample of 60 households and thus 7 new households were selected randomly to complete the sampleas discussed earlier.

As mentioned earlier, the research area was limited to the said villages primarily due to the advantages of being studied villages, thus providing a longitudinal perspective on land transactions, migration and their nexus with poverty. Although there are many regions within Bangladesh experiencing similar changes as far as the relationship of land with livelihoods, thedissertation was limited to the study of two villages that could potentially provide a lens through which to understand overall country wide changes. A further advantage of studying the selected villages was the linkage established with a local NGO, Noakhali Rural Development Society (NRDS) which facilitated the process of research collection during the fieldwork phase. NRDS provided the logistical support and identified possible students from local universities who could form part of the research team. However, as the NGO did not actually take part in the data collection, the risk of respondents exaggerating their poverty in order to obtain financial or other services was never deemed a problem. The team of selected students that formed part of the research team also had very loose connections with NRDS thus eliminating any chance of miscommunication about the purpose of the research being an NGO dictated one.

5.5.1 Research team

To collect the data, a small team of two students per village was formed. This was deemed necessary considering the wide variations in dialect and the potential misinterpretation of data that could occur due to communication problems. As mentioned earlier, a local NGO, Noakhali Rural Development Society (NRDS) which operates in both Laxshmipur and Feni districts where the study villages are located provided the necessary logistical support in identifying the students and facilitating the overall process. The students were all male and in their early twenties. As there were few sensitive questions in the survey and no questions regarding extremely private matters such as contraceptive use, having males as the enumerators was not an impediment to the data collection process. In fact, it served as an advantage due to the greater levels of mobility of men in comparison to women in Bangladesh. Though the students were from Noakhali they were not from the surveyed villages; thus, travelling to interior regions was required which would have been very difficult for female enumerators to do in the context of Bangladesh. Noakhali, in particular is a region that is far more conservative in comparison to other regions within Bangladesh.

On the other hand, the age and perhaps level of exposure of the team members did pose a problem in some cases. Some households did not give time to the enumerators but when I revisited these households, the respondents were far more serious and respectful. In fact, it could be argued that having foreign students of the same age group would not have created such a disadvantage as it did in the case of local students. Adding a 'foreign' element to the research, be it in the form of a foreign university or a foreigner who conducts the research does generate more interest from the households.

The research team did, however, have the advantage of knowing the local dialect and the idiosyncracies of the area. This was particularly useful when dealing with local measures of size of landholding such as decimals, *gonda* and others which then had to be converted to acres. However, the key disadvantage was the students poor knowledge of English which lead to a considerable amount of time directed towards translation of the survey from English to Bangla and then after the surveys were completed, the recording and translation once more of the data from Bangla to English. There were also small gaps

in between commencement and completion of the surveys due to the students' other responsibilitiesas well as other contingencies such as the monsoon which commenced in the summer months. Sporadic hartals or strikes called by the opposition parties in Bangladesh also caused minor disruptions for the data collection phase as Noakhali is a region known for its political allegiance to the opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP).

The Purbalach village survey was commenced first after an initial piloting of the survey in a nearby village. It was decided early on that the surveys in the two villages would not be conducted simultaneously so as to ensure that the drawbacks and errors in conducting the survey in the first village were not repeated in the second and also to ensure that the researcher could give adequate time to both villages. In both the villages, meetings were held with local government authorities such as the Union Council members, Upazila mayors and so on, all of whom were helpful and cooperative providing their own staff to give an initial briefing of the area. The union represents the lowest tier of local government comprising several villages; an upazila consists of a group of unions.

5.5.2 Sampling and nonsampling errors

The risk of doing a resurvey was the possibility that households could not be identified in which case the research would lose its longitudinal aspect. The process of identifying the households from the original sample was a tedious and lengthy one. Nevertheless, the majority of the households in the sample were identified. Some households, as expected, were not traceable despite repeateded attempts in identifying their whereabouts.

Although the data collection went fairly smoothly in both the villages, there still remained the requisite data collection errors. Data collection from a few households could not be completed as these households were not receptive and were not willing to give the necessary time for adequate completion of the surveys. This was particularly a problem in the case of those households whose primary respondents were land 'dalals' or land traders who are in the business of purchasing and selling land for a profit. In Hasanpur, this was more of a problem as some households questioned the survey's motives fearing in particular that this research was linked to the government. Such

reaction was also evidenced in Purbalach to a lesser degree. Furthermore, when visiting households and collecting data, initially, a throng of villagers would generally watch over the proceedings even interjecting with answers thus making it difficult to obtain accurate information from the perspective of the respondent. However, after the first few surveys, this was corrected by ensuring, for the most part, that the survey data was collected privately so as to reduce bias in the data. The majority of the households, with exception to the land dalal occupational category were very patient and receptive even for brief repeat visits that were made to fill gaps in data.

5.5.3 Asset Index Construction

A weighted asset index was constructed through principal component analysis (PCA) in order to assess the relative wealth of households in the sample. As discussed earlier, it was deemed necessary to measure household wealth through an asset index rather than income considering the errors associated with measuring income over a specific recall period, particularly rural incomes which are more prone to fluctuation. Chapter 2 discusses the the nature of asset indices and both the advantages and disadvantages of using an asset index as a measure of wealth. For the purposes of the 121 sample in the two surveyed villages, a total of 14 assets were used to measure household wealth. Each of these assets has been used by the DHS surveys for Bangladesh. PCA was run on the data set and in turn, the component coefficients for each of the assets were used as the weights in the construction of a weighted asset index.

The combination of count variables with binary variables skewed the data in favor of those count variables with a higher range. As such, these count variables including tables and chairs were removed in the second phase of the analysis. All of the remaining count variables were compressed such that a maximum of three was recorded for the accumulation of these assets beyond three or more. Initially, two separate tests were done for the two surveyed villages in order to determine key differences in the importance of assets within the two villages. The tin roof variable was dropped as it was not a categorical variable and did not take into account other types of roof material. A total of 14 assets were used for the two villages separately. In Purbalach, the following variables received the highest positive weights: number of rooms, flush toilet, and brick

wall. Another fairly high weight was given to the refridgerator variable. The latrine variable received a high negative weight accounting for the fact that poorer households would tend to have latrines as opposed to flush toilets. Other negative weights included number of cows and rickshaw/van although these weights were very small. This may indicate that poorer households are more engaged in agricultural and/or transport activities, although the weights are too small to make any conclusive statements.

In Hasanpur, there was a difficulty using all of the same assets. When I tried to do this, the KMO Bartlett test did not appear and it stated that the tables are not positively definite. I then started a process of using one variable at a time and running the factor analysis to see if the KMO Bartlett test would run. It did so up to the latrine variable. For some reason, when I tried to run the test with the latrine variable, it did not work. The weights were similar as to that of Purbalach with again the highest weight going to flush toilet. However, number of rooms did not accrue a high weight. I also ran a principal component analysis for both the villages combined. This time around I was able to run all the tests for all of the 14 variables without any need fo omission. As for both the villages, the highest weight went to flush toilet and brick wall alongside a high negative weight for latrine.

Table 5.5 below indicates the first principal component generated through PCA accounts for 25 percent of the total variance in the data which is considered an acceptable variance. In the Filmer and Pritchett (2001) analysis, the first principal component accounted for 26 percent of the variance. The next table shows the results of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test of Sampling Adequacy which indicates the extent of correlations within the variables. This value ranges between 0 and 1 with values greater than 0.9 reflecting a very strong variance. In this case, the test shows a value of 0.727, a value still considered a strong indicator of variance in the data set. The Bartlett's test of sphericity and the resulting p value generated reflects the probability of the variables being uncorrelated. As such, in the case of this analysis, a p value of 0.00 indicates that the variables are indeed correlated and thus, we may proceed with further analysis.

Table 5.7 shows the component loadings which are the correlation coefficients between the variables and the first component. These, in turn, show the extent of variation in the

variable accounted for by the first component. Component loadings of greater than 0.7 indicate that over half or more of the variance in the variable can be accounted for by the component. In this case, these variables are flush toilet and brick wall meaning that these variables are highly correlated with the underlying principal component; that is, household wealth. Some of the other variables such as refridgerator, wardrobe, television and mobile phone have component loadings very close to 0.7. Finally, these component loadings have been lineraly transformed to generate component coefficients which in turn are the values used to compute household asset scores. What it shows is that movements in specific assets such as flush toilet and brick wall have the greatest impact on asset scores.

Table 5.5 Total Variance of Principal Component, Household Wealth Explained

Initial Eigenvalues		
Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
3.617	25.834	25.834
2.355	16.820	42.654
1.243	8.876	51.530
1.154	8.241	59.772
1.030	7.358	67.130
.916	6.543	73.673
.747	5.338	79.011
.612	4.370	83.381
.602	4.301	87.682
.489	3.495	91.177
.406	2.898	94.074
.387	2.762	96.836
.251	1.792	98.629
.192	1.371	100.000

Table 5.6: KMO and Bartlett's Test, Measuring Partial Correlation of Variables

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.727

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	495.701
	Df	91
	Sig.	.000

Table 5.7: Component matrix

	Component 1
Poultry	.051
Cows	-.124
Stoves	.164
Rickshaw or van	.022
Motorcycle	.460
Bicycles	.123
Clocks or watches	.416
Wardrobe or cupboards or closets	.628
Refridgerator or freezer	.678
Mobile Phones	.653
Televisions	.603
Flush toilet	.785
Brickwall	.805
Quantity of rooms	.511

Table 5.8: Component score coefficient matrix

	Component 1
Poultry	.014
Cows	-.034
Stove	.045
Rickshaw or van	.006
Motorcycle	.127
Bicycle	.034
Clocks or watches	.115

Wardrobe or cupboards or closets	.174
Refridgerator or freezer	.188
Mobile Phones	.180
Televisions	.167
Flush toilet	.217
Brickwall	.223
Quantity of rooms	.141

5.5.4 Key Informants

In addition to household surveys in two villages, I also interviewed a number of key informants to further solidify the research. The Raipur upazila chairman, also known as the mayor, was interviewed, particularly with regard to the extent of migration in the area. In Hasanpur, I held meetings with the union porishad members.[29] I also met with key research organisations in Bangladesh such as RMRRU (Refugee and Migratory Movement Research Unit), BRAC and the International Migrants' Alliance, IMA Bangladesh. I also met with a successful return migrant who has set up his own return migrant association known as WARBE (Welfare Association for the Rights of Bangladeshi Emigrants Development Foundation). As such, I was able to collect data, perspectives and an account of experiences outside of the survey areas.

5.6 Conclusions

This chapter has developed a methodology to investigate the main research hypotheses of the dissertation. Firstly, to investigate levels of poverty, an asset index has been used instead of income given that income data is prone to error and can be cumbersome to collect in household surveys. Secondly, the methodology centers on a resurvey of households enumerated in the late 1980s,thus providing a longitudinal lens in analysing changes in livelihoods and land possession. This is extremely important in light of the research questions that delve into land's changing role in livelihoods and poverty. Finally,there is methodological (and analytical) shift in focus from

[29]Purbalach fell under the direct jurisdiction of the Raipur upazila instead of the smaller administrative unit of union whereas Hasanpur fell under the smallest administrative unit known as the union porishad.

conditions of production to conditions of reproduction owing to the key trends of increase in non-farm economic activity and migration as outlined in chapters 3 and 4. Although conditions of production as seen through extent of labour hiring, type of technologies used in production, extent of linkage with market and so on are important in understanding rural differentiation, they appear to be predicated on the assumption that agriculture remains the single most important source of income for rural households and as such, conditions of production can be adequate in understanding rural differentiation. Thus, an examination of conditions of reproduction by way of looking at nature of livelihood diversification, trajectories of household changes including change in landholding possession and the reasons for those change and remittance utilisation is warranted.

CHAPTER 6: DYNAMICS OF LAND, MIGRATION AND RURAL DIFFERENTIATION IN STUDIED VILLAGES: HASANPUR

6.1 Introduction

This chapter situates the discussion on land, poverty and migration within the ambit of Hasanpur village, one of the surveyed areas of this dissertation. In chapter 2, I discussed the importance of examining poverty through a relational perspective focusing on conditions of reproduction. I seek to do this for the Hasanpur sample by examining sources of income and the trajectories in which such incomes were generated. In Chapters 3 and 4, I also discussed the role of land and migration play in shaping distinct conditions of reproduction and more specifically, rural differentiation. In chapter 4, we saw that the relationship between land and poverty in Bangladesh is not so clear cut and that there is a growing presence of landlessness that is not indicative of poverty. I also presented evidence in chapter 4 that points to both the existence of rural differentiation and the prevalence of migration as a key observable trend in rural Bangladesh. In the following pages, I will examine the relationship between land and poverty, particularly the role that migration plays in shaping such a relationship. Whether or not land has been 'delinked' from livelihoods as discussed in chapter 3 and the implications of such a phenomenon on poverty and rural differentiation in the said village will form the central theme of this chapter.

Hasanpur is located in the Anandapur Union of Parshuram upazila (once Fulgazi upazila) of Feni district and is surrounded on three sides by the Indian state of Tripura. Feni district, one of the three districts once part of the greater Noakhali district, is bordered on the south by the Bay of Bengal and remains a region that is seasonally flooded and poorly drained.[30] The Feni, Muhuri, Selonia and Ghuriacher rivers flow through the district. Despite perennial floods, agriculture remains an important means of livelihood in the district with the farming of local and high yielding varieties of rice and wheat in addition to marine fishing. In fact, the flooding is both a boon and a bane as it does in its

[30]In Feni, out of a total area of 928.34 square kilometers, 59.29 sq. kms are river and 4.04 sq kms. are forest (CDR, 2002).Valuabletimberandforesttreesarealsogrowninthisregion (M. Ullah, 1996). According to the latest Population Census (2001), Hasanpur, located inside Feni district, consists of 549 households and comprises an area of 720 acres. Approximately 56 percent of the population in this village is literate.

immediate aftermath enrich the soils making agricultural land more suitable for cultivation. For Parshuram upazila as a whole, agriculture remains important to rural livelihoods. Forinstance, households reporting main income sourced from agriculture amounted to 48.32 percent in 2001, still a significant amount although the comparable figure for 1991 was a far higher65 percent (Population Census, 2001). Simultaneously, households reporting earnings from non-farm activities as well as remittances have significantly increased.

The village of Hasanpur is located in the basin of two rivers thus making flash floods a common occurrence. Though lying in close proximity to Feni, an important urban center in the region, Hasanpur remains far more interior and retains an agricultural profile far in excess to that of the other surveyed village as will be discussed in the next chapter on Purbalach.

6.1.1 Historical context of region

The East India Company established its presence in Feni during the beginning of the eighteenth century. The company set up weaving factories near the Feni river and by the latter half of the 18th century had taken over revenue collection and overall administrative management of Noakhali which was then still part of Dacca district (CDR, 2002). This paper by the Center for Development Research further provides anecdotal evidence on the nature of rural conditions in the district collected from local gazettes. Anecdotal evidence presented by the officiating collector of Noakhali in 1888 presented the following categories of households in a rural village in Noakhali: 2 cultivators with average land of 6 acres, 207 cultivators with other sources of income and with average land of 1.98 acres, 76 artisans, 19 laborers and 27 beggars all of whom were landless (CDR,2002). More recently, the Bangladesh District Gazetteers for Noakhali back in 1977 states that the economy of the district was mainly agricultural with very little change in agrarian relations and very little industrial growth. Migration from this region dates back to the period of the British raj with the lure of naval jobs as discussed in later sections.

6.1.2 Nature of landholdings in Feni District

The table below shows that the number of farm holdings in Feni has been rising since the1980 s. Both average owned and operated area for the region has also been consistently on the decline. Nevertheless, as the figures show, by2005 , average operated area was actually higher than owned area reflecting a growing increase in tenancy.

Table 6.1 Changes in Land holdingat ZilaLevel: Feni

Feni	1983	1996	2005
number of farm holdings	115417	123831	135142
average operated area per farm holding (in acres)	1.38	1.16	1.18
average owned area per farm holding (in acres)	1.42	1.17	0.96

Source:AgricultureCensus, 1996,Agriculture Sample Survey, 2005

Table 6.2 goes further to show that the number of farms below one acre is by far the most numerous in comparison to medium sized farm and farms with a size over 7.5 acres. In fact, not only has the number of holdings above 7.5 acres declined, the combined owned and operated area of such farms has also gone down, thus negating the possibility of a greater concentration of owned land in the hands of a few. In Feni, the comparable figures for farm holdings of 2.5 acres and above were 30.8 percent and 20.7 percent for the years 1996 and 2005 respectively. Similarly, for the smaller farm size, the figures were 29.2 percent in 1996 and 47 percent in 2005. A similar story also emerges for operated land where the proportions of total farm area have significantly declined for medium to large farms.

Table 6.2 Operated Area and Owned Area by Farm Size in Feni

			Non-farm holdings			Farm holdings					
		All holdings	**with no operated area**	**with no cultivated area**	**with 0.1 to 0.4 cultivated area**	**.05 to 0.49 acre**	**.50 to .99 acre**	**1.00 to 1.49 acre**	**1.50 to 2.49 acre**	**2.50 to 7.49 acre**	**7.50+ acres**
1996	Number of holdings	178127	393	30766	23137	40602	30086	20894	19638	12045	566
	Percentage	100	0.2	17.3	13	22.8	16.9	11.7	11	6.8	0.3
	Operated area	148572	X	2273	2141	11003	20996	24686	37338	44188	5946
	Owned area	156414	5	6021	5695	19364	22912	24398	33314	38644	6060
2005	Number of holdings	225402	3863	66899	19498	62571	31450	18646	14256	7809	409
	Percentage	100	1.713827	29.679861	8.6503225	27.75974	13.95285	8.272331	6.3247	3.464477	0.181454
	Operated area	170429	0	8351	2251	27884	31513	28861	33667	32547	5355
	Owned area	165181	966	19460	4518	38569	27460	20979	24136	24571	4523

Source:AgriculturalCensus, 1996 and 2005,Bangladesh

6.2 Dynamics of land and livelihoods in Hasanpur

This section will begin by gauging longitudinal changes in landholdings since the period of the last survey. By doing so, it can be ascertained whether a "clinging to the land" phenomenon still persists or whether changes in landholdings can be attributed to either a declining importance of land in rural livelihoods or demographic factors associated with inheritance laws and population pressure. In Bangladesh, inheritance laws subscribe to Islamic law whereby male progenitors receive equalshares; female progenitors receive half of what the sons receive. This will be followed by an analysis of concentration of landholdings within the Hasanpur sample. If a certain section of rural households are gaining land at the expense of others, this may imply that perhaps signal the process of centralisation of capital and the beginnings of capitalist agrarian transition. Finally, this section will conclude with a discussion on the nature of livelihoods within Hasanpur and an empirical comparison of relative wealth across different land size groups.

6.2.1 Longitudinal changes in landholdings

According to the previous survey conducted during the 1980s, the majority of those households surveyed were found to be stable in terms of changes in landholdings. This persistence of the small farmer was observed by both M.Ullah (1996) and Bhaduri, Rahman, and Arn (1986) over the same timeframe and in the same geographical areas within Bangladesh. See Chapter 4 for a longer discussion on these findings. However, on account of the longer timeframe covering two generations of households and the growing importance of nonagricultural means of livelihoods, it would be possible to speculate that the majority of households would in fact be declining households who in turn have lost or sold a significant amount of their cultivable landholdings.

In corroboration with the macro level Census data, a similar picture emerges within the Hasanpur sample. For one, the number of households with medium to large size farms was far lower in the present period in comparison to the

previous period. In fact, only one household was found in the present period to have a landholding size of over 7.5 acres. A proliferation of marginal farms below half an acre were found but it is also important to note that although landlessness was observed in the sample, it was far lower than what was found in Purbalach as we shall see in the next chapter.

The index of variation as calculated using the same method to that of M.Ullah (1996) and Bhaduri, Rahman and Arn (1986) (please see chapter 4 for a thorough discussion on the formulation of the index of variation) was again used for the purposes of determining longitudinal change in land position in both the studied villages. This longitudinal change was not measured for all 61 households in the Hasanpur sample as earlier land position could not be ascertained but for those belonging to the still living and partitioned categories as described in the earlier chapter on methodological concerns. In the case of households from the earlier surveys whose head was still living for current survey, the cultivable land holding from previous recording was used to compare with the current landholding. Only cultivable landholding was used, not homestead landholding although the extent of homestead land owned was part of the data collected in the survey. This was because of the argument that the extent of household homestead landholdings are generally stable as discussed in chapter 4. In the case of partitioned households, the earlier land position was calculated using the summary of land transactions over a period of 15 years as the landholding recorded in previous period was for the household prior to the division of inherited land amongst children and as such, not an accurate indicator of size of landholding of the new household. This meant that the longitudinal change of landholdings for households belonging to the still living category was a span of 25 years, ten years more than the no longer living category.

With regard to partitioned households, a few clarifications need to be made. Firstly, the death of a household head does not necesarrily imply the partitioning of that household as the members of the household may continue to pool incomes and consumption as a joint family. This is determined by a number of factors such as age of inheritors and the

overall composition of the household. Secondly, the partitioning of a household does not necessarily indicate the inheritance of paternal property (M. Ullah, 1996). Such a situation was found in a number of partitioned households within the Purbalach sample as we shall see where the land was still undivided. In the case of partitioned households whose land remained undivided, the original landholding recorded by M. Ullah for the orginal head of household was used as a longitudinal benchmark as no land was inherited at the current point in time.

Table 6.3 displays the longitudinal changes for the two household categories based on four categories of longitudinal change. Any value for the index of variation between 0.9 to 1.10 was recorded as stable; any value higher than 1.1 growing and below .9 as declining. As in the earlier study by M.Ullah, I also defined distressed households aslandless households in the original survey with no change in landholding in my survey; this in no way made presumptions about the relative level of distress of the household. These again were the same lines of demarcation used in M. Ullah's study as discussed in chapter 4. As the table below shows, the vast majority of households belonging to the still living category recorded a declining position in landholdings. This was not the case, however, for the partitioned category with a far greater percentage of stable households whose change in land position was negligible.

Table 6.3 Household Categories according to change in landholding: Hasanpur sample

	Declining	**Growing**	**Stable**	**Distressed**
still living	78.20%	21.70%	0	0
Partitioned	39.20%	3.50%	57.10%	0

Source: Surveys conducted for dissertation; for all subsequent tables from Hasanpur sample,no source will be mentioned.

These changes were measured only for cultivable landholding as the extent of homestead land generally does not fluctuate. Prior criticisms on the index of variation focused on a possible bias towards stability of households that stemmed from the contention that these

households have only their homestead land remaining but are essentially landless (Rahman, 1986). Such an argument could not be made in the case of the present analysis. What could be argued is that there is a discrepancy in the span of time used to measure longitudinal change for the household categories. For instance, the span of longitudinal change for still living households is different to that of the partitioned households given that the partitioned households did not exist during the original survey. However, it is important to note that I collected additional information for partitioned households including the year in which they were partitioned as well as the amount of land they inherited. This additional information, though it does not correct for the discrepancy does provide a fuller account of whether stability is prevalent or not within the category of partitioned households. What the results clearly indicate is that change is slow to come. Households in the still living category, the majority of whom were once stable households are now, over a longer time span, declining households. Such a decline was not visible for the newer, partitioned households, thus indicating that stability or persistence of small farmers is still a rural phenomenon despite widespread landlessness.

6.2.2 Concentration in landholdings

Remembering our discussion in Chapter 4, Atiur Rahman's seminal research on rural differentiation posited that concentration of land in rural areas of Bangladesh is in fact occurring wherein certain households are gaining land at the expense of dispossession amongst other households (1986). Even the studies by M.Ullah (1996) and Bhaduri, Rahman and Arn (1986),which argued that the preponderance of rural households were stable, still maintained that this occurred as a result of increasing polarisation of landholdings. Chatterjee's pithy work comparing differentiation between West Bengal and Bangladesh demonstrated how factors such as the Great Bengal Famine of 1943 increased land transfers in Bangladesh (then, East Bengal)and in turn, increased concentration of landholings (1998). In fact, Chatterjee used data on land transfers between 1930 to 1938 to argue that regions such as

Noakhali (area of present research) amongst other regions of then East Bengal reported far higher land transfers than other regions (ibid, 1998). Whether further concentration is taking place in the present period for Bangladesh isdiscussed in chapter 8. As far as concentration of landholdings in Feni, in 1996, the top two land categories (2.5 to 7.5 and 7.5+ acres) formed about 7 percent of total holdings and 33 percent of operated area (see table 6.2). The bottom category of both landless and households which owned less than 0.5 acres of land formed over half of total holdings but with only 10 percent of operated area and approximately 7 percent of owned area. By 2005, the percent of holdings in the topmost land categories had declined by about half; area operated and owned had also dwindled by 40 percent. On the other hand, holdings belonging to the bottom most land category went up to 67 percent but also witnessed nearly a doubling of both operated and owned area. The survey results displayed a similar picture for Hasanpur as shown in Table 6.4. Although inequality in landholdings was evidenced, the majority of land size categories were experiencing a net decline in landholdings through land sales. The greatest decline was found for the land size category of .05 to .49 acres. Only the medium size land category of 1.5 to 2.49 acres experienced no net change and households with a holding size between half an acre to less than one acre experienced a minimal positive change.

Table 6.4 Net purchase of land according to land size: Hasanpur sample

Land category	# of households	Total area(acres)	Net purchase
0 to .04	7	0.03	-0.17
(%)	(11.475)	(0.07606)	
.05 to .49	32	7.035	-2.46
(%)	(52.459)	(17.835)	
.50 to .99	10	7.19	0.25
(%)	(16.393)	(18.228)	
1 to 1.49	7	8.13	-0.31
(%)	(11.475)	(20.611)	
1.5 to 2.49	2	3.55	0
(%)	(3.279)	(9.000)	
2.5 to 7.5+	3	13.51	-0.4
(%)	(4.918)	(34.250)	

Total	61	39.445

Furthermore, stable households were mostly found amongst the lower range of land size categories, in turn, exhibiting the phenomenon of 'clinging to the land' oft cited in M.Ullah's work on the same surveyed area. As discussed in Chapter 4, M. Ullahs's study claimed that this phenomenon of clinging to the land occurred amongst the lower land size groups who were near landless and wanted to hold on to whatever remained of their existing landholdings. However, even growing households, the few that existed, were also found mostly in the lower land size categories. As Table 6.5 reveals, not a single growing household was found in landholdings above 1.5 acres. Both the tables demonstrate that concentration of landholdings is not occurring wherein the largest agricultural holdings are gaining more land. In fact, it is the smaller size farms that are gaining in land.

Table 6.5: Growing, Declining and Stable Households according to land size (in acres): Hasanpur sample

	0 to .04 (in acres)	**.05 to .49**	**.5 to .99**	**1 to 1.49**	**1.5 to 2.49**	**2.5 to 7.5+**
Growing	0	3	0	2	0	0
Declining	1	19	0	2	0	1
Stable	0	9	11	4	1	1

Note:Numbers will not add up to 61 which was the total sample as new households not part of the original survey were excluded

Remembering the research questions, and in particular, the role of land in financing migration, I investigated the land transaction histories for the sample households over a period of fifteen years including the extent of land sold or purchased as well as the reasons behind those transactions. As far as land transactions, it was presupposed that land sales would far exceed land purchases in consonance with the lack of concentration in rural landholdings, this despite the overall paucity of land transactions amongst rural households. Furthermore, the supposition that land is used as a vehicle for financing migration gave further credence to this. The extent of land transactions for the surveyed

households supports the conclusion that householdsdoclingtoland. Out of the 61 household sample in Hasanpur, close to half never engaged in any land transactions over the past fifteen years as the table below indicates. However, it is also important to note that there may be a bias against reporting land transactions.

Table 6.6 Summary of Land Transactions: Hasanpur sample

	Frequency	Percent
Land purchased	4	6.6
Land sold	27	44.3
None	27	44.3
Both	3	4.9
Total	61	100.0

The land transactions that did occur within the sample were mainly to sell land, not purchase; as such, the total amount of land sales in acres far exceeded the total land purchased partly due to the fact that this study consisted of a study of a sample, not a census. However, this could also be attributed purchases made by households outside of the village or in urban areas. The reasons for sale of land were manifold and included distress and the need to finance migration abroad. However, Table 6.7 shows below that the majority of land sales transpired out of distress followed by the need to land to finance migration abroad. A very small percentage can be attributed to investment in business or the purchase of land elsewhere.

Table 6.7 Reasons for Land Sales: Hasanpur sample

To finance migration (abroad)	**Toward household expenses**	**To invest in business or purchase more land**
12	21	3
19.70%	34.40%	4.90%

Despite the problems with recall periods, the results still strongly indicate that concentration of landholdings is not occurring within the sample through land accrual; rather landholdings are being further fragmented through sale of land. Furthermore, a sizeable proportion of households have never engaged in the land market. Even for the households from the original survey who had migrated, the information that was collected on these households through discussions with current tenants showed that for the majority of cases, the land was not sold but was either being rented out or simply occupied by relatives.

So what emerges in Hasanpur is a picture of inequalities in land ownership but not increasing concentration amongst the top category of landholdings. This is in stark contrast to the findings for Bangladesh up to the 1980s as studies by Atiur Rahman (1986), Jannuzy and Peach (1980), Bhaduri, Rahman and Arn (1986) have maintained for that period. Why concentration was evident up to the 1980s but is not the case in the present period will be briefly hypothesised in chapter 8.

6.2.3 The nexus between landholding size and poverty

The traditional relationship between landholding and poverty has been considered an inverse one in the case of Bangladesh as discussed in Chapter 4. However, a number of studies as well as BBS statistical data demonstrated that during the 1990s, the poorest were those who owned up to half an acre of land and not the landless. Growing evidence on a global scale has sought to contest the claim that the landless are the poorest, particularly with the growth of rural non-farm and labor market opportunities (Rigg, 2006). This purported inverse relationship between landholding and poverty was again put to the test for the Hasanpur sample. The same landholding categories as used by the Agricultural Census in Bangladesh were used which define small landholdings as those below 1.5 acres, medium as those between 1.5 to 2.49 acres and any size above 2.5 acres as large. To measure levels of poverty, the asset index was employed instead of income flow given the measurement errors involved in using income

(see chapter 2 for a discussion on measurement errors related to income and chapter 5 for more on asset index). When comparing land size with mean asset scores, no significant difference was found amongst the various land size categories. That is to say, between medium and large farmers, functionally landless and marginal farmers and all the combinations therein, no significant difference in mean asset scores was found. However, at the same time, a statistically significant difference in mean asset scores was found between the lowest land size category (less than .05 acres) and the top two land categories of 1.5 to 2.49 acres and 2.5 to 7.5+ acres, thus indicating that being landless still remains indicative of poverty in comparison to large farmers, contrary to some of the global empirical studies that suggest landlessness to be phenomenon of economic success, not deprivation (Rigg, 2006, Ravallion, 2008). This, however, does not necessarily mean that the inverse relationship between landholding and poverty holds true in Hasanpur. After all, a statistically significant difference in wealth was not found for all land size categories, but rather only between the top two highest and the lowest land size category. What it does point out is that households with a landholding size above 1.5 acres, not half an acre as many of the studies for Bangladesh have pointed to (see Chapter 4) are better off.

Table 6.8 Mean Asset Scores According to Land Size: Hasanpur sample

Land category	Land size	Number of households	Mean asset index
1	Less than .05 acres	8	.8419*
2	.05 to . 49	32	1.44
3	.50 to .99	10	1.66
4	1.00 to 1.49	7	2.39
5	1.5 to 2.49	1	1.74**
6	2.5 to 7.50+ acres	3	2.03*

Between categories 1 and 5,p =.004;between 1 and 6, p=.010

Given these survey findings, it appears that the possession of land remains an important source for wealth accumulation within the Hasanpur sample. The possession of land as a constraining factor in wealth accumulation, however, is not observable for the sample.

6.2.4 Livelihoods

The rise of the non-farm sector has becomeacommonly accepted fact in Bangladesh. Mahbub Ullah's earlier work on the same villages pointed out the importance of both agricultural and nonagricultural sources of income generating activities. Toufique et al's work, as discussed in chapter 4, reiterated the same but went further to argue that the nature of return from non-farm activity differed with respect to extent of landholding (1996). For instance, households with large landholdings were found to be engaged in high return non-farm activities and vice versa (see chapter 4). As we see here, the majority of households surveyed relied both upon land-based livelihoods primarily in agriculture as well as non-farm work. Thus, the picture drawn by M. Ullah (1996) back in the 1980s about the importance of both agriculture and non-farm work remains consistent with the present findings.

Table 6.9: Profile of Top 20% of Households According to Asset Index,Hasanpur sample

	Landholding (in acres)	**Migrant**	**Nature of economic activities**
1	0.06	Migrant overseas	Construction laborer, non-farm salariedwork
2	0.13	Migrant overseas and domestic migrant	Non-farm business,electrician
3	3.00	No migrant	Currently retired armyofficial
4	1.23	Migrant overseas	Worksfor CocaCola company overseas; mortgages out land
5	0.40	Migrant overseas	Non-farm salarywork
6	2.81	Domestic migrant	Non-farm salary work plus mortgaging out land
7	0.25	No migrant	Non-farm grocery shop plus mortgaging out land
8	0.48	No migrant	Non-farm salary work and mortgaging out land
9	0.90	Migrant overseas	Non-farm salary work, fishing and agriculture
10	0.80	No migrant	Teachers;mortgage out land
11	1.00	Domestic migrant	Non-farm salarywork
12	0.13	Return migrant from overseas	Non-farm business, mortgaging out land

Table 6.10: Profile of Bottom 20% of households according to asset index, Hasanpur sample

	Landholding (inacres)	**Migrant**	**Nature of economic activities**
1	0.12	Domestic migrant	Self-cultivation, daylabor, sharecropping
2	0.11	Migrant overseas and	self-cultivation,construction labor,

		domestic	mortgaging in land
3	.05	No migrant	Daylabor, sharecropping
4	0	Domestic migrant	daylabor, sharecropping
5	0.32	No migrant	Sharecropping from time to time,construction, day labor
6	0.21	No migrant	Self-owned cultivation, sharecropping,day labor
7	0.11	Migrant abroad	self-cultivation
8	0.38	No migrant	Construction,self-cultivation
9	0.50	Domestic migrant	Drives a rented jeep, self-cultivation
10	0	No migrant	Fishing
11	0	No migrant	Drives rickshaw
12	0	No migrant	Construction, sharecropping

The tables above show the livelihood profiles of the top and bottom quintile of the Hasanpur sample based on the asset index. The top quintile households are clearly engaged in more formal non-farm activities and have migrants either overseas or within the country. A third of households in the top quintile had no migrants whatsoever. In the bottom quintile were households mostly engaged in agricultural labor or sharecropping as well as low return non-farm activities particularly in the transport sector. On average, households engaged in low-return non-farm activities possessed smaller cultivable landholdings in comparison to households engaged in high return activities, thus corroborating Toufique's (2003) earlier observations as discussed in chapter 4. Nevertheless, it is important to note that these findings do not take into account quality of land and crop choice.

Agriculture remains an important occupation for many of the surveyed households, albeit to varied extent. Both on and off-farm agricultural activities were observed across the Hasanpur household sample. All of the categories of farmers discussed in A.Rahman's work on peasant differentiation (1986) were found in the present sample although whether these constitute differentiable classes is a question that will be delved into in section 6.4. These included the farmers who produce a surplus on their agricultural land and who either self-cultivate and/or rent out land, self-sufficient farmers and farmers who do not produce enough of an output for present consumption and thus rent in land or engage in sharecropping and /or agricultural labor. However, it was also observed that

growing households who purchased land could not do so through agricultural surplus alone but relied upon non-farm revenue and/or migration remittances. For instance, of the five growing households, three households had migrants overseas and one had a domestic migrant. The remaining growing household financed land purchase through a dowry. Furthermore, as shown inTable 6.5, these growing households did not belong to the large land size category of 2.5 acres and more but came from the small to medium size landholding category. Not a single growing household reported surplus cereal production. Moreover, surplus farmers were found across all land size categories and thus, were not limited to those households with medium or large landholdings. Households with the largest landholdings of 2.5 acres and above reported sources of income in agriculture and local migration. Migrants overseas were not found in these households as discussed later in this chapter.

Some of the higher end non-farm salaried work observed in the sample included teachers, doctors and pharmacists. Most of these households, however, still had agricultural land that was being rented out. Other occupations included mechanics, electricians, carpenters and tailors. Construction work was also reported. The key non-farm businesses reported in Hasanpur included van leasing, construction and mechanical repair work. At the lower end were those who engaged in petty trade that involved small grocery shops and the sale of vegetables and produce in local haats/markets. As earlier noted by Toufique (see chapter 4), low-return non-farm economic activities were found mostly in households with marginal landholdings and served as a support mechanism to cling to the land. This proposition was earlier made by M.Ullah (1996) who argued that the phenomenon of clinging to the land would not be possible without the support of non-farm economic opportunities, however petty. On the other hand, those households engaged in high-return non-farm activities were also those with higher landholdings.

6.3 Nature of Migration

Both Feni and Noakhali districts are known to have a high incidence of migration as discussed in chapter 4. Migration from these regions, in fact, dates as far back as the 18th century during the British period. The southeastern region of Bangladesh where the greater Noakhali lies with its proximity to sea ports allured many migrants abroad through the British navy (Siddiqui, 2003). Another reason for the high incidence of migration from regions such as Noakhali could be due to the recurrence of flooding thus making agriculture a more precarious source of year round employment (IOM, 2003). Even during the Pakistan colonial period, there were many households from Feni district and Hasanpur, in particular, who migrated to then West Pakistan (Interview,M.Ullah, 2010). The latest stream of migration began during the 1970s, the period of oil booms and stagflation that catapulted Middle Eastern countries into rich havens with infrastructural booms and in turn, bastions of cheap labor from the poorer countries in South Asia.Short-term contract migration to the Middle East and Southeast Asia has resulted in more than three million Bangladeshis overseas over the period between 1976 to 2002 (Siddiqui, 2003). The more recent turn of events, however, particularly in the form of escalated competition between sending countries, has led to a decline in the number of overseas migrants from Bangladesh over the past two years as discussed in chapter 4. How this has affected rural differentiation and overall economic outcomes in the survey areas will be discussed later in this chapter.

6.3.1 Demographic characteristics of migrants

Over half of the households in the sample (65 percent) had at least one migrant either within the country or abroad at some point or another. These migrants were then classified based on their status as either new, long-term, repeat and return migrants. The classifications are defined below.

- New migrants: those who were abroad for less than one year and are currently abroad
- Longstanding migrants: migrants who have been abroad and remain so for a period beyond one year

- Repeat migrants: migrants who returned from overseas but have gone back abroad
- Return migrants: Former overseas migrants who have returned from overseas

At the outset, these aforementioned categories were used so as to ensure that all possible trajectories of migration were encapsulated. To have merely taken a snapshot perspective by only focusing on households with current migrants would not have presented a complete picture of migration, particularly as it related to rural differentiation. These particular classifications were used for all migrants, including both overseas and domestic migrants. Households could have members in more than one of the aforementioned categories due to having multiple members who were or are currently migrants. A distinction was made between new and longstanding migrants so as to distinguish between variations in flow and value of remittances as a result of duration of time spent abroad . Although repeat migrants could have been placed in the longstanding migrant category, due to the number of cases found, it was still deemed necessary to have a distinct category for the purpose of qualitative analysis. The return migrant category was also deemed a useful classification, particularly to identify households who at some point in time had a migrant overseas from households who have never had any overseas migrants. The same category of return migrant is referred to in the Bangladesh PRSP and also by key organisations in Bangladesh working on migration issues such as RMMRU. If the return migrant category was not utilised, a small number of migrants would have been omitted from the analysis. Only one migrant household had a return migrant; all others were current migrants. Although two more return migrants were reported, they were part of households that also had current migrants abroad. Thus these households were categorized as having both type of migrants. Return migrants, though not evident in large-scale in the surveyed region, are prominent in other migrant sending regions of Bangladesh.

Table 6.11 indicates that of the 61 household sample, 22 households had migrants overseas currently, reflecting an overall high incidence of current migration. Not a single

female was found among the migrants. All were males with an average age of 32 years. A predominantly young, male migrant population overseas remains a salient characteristic of outgoing émigrés and has been noted in some of the prominent migration studies on Bangladesh as discussed in chapter 4 (Siddiqui, 2003). As far as levels of education, the majority of the migrants in the sample were found to have had only primary schooling. Only seven migrants (out of the 22 migrants currently overseas) were found with higher university degrees. Thus, the arguments of "brain drain" that are associated with migrants qualified with tertiary education were not considered relevant in this analysis (Chiswick, 2000, Bhagwati, 1976). Chapter 3 provides an overview of the costs and benefits of migration.

Table 6.11
Migrant Households: Hasanpur sample

	Frequency	**Percent**
Households with current overseas migrants	22	36.1
Households with no current overseas migrants	1	1.6
Household with domestic migrants	22	36.0
Households with no migrants	16	26.3
Total	61	100

In the case of domestic migrants, their profiles bore many similarities to that of their overseas migrant counterparts. Again, these domestic migrants were predominantly young males with an average ageof 29 years, just three years lower to that of the average age of overseas migrants. Similar again to that of overseas migrants, these domestic migrants, for the most part, only had a few years of schooling. Although female migration to urban centers is now a common phenomenon within Bangladesh, this could not be found in Hasanpur. One explanation for this restricted female mobility could be due to the conservative nature of the Noakhali region in comparison to other regions of Bangladesh. However, there may have also been an underreporting of female migrants in my surveys due to an unwillingness to report female labour outside of the homestead.

6.3.2 Land, Migration and Remittances in Hasanpur sample

Households who had migrants overseas either currently or at some point in time mostly originated in the small to medium land size categories with the majority having current (cultivable) landholdings of less than half an acre of land. Only a single overseas migrant originated from households with landholdings over 1.5 acres. These findings again are consonant with previous studies by IOM that indicate the share of households with migrants at the top extreme of landownership in Bangladesh has actually declined (IOM, 2003). This could be, as the study argues, due to a saturation point of migrants overseas from these households. However, in the Hasanpur sample, if this were the case, more return migrants would have been found for the topmost land categories which was not the case. The three return migrants in fact came from households with less than an acre of land.

Even when accounting for land sales to finance migration which on average was less than 0.15 of an acre, it appears that overseas migrant households, for the most part, do originate from small landholding size categories. Out of the three households with the largest landholdings, only one household had a migrant overseas whose migration was financed not through the sale of land but from profits in agricultural activities. Of the remaining two households, one household head was retired from the army and the other household was fully engaged in self-cultivation and the mortgaging out of agricultural land (Hasanpur survey, 2011). As such, not only are the top most land rich significantly the most well-off in terms of wealth indices, they also for the most part appear to be engaged in profitable agricultural ventures. Similarly, domestic migrants were found across all land size categories but by far, the highest recording was for those households with marginal landholdings of less than half an acre. The same was also found for households with migrants overseas but these were households who had sold some land to finance migration which was not the case for domestic migrant households.

Table 6.12 Migrants with respect to land size: Hasanpur sample

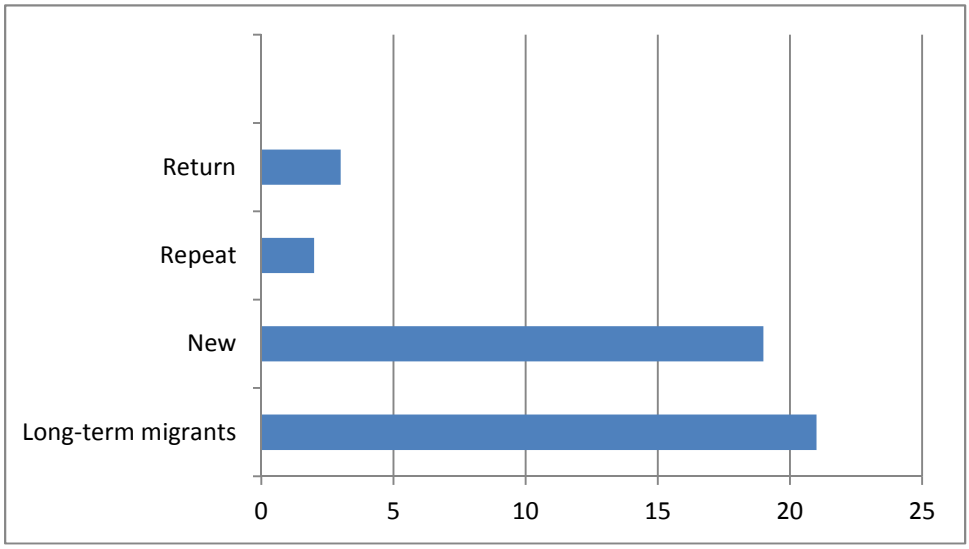
Landsize category (acres)	Number of overseas migrant Households	Number of domestic migrant Households	Total number of households in each landsize category
Less than .05	1	2	8
.05 to .49	14	10	32
.50 to .99	4	4	10
1 to 1.49	3	3	7
1.5 to 2.49	0	1	1
2.5 to 7.5+	1	2	3

The sale of land remained an important tool in financing migration abroad although to a lesser extent to that of Purbalach as we shall see. The fact that land was sold to finance migration goes to show that land ownership in fact does enable higher income in the non-agricultural sector and is consistent with the political economy argument discussed in chapter 3. Local migration to urban centers did not require the sale of land although in many cases, sizeable sums of money were spent to finance migration within the country. A total of twelve households reported selling land to finance migration overseas. Thus, far more stability was found in landholdings with households displaying an urge to‘cling’ to the land and as such, an aversion to engage in land markets. However, in the case of Hasanpur, other forms of finance were also reported which was not the case for Purbalach. Some of these other forms of finance included the sale of jewelry, transport equipment such as motorcycles, loans, and even the sale of agroforestry assets such as trees.

As we saw in chapter 3, the developmental impact of migration is a divisive one globally, divisive over the impact of outmigration on the sending countries of origin and the effect of remittances on investment (Lucas, 2005, Acosta et al, 2007, Bjuggren et al 2010). Proponents bring to light the importance of return migrants as change agents in the spread of knowledge and skills focusing on the migrants themselves as local resources. Critics have argued, however, that no such positive repercussions have been observed. Furthermore, critics argue

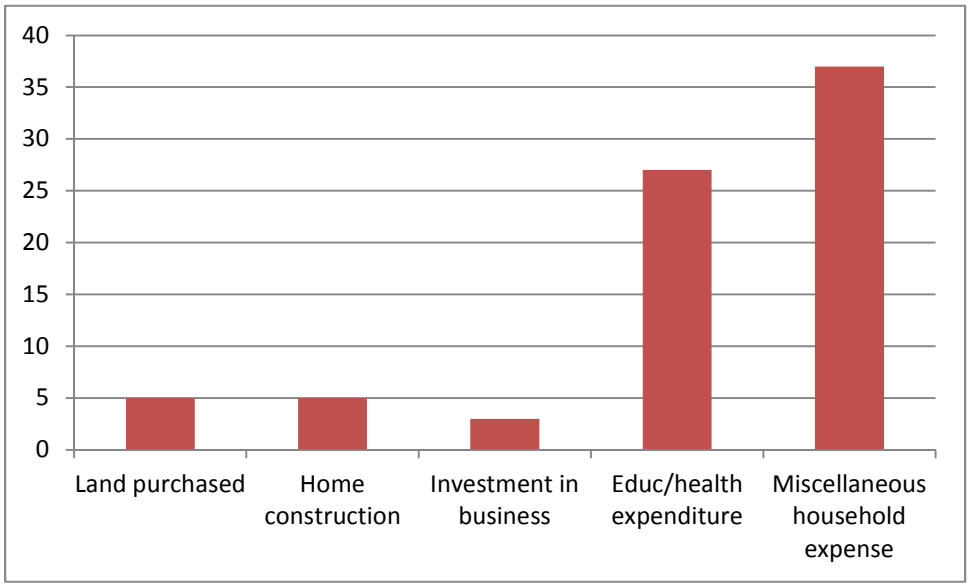
that the remittances sent by migrants overseas do not lead to capital formation but rather fuel a process of conspicuous consumption and even heighten inequalities within sending regions (DeHaas, 2010; Lipton, 1980). With regard to return migrants in the Hasanpur sample, only three households were found with a migrant belonging to this category out of which two of the former migrants were currently engaged in non-farm work and the other return migrant was retired. To test, however, the positive repercussions of return migrants' on local skills bases and knowledge transfer would have required a higher sample of return migrants within the sample which was simply not the case as most of the migrant households had either new or longstanding migrants as the graph below demonstrates. Of the 19 households with new migrants, only 5 households had another longstanding, return or repeat migrant. The remaining 14 households with new migrants were altogether new with no previous history of migration within the household. Such figures do not provide a compelling argument that migration and the ensuing finance capital as well as knowledge of the logistics of migration processes both within the sending and receiving countries is a vehicle for further migration.

Figure 6.1 Frequency of Migrant type: Hasanpur sample



In order to determine the developmental impact of remittances in the surveyed villages, the frequency and use of remittances was assessed. With exception of one migrant household, all of the remaining households with migrants overseas received remittances. This was also the case for domestic migrants although the value of these remittances was far lower as expected. It was observed that the most common use of remittances was towards daily living expenses, construction of a home and educational expense. The least common uses were for investment in business or purchase of agricultural land. Figure 6.2 below indicates that the overwhelming majority of households utilise remittances for household expenditures including expenditures in health and education. Investment in business was not a common use nor was the purchase of agricultural land. Thus, although remittances are unable to finance investments in agriculture or nonagricultural activities, they are developmental in the sense that, for the most part, they do cover important facets of development such as health and education. Even the construction of homes which was reported in a few cases also can be argued to facilitate development by improving welfare in the broader sense.

Figure 6.2 Use of Remittances: Hasanpur sample



6.3.3 Migration and Poverty

Although the link between migration remittances and capital formation is a weak one, migration overseas remains instrumental in ameliorating the welfare of households back in the sending countries as discussed both in chapter 3 in an overview of the literature on migration globally and in chapter 4 focusing specifically on Bangladesh. This relationship was investigated further through the household surveys. Migrant households were classified into current migrants versus those who were migrants at some point. There is also a distinction between migrant laborers and overseas migrants who have higher positions; however to gain accurate information on the actual nature of overseas migrant work from their families was considered problematic. Although occupational information was collected on overseas migration, it was not used to distinguish across these households. It is also important to note that the location of migration overseas may also indicate levels of wealth; for instance, migration to Italy is far more expensive than migration to the Middle East or South Asia (interview withWARBE[31], 2012). However, as the majority of households in the sample were mainly migrants to the Middle East, it was decided that duration of stay would be a better indicator of distinctions in wealth than location of migration. The mean asset index values were compared for migrant households with a current migrant (either locally or abroad), migrant households with migrant overseas at some point, and migrant households with overseas migrant currently. As expected, the asset index values for migrant households with members overseas either currently or at some point (only three households had return migrants as mentioned earlier) were significantly higher than households who never had an overseas migrant at some point. In the case of migrant households with a member(s) currently either working locally or abroad, no statistically significant relationship could be found. Thus, overseas

[31]This is a returnee migrant association based in Bangladesh known as the Welfare Association for the Rights of Bangladesh Emigrants

remittances were found to influence household accumulation and levels of wealth; the same could not be said of remittances from within the country.

Table 6.13: MigrantStatusandWealth as derived from asset index:

Hasanpur sample

	(1) Asset index (mean) (currently overseas)	**(2) (overseas)**	**(3) Migrant (domestic)**
Yes	1.8757 **	1.8461 **	1.3858
No	1.2711	1.2731	1.5474

(1)- p=0; (2)- p=.001; (3)-p=.357

As earlier discussed, the overseas migrants mostly came from households with small landholding size though not the smallest landholdings. When compared to the mean asset scores of the topmost land category (a mean asset score of 2.03 as discussed in section 6.2.4), I expected that the wealth of these small landowners with migrants abroad would be comparable considering that overseas migrant households were better off than households without migrants overseas. However, as the table below reveals, the households belonging to the highest lands ize category were significantly wealthier than households with migrants overseas.

Table 6.14 Comparing Land rich households with Overseas Migrant Households

Household Type	**Number of households**	**Asset Index**
Overseas migrant households	22	1.88 **
Households belonging to topmost land category	3	2.03 **

p<.05

Table 6.15
Wealth categorized by longitudinal change:
Hasanpur sample

Category	**Mean asset score**
Growing	2.2294 **
Declining	1.4603 **
Stable	1.3930 **

p< .05

When households were compared based on the longitudinal change of landholdings, growing households were found to be significantly better off than both declining and stable households. Nonetheless, these growing households, for the most part had either local or overseas migrants or financed the purchase of land through gifts, not through income obtained from agricultural cultivation as discussed earlier. As such, it cannot be argued that growing households are better off due to the accumulation of land; rather these growing households utilized the wealth obtained from elsewhere (migration remittances mostly) to finance the purchase of land. No statistically significant difference was found between declining and stable households however. Households in these same categories in the previous study by M. Ullah (1996) were also found to have distinguishing economic characteristics although asset scores were not the basis for distinguishing economic welfare in the previous research. Thus, although static measures of landholdings showed little bearing on levels of poverty with exception to the two extreme land positions, longitudinal changes in landholdings do provide a useful indicator of the overall welfare of households.

It is worthy to note that growing households came from small size landholdings, not the top land category (see 6.2.2) and as such, lending credence to the comparability of wealth between these households with households with far higher landholdings. Whether these growing households could constitute a class of potentially capitalist farmers was investigated further. Out of the five growing households in Hasanpur, four had migrants either locally (1) or abroad (3) who in turn remitted the money that was used for the purchase of land. Two of these growing households had also sold land over the same period. Cereal sufficiency for each of these households was anywhere from 6 to 12 months. Not a single household was producing a surplus. The one household that did not have a migrant member either locally or abroad did not source the purchase of land through agricultural surplus but through dowry. Thus, agricultural surplus was not a source of finance for further investments in land in any

of the cases nor did it seem likely that further additions to landholdings of these growing households would in any way be indicative of prospective capitalist forms of agriculture. Furthermore, the fact that 40 percent of the growing households had also sold land over the recall period suggests that these growing households may have been declining or stable households at another point in time thus making any association of longitudinal change of landholdings with class status mere conjecture. This is also in line with the studies of intercategory mobility that studies by Van Schendel (1981) and Bertocci (1972) pointed to and as discussed in chapter 4.

In sum, this section explored the wealth status of migrant households and found that households with migrants overseas are significantly better off than other households within the sample. However, when compared to households within the highest land size category, these migrant households were not as well-off. Furthermore, the accumulation of land was found to have bearing on poverty levels. What these findings signify for rural differentiation and conditions of reproduction will be discussed in the remainder of this chapter.

6.4 Rural differentiation in Hasanpur

In chapter 3, we saw that differentiation of the peasantry has been a widely discussed topic in agrarian transition literature dating back to the classical literature of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Kautsky and Chayanov. The raison d'etre of such differentiation, however, has been a dichotomous one with the Leninist school focusing more on class as a source of rural differentiation as opposed to the Chayanovian school focused far more on demographic household reproduction as the differentiating variable. Others such as Shanin have provided a middle ground arguing in turn that neither class nor demography can be ruled out. The theories of peasant differentiation are discussed in detail in chapter 3. More recent work on differentiation has in fact focused merely on classification using terms such as "urban poor" for example and thus,

belying any deeper probing into the ontology of rural economies and its constituent parts (see chapter 2). This section will discuss rural differentiation in the context of the Hasanpur sample and seek to identify the possible differentiating variables that can be considered as distinct conditions of reproduction and adequately explain and account for the range of different households found in the survey.

The lack of any meaningful distinction in terms of wealth rankings across households with differing levels of cereal output (see table 6.16) perhaps indicates that the once differentiable classes of surplus farmers and self-sufficient farmers recorded back in the time of the British regime in Bengal may not be fully relevant in the present day. As earlier mentioned, in M.Ullah'survey (1996), specific categories of households were identified based not only on their size of cultivable landholdings but also levels of cereal sufficiency from both owned and operated land. These levels of cereal sufficiency were defined in the following manner: self-sufficient wherein households could meet their cereal needs for nine to twelve months in a given year, insufficient or generating less than six months of cereal needs and generating surplus over twelve months. However, no significant difference in asset scores could be found amongst these categories as the table below reveals.

Table 6.16: Wealth according to cereal sufficiency: Hasanpur sample

Cereal sufficiency	Mean Asset Index value
Less than 6 months	1.5462
6 to 8 months	1.5023
9 to 12 months	1.6286
Surplus	1.5745

p>.05

Surplus households were not necessarily those who solely belonged to the higher land size categories; similarly, households with an insufficient amount of cereal output for household needs was also found amongst the higher land size categories. Such evidence is in line with Patnaik's earlier discussions on the disconnect between size versus scale of production (1972). In fact, scale of production depends on a wide range of factors including relative factor proportions, technology, institutional arrangements as well as

nature of involvement in economies external to agriculture. The intensification of agriculture and the resulting surplus it generates may not necessarily be adequate in fostering rural differentiation as the survey findings show. Such intensification, in fact, generates a wider range of questions pertaining to agricultural involution and whether such intensified land use only signifies a process of pauperisation without any significant changes in output per head (Geertz, 1963). Thus, the actual retained surplus or the value of marketable surplus may have shed more light on the nature of rural differentiation. Nevertheless, it is also important to note that all of the conditions of production even when exhaustively pooled together may still be inadequate in particular contexts where there is extensive migration and non-farm activity.

A.Rahman's study on rural differentiation, as discussed in chapter 4, demonstrated further that in areas where a greater absorption of Green Revolution technologies took place, differentiation occurred at a greater pace due to the contention that only large farms could take on such capital-intensivetechnologies (1986). Rahman also provided an empirical backing to this claim based on his surveys of two villages in rural Bangladesh. This was (and remains) the reigning position that Green Revolution technologies would lead to greater rural inequalities due to their capital intensive nature which only larger-scale, richer farmers could afford (Byres, 1981). However, Green Revolution technologies have also been shown to vary from capital-intensive to labor-intensive so much so that absorption rates of these technologies may even be higher for smaller farmers (M. Hossain, 2002). Although it is important to acknowledge that data on type of technology employed and extent of marketable surplus was not collected, it is equally important to note that this dissertation sought to assess the extent to which the non-farm sector and particularly migration fuels rural differentiation. This does not negate the importance of the host of conditions of production that do have bearing on differentiation but rather argues for an analysis that places the non-farm sector in an equal footing to that of agriculture.

Dependency ratios were also tabulated for the households based on a ratio of adult members to child and elderly dependents. Again, no strong correlation was found between dependency ratios and asset scores. Additionally, there was no statistically significant difference in wealth found between the still living and partitioned households as Table 6.18 shows, thus negating the Chayanovian assumption of differentiation based on cyclical changes in household demographic characteristics.

Table 6.17 Relationship between Dependency Ratios and Wealth using Pearson Correlation Coefficient: Hasanpur sample

		Dependency ratio	Asset index
	Pearson Correlation	1	-.094
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.473
	Total sample	61	61

Table 6.18 Household Type and Asset Index

Household Type	Asset Index	Number in category
Still Living	1.66	28
Partitioned	1.43	28

p>.05

On the other hand, a significantly distinguishable difference in asset scores was found between households with member(s) as either sharecroppers or agricultural laborers. Households with members engaged in sharecropping or day labor were considerably poorer than other households and did not have any migrants abroad. Thus, a category of households emerges whose conditions of reproduction are distinct and who take part in multiple livelihood strategies of which sharecropping and labour is predominant.

Table 6.19

Laborer households according to wealth:

Hasanpur sample

Households with sharecroppers or agricultural laborers	Mean Asset Score
Yes	1.0571 **
No	1.6298

p=.002

In sum, neither household demographic characteristics, land size (with exception to landless households vis a vis large landowners) or degree of cereal self-sufficiency create the conditions for rural differentiation. Both for Bangladesh and India amongst other regions, land size as an indicator of class status has been contested particularly due to the use of modern agricultural inputs which can make smaller farms more productive than those larger farms that do not make optimal use of Green Revolution technologies (Patnaik, 1986, Rahman, 1986). In fact, Rahman has brought other differentiating variables including the hiring of labour, market participation and the ownership of draught animals into his seminal analysis of peasant differentiation. A host of other differentiating variables are discussed in the literature including marketable surplus, crop choice, and degree of commercialisation (Oya, 2010). As discussed earlier, studies of differentiation of the rural peasantry in Bangladesh dates as far back as the British period with the classifications consisting of landlords and surplus farmers, self-sufficient and mostly self-cultivating farmers and finally sharecroppers/agricultural laborers (Rahman, 1986). In the present sample, a distinct category of sharecroppers and agricultural laborers were found who were markedly the poorest in comparison to other households as Table 6.18 above indicates. However, the other categories were not clearly distinguishable based on their wealth indices.

6.5 Conclusions

This chapter has investigated the overall relationship between land, migration and poverty within the Hasanpur sample. Through district level data and the survey findings, this chapter has indicated that further polarization in land was not evident in either the Feni district as a whole or within the Hasanpur sample, this despite there being acute inequality in landholdings. Net decline in land purchases was

found across most land size categories in the sample with exception to a holding size of .5 to .99 acres for which a small net increase was observed. Despite a lack of further polarisation in landholdings within the sample, a significant difference in wealth was found between households who engaged in either sharecropping or agricultural labor and those who did not. These near landless households whose occupations revolved around sharecropping, agricultural labor and low-end non-agricultural activities did not have any migrants abroad or even locally. This was in sharp contrast to the richer households who held some agricultural land and generally had migrant members abroad. These significant differences between near landless, non-migrant households and landed migrant households clearly could not be justified on exclusively Chayanovian terms as earlier discussed, especially given the overwhelmingly high stability found in landholdings. The demographic analysis that examined dependency ratios also reached the same initial conclusion. However, demographic factors cannot be fully ruled out considering that all of the households belonging to the topmost land category were all 'still living households'. As such, three distinguishable groups do emerge from the analysis: firstly, the poorest landless or near landless who are engaged in sharecropping or day labor and do not have the means to send migrants abroad; secondly, households with small to medium farm holdings who have migrants abroad (some within this category who may even be growing households) and finally, the wealthiest farmers who are primarily engaged in agriculture though they still may be engaged in non-farm activities.

I will now apply the research questions posed in earlier chapters to the case of Hasanpur. Firstly, is migration becoming a distinct condition of reproduction within the Hasanpur sample? It was evident that households with migrants overseas were clearly better off in terms of their asset indices to all other category of households. However, the phenomenon of 'clinging to the land' was still evident despite land being sold to finance migration. Complete landlessness was not prevalent within the sample. Moreover, when comparing growing, declining and stable households, it was found that growing households were significantly better off than declining

or stable households. What this indicates is that the accumulation of land remains important in income trajectories. In the Hasanpur sample, migration abroad has become a new differentiating variable that does demarcate wealthy households from their poorer counterparts. Local migration, on the other hand, perhaps due to the absence of high-wage industrial sector opportunities and lower amount of remittances was not found to be a differentiating variable. However, migration overseas does not appear to be a distinct and sufficient condition of reproduction on its own considering that households still possess land and that the accumulation of land does make households better off. The next research question focused on the overall relationship between land and poverty and more specifically whether landlockedness is a detriment to wealth accumulation.

As the evidence suggests, there is still a distinct difference in wealth between households with landholdings below 0.05 acres to those greater than 1.5 acres. Although an inverse relationship was not seen across all land size categories, there remains a statistically significant difference in wealth between the highest and lowest landholding categories. Such a distinction in wealth in no way can be equated with rural differentiation but it does indicate that the accumulation of landholding above a specific size category is conducive to higher levels of wealth. Furthermore, as the majority of households still maintained landholdings and were thus landlocked, the comparison could not be made between landless and landlocked households for Hasanpur. Please note that I used land size in order to assess the overall 'delinking' of land from livelihoods and as an initial basis for investigating overall concentration of landholdings. It was not done as a basis for assessing rural differentiation as this has been widely contested as discussed earlier.

Households in the topmost land category all belonged to the still living category, thus implying that landholdings have not yet been split up. These households were also mostly declining or stable households, not growing households who through agricultural surplus accumulate more land. As such, they cannot be equated with Lenin's 'rich' farmer as a differentiable class. In

Lenin's differentiation schema, it was the middle farmer that would be usurped through a process of polarisation. In Bangladesh, we find rather a situation where the topmost landholders gradually decline over time; this leaves us with the functionally landless (less than 0.05 acres) who are mostly engaged in sharecropping and day labour and small farmers with finance linkages overseas who both self-cultivate land and mortgage out land (in very few cases also rent in land and sharecrop). These two remaining differentiable groups that were found across both still living and partitioned household categories and thus cannot credit their existence solely due to discrepancies in demography. Nonetheless, the poorest category does not fully rely upon labour markets and in fact relies upon multiple sources of livelihoods, thus making the level of proletarianisation a partial one as observed by Rahman during the 1980s (Rahman, 1986).

It has been argued that rural differentiation based on the classic Leninist categories of 'rich,''middle'and 'poor' may not be entirely relevant in the present day where agriculture alone does not account for rural livelihoods and increasingly so (Shah and Harriss-White, 2011). This does not rule out that factors such as crop choice and rates of adoption of modern technology are important in distinguishing across various classes; however, what it does reflect is the changing nature of rural differentiation and more so, how inextricably linked it has become to external non-farm and industrial sources of employment. Before assessing the full extent of rural differentiation and the role of migration, however, I will now turn to an analysis of the findings for the second village. The next chapter turns to the second surveyed village to examine the same relationships of land, migration and poverty and to uncover whether migration represents a differentiating variable.

CHAPTER 7: DYANAMICS OF LAND, MIGRATION AND RURAL DIFFERENTIATION IN STUDIED VILLAGES: PURBALACH

7.1 Introduction

This chapter informs the findings of the second surveyvillage Purbalach.Purbalach is located in the Raipur upazila in Laxshmipur district. Laxshmipur, like Feni, was once part of the former Noakhali district but was upgraded to a separate district following administrative reorganisation of Noakhali district back in the 1980s. The village lies to the east of Raipur bazaar and remains connected to this market through paved roads. Raipur, in fact, is well-connected to other urban centers such as Dhaka through direct, regular bus services. Although the district headquarters is in Laxshmipur, Raipur in fact is the nerve center of the district with far more commerce and communication linkages to Dhaka. The town of Raipur is home to a number of small textile mills as well as the Raipur Fish Hatchery and Training Centre, one of six main fish hatcheries in Bangladesh, the presence of which has opened up various economic opportunities for households. According to the latest Population Census, about 47 percent of households in Raipur upazila reported earning their main income from agriculture in 2001 compared to 61.58 percent ten years earlier. The non-farm contribution to household earnings has increased particularly in non-farm business and transport and communication. Thus, as far as composition of household earnings and overall changes in this composition over time, discernible differences between the two upazilas where the surveyed villages are located are not evident. However, Raipur upazila is by far the more urbanised of the two districts as we shall see later.

Purbalach lies under the direct jurisdication of the Raipur upazila whose headquarters are in Raipur rather than an union which is the next administrative layer after the upazila. Purbalach village covers an area of 430 acres and comprises 666 households (Population Census, 2001). Approximately 48 percent of the village is literate.

7.1.1 Historical context of region

The former Noakhali district of which Laxshmipur was part was home to many textile factories developed under the aegis of the East India Company during the latter half of the eighteenth century. Some of the ruins of these erstwhile companies can still be found. The vast river coast spanning from Raipur all the way to the mouth of the Feni river made Noakhali district suitable for commerce and trade (M. Ullah, 1996). Eventually competition from Manchester cloth spelled the death knell to the textile base in the region. Many salt manufacturing companies were also formed around the same period in Noakhali but are no longer in existence. As such, agriculture remained the primary occupation *within* the region. The following passage from Hunter's Statistical Account of Bengal for Noakhali district describes the nature of landholdings during that time.

> **Position of the Cultivators:** A farm of one dron, equal to twenty-five acres is considered a large landholding; a farm of one kani, or about one and three-fifth acres, is a very small holding; a modest-sized holding is from thirty to fourty bighas, or from ten to sixteen acres in extent. (Hunter, 1973).

Hunter's voluminous account of the state of Bengal also stated that in Noakhali district, there is no tendency "towards the growth of any distinct class of landless day-laborers" as the majority of households have land of their own to cultivate or land they can rent. These descriptions run in stark contrast to the present scenario as the subsequent sections will delve further into.

Shapan Adnan's annotation of village studies sheds further light on the more recent history of the Noakhali region (Adnan, 1990). For instance, Adnan cites the char village of Ramapur in Noakhali which when inundated, led to out-migration to some of the Northern districts of Bangladesh. However when the alluvial plain (char) resurfaced, some of the migrants had returned to their village in what may be termed a form of cyclical migration. Adnan also cites labour migration by male workers from Noakhali to industrial centers in urban areas within the country. Environmental distress, river erosion

and falling land to man ratios lead to such out-migration. Again citing villages in Noakhali, Adnan refers to the dramatic plummeting of land-man ratios to such an extent that no grazing land existed for farmers to maintain their livestock. A specific study on the Noakhali village of Madhupur provides some evidence of canal irrigation during the late 1970s which lead to widespread productivity gains from cultivation of Green Revolution HYV cultivation. However, other Noakhali villages without such access to modern irrigation also benefited from high productivitiy in agriculture. With regard to cropping patterns in Noakhali, Adnan writes the following:

> It would thus appear that the major impact of modern irrigation on the cropping pattern in Noakhali was not in terms of cropping intensity but rather in terms of the crop-mix, inclusive of shifts in the composition of paddy varieties and seasons of cultivation. (Adnan, 1990, p. 94).

Nevertheless, not all regions within Noakhali benefited equally from HYV technologies. For instance, in some areas with higher degree of salinity such as Ramapur in Noakhali, cropping intensity was not found to be high. In Raipur, on the other hand, of which Purbalach village is part, cropping intensity rose dramatically from the late 1970s (ibid, 1990). Adnan illustrates the positive ramifications of this heightened cropping intensity on the non-agricultural sector in Madhupur village where new sectors emerged in transport, construction, and small-scale industry. In contrast, in Jagatpur village of Jessore district, a failure to implant the new HYV technology in the early 1970s meant that new occupations in the non-farm sector like that of the power-pump operator emerged. Rather, the distress diversification that did occur was limited to petty trade which in turn actually reduced the volume of trade and profit margins (ibid, p. 135). Not only were regions within Noakhali such as Raipur vested with a favorable conditions for agricultural growth and with it the growth of the non-agricultural sector, other factors such as institutional credit, as opposed to usurious moneylending practices, were also expanding in Laxshmipur, thus making the region an unfolding success story.

7.1.2 Nature of landholdings in Laxshmipur district

Just as for Feni district as discussed in the previous chapter, a similar picture emerges for Laxshmipur district in terms of landholding size. Both owned and operated area have been consistently on the decline since the 1980s with the number of farm holdings proliferating over the said period. In fact, the share of medium and large farms in both Feni and Laxshmipur is lower than the national share (CDR, 2002). The table below clearly indicates that over a period spanning more than twenty years, the overarching trend is one of decline.

Table 7.1: Changes in Landholding at Zila level, Laxshmipur

Laxshmipur	1983-84	1996	2005
number of farm holdings	155460	174767	214021
average operated area per farm holding(in acres)	1.52	1.18	1.06
average owned area per farm holding(in acres)	1.44	1.13	0.84

Looking also at Table 7.2, we see that in Laxshmipur, the top land categories constituted 8 percent of holdings in 1996. Again this percentage had decreased by half in 2005 with a concomitant decrease in operated and owned area. For those holdings of less than half an acre, 30 percent of holdings belonged to this category in 1996. By 2005, 36 percent of total holdings belonged to this category. Both operated area and owned area in this category had doubled. What these figures reveal is that although inequality in land ownership persists, further concentration is not occurring as is evidenced by the fact that the changes in operated and owned area are roughly proportionate with changes in the number of holdings within specific land categories. What the figures reveal is that the percentage of households in the bottom land categories is increasing but furthermore, their share of total farm land is also increasing at roughly the same rate. The same holds true for the topmost category of households whose numbers are not only dwindling but their share of land is rapidly dwindling as well.

These current Census data for Laxshmipur district (and Feni district as discussed in the previous chapter) indicate that further concentration of landholdings is in fact no longer an observable phenomenon though it may have been the case during an earlier period as

discussed by A. Rahman (1986). Section 7.2.2 will discuss concentration in landholdings within Purbalach village.

Table 7.2: Operated Area and Owned Area by Farm Size in Laxshmipur

			Non-farm households			**Farm holdings**					
		All holdings	**With no operated area**	**With no cultivated area**	**With.01 to.04 cultivated area**	**.05 to.49 acre**	**.50 to .99 acre**	**1.00 to 1.49 acre**	**1.50 to 2.49 acre**	**2.50 to 7.49 acres**	**7.50 + acres**
1996	Number of holdings	232535	219	38218	19331	70738	39787	22632	22439	16885	2286
	Percentage	100	0.1	16.4	8.3	30.4	17.1	9.7	9.6	7.3	1
	Operated area	209373	X	2423	1351	18181	27434	26301	41676	65847	26160
	Owned area	202265	12	3546	1940	24838	29532	28562	39585	54081	20168
2005	Number of holdings	308354	2154	56833	35347	112695	44496	23949	20620	11444	817
	Percentage	100	0.708	18.43	11.46	36.54	14.43	7.76	6.68	3.71	0.26
	Operated area	234142	0	3909	3262	41795	44338	36677	45922	49246	8993
	Owned area	219311	19	6957	6259	51722	39161	28846	37770	40893	7685

Source: Agricultural Census, 1996 and Agricultural Sample Survey 2005, Zilla Series, Laxshmipur

7.2 Dynamics of land and livelihoods in Purbalach

In Hasanpur village (see chapter 6), it was found that households still exhibit the phenomenon of "clinging to the land" although the presence of declining households could not be negated. Furthermore, although acute inqualities in land were detected, further concentration of landholdings was not found, this notwithstanding the presence of growing households amongst a group of households surprisingly in the small landholding category, not the highest landholding category as expected. Notwithstanding a polarisation in land, a polarisation of incomes within the Hasanpur sample was evident as reflected in the clear demarcation of wealth between households with migrants overseas versus other households such as laborer households for instance. This section will seek to explore whether the same holds true for Purbalach village. In section 7.2.1, the longitudinal changes will be measured in order to assess whether stable households still form the majority as they did during the 1980s. This will be followed by a discussion on concentration of landholdings in section 7.2.2. The section will conclude with a discussion on the relationship between landholding and poverty as it pertains to Purbalach village and a profile of the nature of livelihoods that were found within the Purbalach sample.

7.2.1 Longitudinal changes in landholdings

As was performed for Hasanpur, the longitudinal change in landholdings was also assessed for Purbalach using the previous findings from M. Ullah's surveys. An explanation of the various longitudinal categories based on the index of variation is given in chapter 5. Furthermore, as stability amongst households was observed in the previous surveys and for the current Hasanpur survey in the case of partitioned households, it was expected that the same may be the case for Purbalach. Partition, a term coined by Shanin (1971) and later also used by Van Schendel (1981) refers to the creation of a separate household from a previous one though not necessarily the division of land. The data revealed, however, that the majority of households currenlty surveyed, regardless of whether they were in the still living category or were part of partitioned

hosueholds were in fact declining households. In fact, the second sizable category after declining hosueholds was growing households for the still living category. For partitioned households, the second sizable category was distressed households who were landless and remained in the same position for the present survey.

Table 7.3: Household categories according to land position, Purbalach sample

	Declining	**Growing**	**Stable**	**Distressed**
Still living	75%	20.80%	0	0
No longer living (partitioned)	82%	13%	0	0

Note: For partitioned households, inherited land was used as benchmark; figures do not add up to 100 percent as for a few households in both categories, either initial landholding or current landholding was not available

As partitioned households were not in existence during the series of surveys carried out by M. Ullah during the 1980s, no benchmark existed to compare these particular households over time. The table above relied upon land transactions over the past fifteen years to determine previous land status of these partitioned households. For households in the still living category, the measurement of longitudinal change did not pose a problem as I had access to the data collected from M. Ullah's surveys. As discussed in the previous chapter on Hasanpur, a discrepancy existed in terms of the length of time used to measure longitudinal change within the still living category and that of partitioned households. In order to correct this to some degree, I re-collected data for partitioned households only which focused on the amount of land that was inherited. In Islamic law, paternal property is generally divided into equal shares amongst male inheritors in practice; females also inherit paternal property but generally half of what the males receive. Land inherited, in turn, would provide a useful benchmark to compare longitudinal changes than the summaries of land transactions of these households. The new data indicated that partitioned households belonged predominantly to the declining category, thus strengthening the existing data that reflected the same results. Many of the partitioned households previously found to be "stable" over a fifteen year period were found to be declining households when the inherited landholding was used. However, there were two different cases: (1) a partitioned household that was declining based on

land transactions but found to be a growing household based on inherited land as land had not been divided and (2) a household that was found to be growing based on inherited land but was stable based on land transactions. The fact that the longitudinal status of households so easily changes based on duration partially confirms Van Schendel's intercategory mobility thesis which argued that households' economic status is not stable and is constantly in flux (1981). Van Schendel, in particular, focused on the cumulating of economic advantages and disadvantages including splitting, merger and in-migration, impact of the state and market, the biological life cycle, and chance as some of the factors that lead to such intercategory mobility. Nevertheless, the overwhelming majority of households, regardless of whether they had partitioned or not,were clearly declining households in terms of land.

The implications of such a stark difference in longitudinal change amongst the two villages are far reaching and will be a point for further discussion in the next chapter. In brief, however, Purbalach is in greater proximity to an urban center and with far greater percentage of migrants abroad (as will be discussed in section 7.3) than in Hasanpur. As such, I will argue that the phenomenon of "clinging to the land" that was observed in Hasanpur was not at all found in Purbalach. However, this did not preclude a significant number of households from purchasing land as part of their accumulation strategy (though mainly found in the still living category and not in the next generation of households). As Table 7.4 goes further to illustrate, declining households were found mainly in the lower range of land size categories; the same was also the case for both growing and stable households. Although it was expected that stable households would be mostly found in the lower land size categories, it is a startling finding to observe that the same holds true for growing households in both of the surveyed villages. For the lower land size categories, M.Ullah had noted that as households lose land, they begin to cling to what little they have in their possession (M.Ullah, 1996). However, the fact that the majority of growing households are found in the small land size category goes directly against the claim that

polarisation through concentration of landholdings at the top is occurring. This will be discussed further in the following section.

Table 7.4: Growing, Declining and Stable households according to land size, Purbalach sample

	0 to .04 (in acres)	**.05 to .49**	**.5 to .99**	**1 to 1.49**	**1.5 to 2.49**	**2.5 to 7.5+**
Growing	0	1	2	2	0	1
Declining	10	10	2	3	2	0
Stable	1	2	1	0	0	0

Source: Researcher's survey findings; all subsequent tables from Purbalach sample will not be sourced.

7.2.2 Concentration in landholdings

As discussed in the previous section and the earlier chapter, concentration of landholdings, a phenomenon found during the period of the 1980s was not observed in Hasanpur village nor was it found for Feni district. Not only A. Rahman's study (1986) but Mukherjee's seminal study of six villages in Bogra district of Bangladesh dating even further back and covering the period between 1922 to 1945 pointed towards increasing concentration and subsequent polarisation both in terms of land ownership and incomes (1971). The year 1943 as M. Ullah (1986) notes was the year of the Bengal famine, thus placing the economic process of concentration within a historical context as done by Chatterjee for the same region (1998). Nevertheless, as discussed earlier in this chapter, the Census data for Laxshmipur did not point in the direction of increasing levels of concentration. Such reduced levels of concentration within the district could not be accounted for by the process of former cultivators becoming landless, thus making the area remaining for existing cultivators less concentrated. This explanation was given using Indian data by Patnaik who in turn argued that concentration was occurring despite what the statistics revealed (1987). Landlessness within the Purbalach sample did increaseinthe 1980s when the last survey was undertaken. However, Patnaik's explanation is an adequate one when considering operated land, not owned land. In the cases of both Laxshmipur and Feni districts, both operated and owned land increased for the lower landholding categories with simultaneous decreases

for holdings in the highest land categories. Furthermore, concentration in landholding is not only influenced by processes of landlessness but also processes of land accumulation. For instance, it is true that if former cultivators turned landless, there would appear to be lesser concentration in the lower landholding size categories with fewer households operating or owning a given land area (provided that the land operated by former cultivators was not usurped by households with greater landholdings). However, if there is a simultaneous decrease in operated and owned area in the top most land categories, there is reason to argue that (increased) concentration is in fact not occurring. As such, despite the differences between the two villages in terms of levels of urbanisation and incidence of migration, it is expected that the same lack of concentration will also be evident for Purbalach village.

In the Purbalach sample, an overall decline in landholdings (based on net purchases) was found for all land size categories with exception to the highest land category for which no change was found. The greatest decline in owned area was found for the lowest land size category reflecting a higher degree of landlessness (zero cultivable landholdings) in comparison to Hasanpur where the greatest decline was found for households in the land size category of 0.05 acre to 0.49 acres. As far as concentration, the top three land categories which constitute over ten percent of the population own over 60 percent of the land in the sample. The bottom 50 percent constitute landless households. Despite this staggering inequality, again what is found is a net decline in holdings for all size categories. Although the largest land size category reported no change, it is also important to note that not a single household existed during the resurvey with a holding size of over 5 acres for Purbalach. In comparison, for Hasanpur, one household was found with a landholding above 7.5 acres (see chapter 6). Of the two households in the topmost land cateogory for Purbalach, one was a growing household and the other a declining one, thus not providing any certainty about land accumulation for households with relatively large landholdings. However, in terms of net purchase across all the land size categories, there is ample evidence to support the conclusion that increased concentration amongst a specific land category alongside dispossession of households

within other land size categories is not occurring just as expected given the district level data. Although landlessness is clearly evident within the Purbalach sample, there does not appear to be a simultaneous process of accumulation of landholdings to the extent required for an increase in concentration.

Table 7.5: Net purchase of land according to land size, Purbalach sample

Land size category	# of households	Total owned area	Net purchase
0 to .04	29	0	-6.225
(%)	(49.153)	(0)	
.05 to .49	13	3.25	-1.6375
(%)	(22.034)	(12.755)	
.5 to .99	8	5.23	-1.03
(%)	(13.559)	(20.526)	
1 to 1.49	5	5.75	-1.13
(%)	(8.475)	(22.567)	
1.5 to 2.49	2	4.05	-0.46
(%)	(3.390)	(15.895)	
2.5 to 7.5+	2	7.2	0
(%)	(3.390)	(28.257)	
Total	59	25.48	

The table below shows the frequency of land transactions in the Purbalach sample. As in Hasanpur, land sales far exceed land purchases as expected, particularly given the preponderance of declining households in the sample. However, in Purbalach, the majority of households in the sample have at some point or another engaged in land transactions in comparison to Hasanpur where half of the households had not engaged in any land transactions over the fifteen year recall period. This is consistent with the divergence in results found across the two villages: in Hasanpur, a far greater proportion of stable households; in Purbalach, a preponderance of declining hosueholds.

Table 7.6: Summary of land transactions: Purbalach sample

	Frequency	Percent	Percent
Land sold	36	60.0	60.0
Land purchased	3	5.0	5.0
Both	2	3.3	3.3

None	16	26.7	26.7
No answer	3	5.0	5.0
Total	60	100.0	100.0

The survey results for Purbalach indicate further that land has been sold for manifold reasons including to finance migration, household expenses and to invest in business. This was more evidenced in Purbalach where the degree of landlessness amongst the households was far higher than in Hasanpur. In Hasanpur, far more land sales occurred as a result of distress and to finance daily survival in comparison to Purbalach where land sales signaled far more economic success (The Hasanpur results are shown in table 6.6).

Table 7.7: Reasons for land sales: Purbalach sample

To finance migration abroad	Toward household expenses	To invest in business or purchase more land
20	29	8
33.30%	8.20%	13.30%

7.2.3 The nexus between landholding size and poverty

Whether there remains an inverse relationship between landholding size and poverty was explored in both the surveyed villages using the asset index as a measure of wealth. In Hasanpur, a significant difference in wealth was found between the lowest and the top two highest land size categories (see table 6.8). Although this does not imply an overall inverse relationship as a steady increase in wealth was not observed with an increase in landholding size, it did reveal that in the case of Hasanpur, land remains an important signifier of well-being, particularly at the two extremes in landholding. Whether this remains the case for Purbalach will be tested below.

As Table 7.8 shows, no significant difference in wealth was found between the lowest and the top most land size categories unlike the case for Hasanpur. Given the lack of significance across these landsize groups, landlessness amongst the Purbalach sample

may not necessarily indicate poverty. Thus, Ravallion's obervations on Vietnam and the contention that landlessness may in fact indicate economic well-being, not deprivation may hold true for Purbalach (though not for Hasanpur). In Purbalach, most of the households in the lowest land size category are in fact completely landless as opposed to Hasanpur where they still retained a very marginal landholding. To be more specific, 50 percent of households had no cultivable landholdings in the Purbalach sample in comparison to roughly 10 percent in the Hasanpur sample. Such a staggering difference in rates of landlessness across the two surveyed areas requires further discussion.

Table 7.8 Mean Asset Scores According to Land Size, Purbalach sample

Land category	Land size (in acres)	Number of households	Mean Asset Index
1	Less than .05	29	1.3327
2	.05 to .49	13	1.5537
3	.50 to .99	8	1.7809
4	1.00 to 1.49	5	1.3020
5	1.5 to 2.49	2	1.5720
6	2.5 to 7.5+	2	1.1335

$p > .05$

Clearly the phenomenon of being tied down to the land is far less entrenched in Purbalach reflecting in part a wider range of economic activities within the ambit of trade and commerce as well as migration opportunities, both localized and overseas. However, as in Hasanpur, I will argue that no tendency towards concentration of landholdings or capitalist transition in agriculture appears to have taken place in Purbalach either. But as Tables7.9 and 7.10 indicate (discussed in the next section), landless households form 75 percent of the bottom quartile in the sample but only a third of the top quartile. Thus, any wholesale categorisation of the landless in terms of wealth would be premature.

7.2.4 Livelihoods

A range of various on-farm, off-farm and non-farm economic activities was found for the Purbalach sample. Within agriculture, these included self-cultivation, sharecropping and

the leasing in or leasing out of land. Non-farm activities involved various types of non-farm business and salary work. Three households had members whose occupation was that of "land dalals" involving the buying and selling of land. Interestingly, this occupation was not reported for Hasanpur village and not surprisingly given the relative paucity of land transactions there in comparison to Purbalach. The following tables provide an occupational profile for the top 20 and bottom 20 percent of households.

Table 7.9 Livelihoods Profile of Top 20% of Households According to Asset Index, Purbalach Sample

	Landholding (acres)	**Migrant**	**Economic activities**
1	0.57	No migrant	Mortgages out land, motor parts store
2	0	Migrant abroad	Non-farm salary work
3	0	No migrant	Real estate "dalal" or trader
4	0	No migrant	Village doctor plus has pharmacy
5	0.38	Migrant abroad	Non-farm business, self-cultivation and mortgaging out land
6	0	No migrant	Non-farm business
7	0.10	Migrant abroad	Non-farm business
8	0.23	No migrant	Former bank official currently retired, mortgages out cultivable land
9	0.57	Migrant abroad	Non-farm business, self-cultivation
10	Not reported	No migrant	Land "dalal"
11	0.67	Migrant abroad	Betel nut and soya business
12	0.32	No migrant	Non-farm business, self-cultivation and mortgaging out land

Table 7.10 Livelihoods Profile of Bottom 20% of households according to asset index, Purbalach sample

	Landholding (acres)	**Migrant**	**Economicactivities**
1	0.07	No migrant	self-cultivation
2	0	No migrant	Day laborer
3	1.20	No migrant	Non-farm business, mortgaging out land
4	0	Migrant abroad	Tailoring
5	0	Migrant abroad	Carpenter,non-farm business
6	0	No migrant	Rickshaw,sharecropping
7	0	No migrant	Carpenter
8	0	No migrant	Non-farm vendor
9	0.28	No migrant	self-cultivation,day laborer
10	0	Migrant abroad	Rentingland,construction work
11	0	Migrant abroad	Construction,sharecropping, non-farm business
12	0	Migrant abroad	Rickshaw/van,construction,tailoring

As the above tables indicate, the top quintile of households are engaged in high-return non-farm activities such as regular, salary work or have established businesses. Two of these households were engaged as land and real estate traders. Over half of the households in the top quintile did not even have migrants abroad, reflecting the high return nature of their non-farm activities. Moreover, a third of households in the top quintile were landless, possessing only their homestead land. On the other hand, those households in the bottom quintile were far more engaged in low-return, non-farm activities such as construction and tailoring. In the case of households in this quintile with migrants abroad at some point in time, the migrants had either returned unsuccessfully or were fairly new current migrants who had not begun to remit. The sharp differences in returns to the non-farm sector (as reflected in the composition of households in the top and bottom quintiles) again demonstrates the "new" poverty that Rigg discusses (as mentioned in Chapter 3) within the non-agricultural sector.

As I did not use income as a measure of wealth (see chapter 5), this meant that the relative importance of on-farm, off-farm and non-farm incomes could not be distinguished. However, the link between agriculture and non-agricultural incomes has been well established as early as Kautsky who argued that "the smaller the farm, the greater the pressure to take on secondary employment" (1989). Specific to Bangladesh, Towfique (2003) has discussed a positive relationship between landholding and non-farm income as discussed in the previous chapter and chapter 4. M. Ullah (1986) and Bhaduri et al (1986) (also discussed in chapter 4) argued that there was an inverse relationship between income earned from own land sources and income earned from sources other than own land, which may still include both off-farm income and non-agricultural income. Patnaik (1987) contended that the poorest peasants would in turn diversify through distress into other areas and as such, the proportion of non-agricultural income to total income would be highest for these households in comparison to richer peasants.

None of the aforementioned contentions conflict with one another or the data using asset scores presented above. Naturally, poorer households engaged in low return agricultural

activities would be left with no choice but to diversify into off-farm and non-agricultural employment and this would be reflected in a higher proportion of income derived from such sources. Such a composition of income is still consistent with the fact that the richer, more landed households are engaged in higher-return economic activities that includes both off-farm and non-agricultural activities. Surprisingly, however, the composition of households within the top quartile of households as shown in Table 7.9 is not fully consistent with Toufique's findings as there is not a single household from the higher land categories. However,the average landholding in the top quintile is slightly higher in comparison to those households in the bottom quintile; in Hasanpur, the difference in average landholding between the top and bottom quintiles was larger (see tables 6.9 and 6.10). This could imply a possible trajectory in the importance of land in reaping greater returns in non-farm activities. To elaborate, it could well be that Purbalach, owing to the greater degree to which land transactions have occurred, particularly sales, has reached a point where perhaps the possession of land, once linked to greater returns in non-agriculture is no longer the case in the present. On the other hand, in the Hasanpur sample, it was evident that wealth still hinged on the extent of landownership as well as the accumulation of land in addition to migration overseas.

7.3 Nature of Migration

This section provides an overview on both the demographic characteristics of both domestic and overseas migrants in the Purbalach sample. As discussed in the previous chapter, all categories of migrants from the Hasanpur sample were predominantly young males. There is no reason to expect otherwise from the Purbalach sample. With regard to the relationship between migration and wealth, the survey findings for Hasanpur clearly concluded that overseas migrant households regardless of whether they were current migrants or not are better off than other households including households with domestic migrants. Given the relatively similar levels of migration (although in Purbalach, the incidence of overseas migration is higher), it was expected that the same distinction between overseas migrant households and other households would be observed.

7.3.1 Demographic characteristics of migrants

The Purbalach sample exhibited a higher incidence of migration overseas in comparison to Hasanpur. Half of the sample either had a migrant currently overseas or at some point in time. Only five households were found with domestic migrants only. As was the case for Hasanpur, all of the migrants in Purbalach, both domestic and overseas, were young males. The average ages for domestic and overseas migrants were 29 and 31 respectively.

Table 7.11: Migrant households: Purbalach sample

Migrant status	Frequency	Percent
Household with current overseas migrants	27	45%
Households with overseas migrant (not current)	3	5%
Households with domestic migrants	5	8.3%

7.3.2 Land, migration and remittances in Purbalach sample

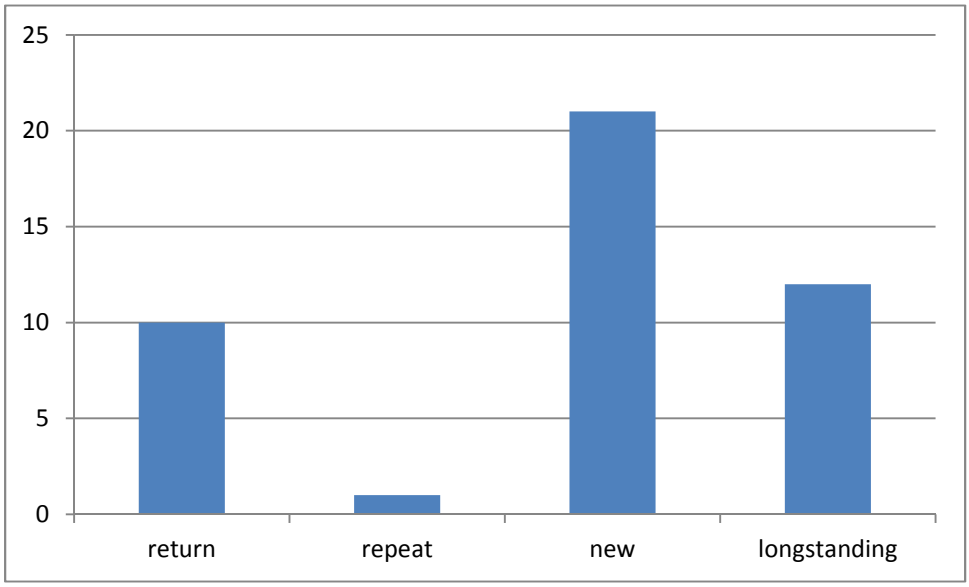
It was expected that households with migrants overseas would come from the small landholding sizes as this was the case for Hasanpur, although this runs contrary to the initial expectation that households with migrants overseas would in fact originate from the top most or middle land categories. As Table 7.12 does indeed confirm, the majority of households with migrants overseas do come from the lowest land size categories, in fact lower than that found for Hasanpur. The same was true for domestic migrants although very few households were found in Purbalach with domestic migrants in comparison to Hasanpur.

Table 7.12: Overseas and Domestic migrants with respect to land size, Purbalach sample

Land size category (acres)	Number of overseas migrants overseas	Number of domestic migrants	Total number of households in each land category
Less than .05	14	2	29
.05 to .49	5	2	13
.50 to .99	6	0	8
1 to 1.49	3	0	5
1.5 to 2.49	1	1	2

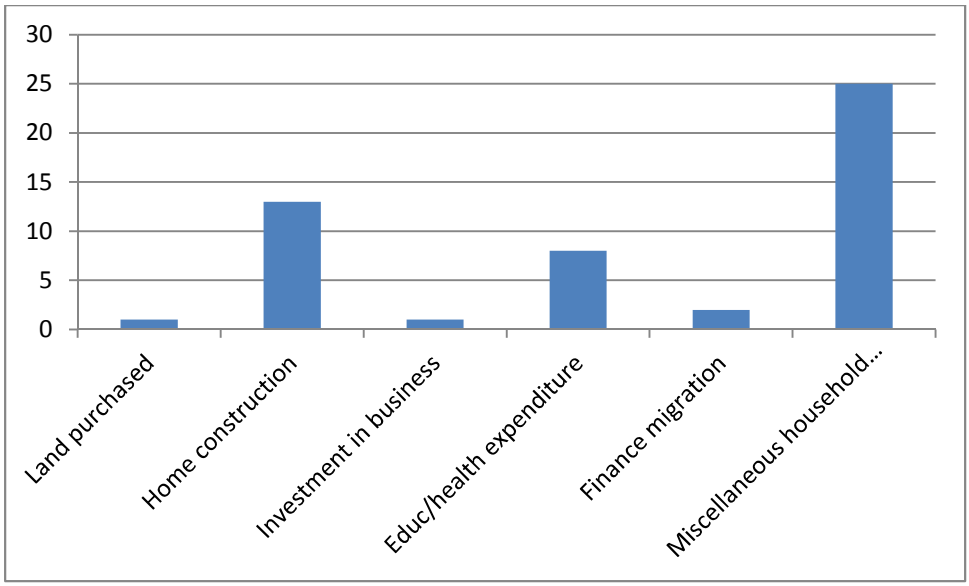
2.5 to 7.5+	1	0	2
Total	30	5	59

Figure 7.1: Frequency of Migrant type, Purbalach sample



As the figure above indicates, the majoriy of households had new migrants (both overseas and domestic) followed by long standing migrants. All of the long standing migrants were interestingly all overseas migrants. Return migrants also formed a sizable category in comparison to Hasanpur. Interestingly, although Hasanpur has a lower incidence of migration overseas, the number of households with longstanding migrants was higher in comparison to Purbalach (see figure 6.1).

Figure 7.2: Use of remittances, Purbalach sample



The utilisation of remittances resembled that of Hasanpur. Daily household expenditures was the most common use across both the surveyed villages; land purchases and investment in business the most uncommon. Of all the return migrants, only one reported engaging in land purchase. Although land purchases were reported to be uncommon amongst the survey households, there still may be a considerable amount of land acquisitions taking place that are not recorded. For instance, there are cases of return migrants with considerable savings who engage in moneylending and who in turn appropriate mortgaged land from defaulters (Interview with WARBE, 2012). The actual extent of such a phenomenon however is difficult to determine considering that such occurrences are generally not disclosed willingly. In Purbalach, unlike Hasanpur, home construction was recorded for more households as was financing migration of other members of the same household. Even in other overseas migrant sending regions within Bangladesh, the tendency towards construction of Italian styled homes or Saudi Arabian styled homes is quite common depending on where the overseas migrants have worked (Interview with WARBE, 2012). Conspicuous consumption and the alteration of lifestyles is evident across all categories of overseas migrant households. The overall commonality in utilisation of remittances across the two surveyed villages is telling: it suggests that migration and the ensuing remittances are not fully injecting capital into agriculture and thus fueling any form of capitalist agrarian transition. Had this been the

case, it would have been a clear departure from the classical forms of landlord-mediated capitalism and peasant induced capitalism. Abreu points towards a similar conclusion for two surveyed villages in Guinea Bissau where migrant remittances are not fully leading to any marked move towards a more capitalist agricultural mode of production (n.d.).

Despite the findings across the surveyed villages, RMMRU offers contesting cases of successful remitters or return migrants who are generating local employment and investing in business and agriculture. The research center has organised two remittance festivals thusfar honoring the most successful overseas migrants who have invested locally with the titles of Shonar Manush and Best Remittance User Family. The following passages are excerpts of two migrants who were given awards in 2011:

> Shonar Manush Md. Ismail Hossain
>
> Mohammad Ismail belongs to a poor family in Bhatkura village, Karotia of Tangail. Due to the need to feed twelve mouths, Ismail had to join a handloom factory at a very early age. While spinning the wheels at the factory, he thought, "I wish I could be an owner of such handloom factory!" Accidentally, Ismail got a chance to migrate to Saudi Arabia for work in 1990. In Saudi Arabia, he learned the Arabic language very quickly and gradually he got a job in a company. After five years of hard work, he came on vacation. He bought three acres of land for his family. He came back for good after another five years. This time he fulfilled his dream of establishing a handloom factory. He set 36 machinees in a 1 acre plot. Every day 150-200 saris are produced in this factory. Around 200 handloom workers are working in his factory. The wholesalers buy sari from him and supply them to different parts of the country. From almost a landless position, his family now owns 5 acres of agricultural lands. He also has pisciculture and animal fattening enterprises. Ismail is not satisfied by only changing his own economic condition. He paid the cost of migration for two of his brothers who went to Malaysia and Saudi Arabia. He has helped his other brother to establish a coaching centre[32]. Ismail Hossain is an extraordinary Shonar Manush of Bangladesh.
>
> Best Remittance User Family

[32]A coaching centre is an educational centre that provides mentoring, coaching and supplementary education services.

> Abdul Mannan of Haidgaon, Chittagong has four other brothers. His father was a farmer. Twenty years ago his eldest brother, Nasiruddin, went to Abu Dhabi. After working as a laborer for a year, he opened a small store with the help of his Kafil (sponsor). Nasiruddin managed to bring two of his brothers by arranging visas against the store. After a while, they also started a restaurant in Abu Dhabi. The small shop has become a super market now. All four brothers are involved in that supermarket. Responsibility of looking after the family fell on Mannan's shoulder. Mannan subsequently bought a salf factory with 40 lacs taka sent by his brothers. The factory produced 6-7 maunds of salt per month which is marketed under the brand name Mum Super Salt. The local dyeing units of garments factories are his major clients. He engages more than 30 full time workers in his business. In addition, about 30-40 workers are engaged in loading and unloading of salt in the boat. Although with agriculture, fisheries, salt business and renting of micro-bus business Mannan was doing reasonably well Mannan was doing reasonably well, he is losing interest in traditional salt making. He is now obsessed for setting up an auto salt factory. He needs about 2 crores (20 million taka) to materialise his dream. Mannan is confident that he will realise his dream of a auto salt factory. (Excerpts taken from RMMRU-Islami Bank Shonar Manush Award and Remittance Festival, 2011).

The aforementioned cases are perhaps exceptional and also hinge in part on extent of industrial development in the sending regions. Both of the cases highlighted above represent either an urbanised region such as Chittagong or a rural region with a fairly large amount of rural industry such as that of Tangail famous for its handlooms and woven cloth. Note also that in both of the cases a time span of roughly twenty years is involved. As no comprehensive database on return migrants exists for Bangladesh, it is difficult to make any generalisations about the relative success of return migrants and their contribution to rural economies. Migrant trajectories are also varied and unstable due to the vagaries of labor markets in the host countries thus making it difficult to outline any trends of capital accumulation or the like. Daily newspapers in Bangladesh regularly highlight overseas migrants who have returned unsuccussfully from countries due to war and conflict or due to fraudulent practices that goad prospective migrants into expending huge amounts of financial resources on nonexistent jobs overseas (Daily Star, 2011, Guardian, 2013). Others who do land overseas jobs may not generate enough savings to invest in sending regions and those that do have

an adequate level of savings may not have the financial know how to make sound investments. Currently, the focus of the government and many buegeoning organisations working on migrant issues in Bangladesh is considered to focus more on safe migration and assisting the actual process of migration through microfinance (Interview with BRAC, 2012). BRAC, a leading NGO in Bangladesh, for instance, has already disbursed up to 180 crore taka[33] in migration finance (Interview with BRAC, 2012). Reintegration of return migrants and provision of investment loans is still a new area yet to be explored (ibid, 2012).

[33] One crore is equivalent to ten million.

Box 7.1: Interview with Mr, Saiful Haque, Return Migrant, Chairman of WARBE

WARBE is a returnee migrant association founded by Mr. Saiful Haque and Mr. Faruque Ahmed. Both the founders are return migrants from Saudi Arabia. Mr. Saiful Haque also spent two years in Singapore in addition to over six years in Saudi Arabia. His position in these countries was a higher officer based position and he would not consider himself to be a migrant laborer per se though he identifies with their cause. Upon his return to Bangladesh, he engaged in numerous kinds of business including a local courier service and a furniture business but eventually went to a higher salaried position in a jute mill.

WARBE sets up local committees and organises trainings and orientations for prospectiv migrants. The key areas where it works includes Sreepur, Gazipur, and Mymensingh amongst others (Noakhali is not in their district coverage as it is considered to be fairly new to overseas migration to Middle East). Mr. Saiful Haque contends that overseas migration has had a positive impact on the sending regions. Bazaars or markets have become more vibrant. Local day labor and rickshaw labor wage rates have gone up.

According to the Chairman of WARBE, many returnee migrants are now vice chairmen of union porishads which are the lowest administrative unit in Bangladesh. However, as no official database exists on return migrants in Bangladesh, there is no way to fully verify these statements. Many of these return migrants have also performed Hajj (Mecca), one of the five pillars of Islam and thus, upon their return, gain a certain degree of respect and even power as a result of this privilege. These same migrants also are reported to invest in local mosques. Mr. Saiful Haque also argues that many of these return migrants become informal moneylenders in their places of origin as a way to seize landholdings. These accounts indicate that return migrants do have a certain degree of power as a result of their savings and the status they have earned from being abroad. However, more evidence would be needed to make any claims as to the changing nature of rural power structures and class as a result of migration.

7.3.3 Migration and poverty

In Hasanpur, there was a clear and significant difference in wealth between households with migrants overseas and other non-migrant households or households with domestic migrants. It was presumed that a similar distinction could be made for Purbalach as well. Again, as for the Hasanpur sample, the duration of migration was used to distinguish across migrant households. Households were categorised into current migrants, overseas at some point in time (to include return migrants) and longstanding overseas

migrants. As the table below reveals (7.13), when households with overseas migrants either currently (1) or at some point in time (2) were compared with all other households, no significant difference in wealth could be found. Only when comparing households with longstanding overseas migrants as opposed to new migrants was a significant difference in wealthfound. The reason for such a distinction may lie in the nature of livelihoods across the two surveyed villages as no difference could be found in the frequency or amount of remittances received. The fact that Purbalach is in greater proximity to an urban center with a far greater diversity of non-farm income generating activities may mean that even households with migrants who recently moved overseas do not differ in wealth with households who may not have migrants overseas but are engaged in high-return non-farm activities locally or domestically. It takes a far longer duration of migration abroad to actually widen the gap between these households with overseas migrants with that of others.

Table 7.13 Asset Indices of Migrant Households, Purbalach sample

	Mean asset (1) index (currently overseas)	**Mean asset index (2) (overseas at some point in time)**	**Mean asset index (3) (long-term overseas)**	**Mean asset index (4) (domestic migrant)**
Yes	1.5160	1.4882	1.8468 **	1.3858
No	1.3976	1.4136	1.3519 **	1.5474
pvalue	.386	.584	.003	.357

Table 7.14 Comparing Land rich households with Overseas Migrant Households, Purbalach

Household Type	**Number of households**	**Asset Index**
Overseas migrant households(longterm)	12	1.84 **
Households belonging to topmost landcategory	2	1.13 **
Overseas migrants (current)	27	1.51
Overseas migrants (return)	10	1.5

p<.05

In Purbalach, there is a statistically significant difference in wealth rankings of longstanding migrant households vis a vis households with landholdings over 2.5 acres. In Hasanpur, a similar statistically significant difference was found but households in the topmost land category in this village were richer. In Purbalach, it is actually the longstanding overseas migrant households who were found to be richer.

7.4 Rural differentiation in Purbalach

Rural economic differentiation is no longer contested and the extant peasant classes has long refuted the claim of rural homogeneity. Thus, the purpose of this section is not to engage in already resolved debates but to determine the nature and causes of such differentiation with reference to a localised context. Patnaik defines differentiation as "the fact that there is no single, homogenous type of holding with respect to the way that production activity is organised which may be taken as a 'representative' type" (Patnaik, 1987, p. 20). Moreover, there are a host of differentiating variables such as ownership of irrigation technology and other farm equipments, quality of land, and crop mix amongst others. Not all of these could be covered as the purpose of the dissertation was to uncover the role that migration plays in rural differentiation in addition to all those variables pertinent to farming. As such, it will be important to determine as part of an ontological exercise to determine who these differentiable groups are, the genesis of these groups, and what factors or processes lead to the formation of these differentiable groups in the surveyed villages. Nonetheless, it is important not to understate the complexity of determining classes as their purest theoretical form is hardly what constitutes reality. Rudra's work for instance emphasises the problems with using labour hiring as an index of class status, particularly given the evidence that points towards the hiring of labour by poor peasants (Rudra and Mukhopadhya, 1976). Patnaik has focused on similar complexities wherein the quantification of class using variables such as number of labour hiring days belies the actual class status of households (Patnaik, 1987). As such, the following sections will broadly investigate some of the possible differentiating variables for the purposes of conceptual clarity on what drives differentiation but not probe

exhaustively in an empiricist manner into each and every possible differentiating variable.

Land size has long been refuted as an indicator of class status and as Table 7.8 showed earlier for the Purbalach sample, no distinction in asset scores could be found for the six land categories used. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, I used land size to examine phenomena such as clinging to the land and overall concentration, not rural differentiation. Even total output produced does not provide an adequate means for distinguishing across class as it does not take into account degrees of intensification of land and labor utilised to generate that output. Patnaik's illustration of a large farm organised along non-capitalist lines with a smaller acreage farm with greater amount of capital stock provides a strong argument against the use of mere output produced as an indicator of class status (Patnaik, 1987). A wider discussion of scale and output, particularly in relation to a purported inverse relationship between landholding and output produced is discussed in chapter 3. As output produced is not an accurate indicator of class status, cereal sufficiency was used instead wherein households responded to how many months out of a year they could sustain themselves based on the output produced. It was expected that households producing a surplus would be better off. As Table 7.15 below shows, however, no distinction in wealth could be found across varying levels of cereal sufficiency in the Purbalach sample just as was the case for Hasanpur. The amount of marketable surplus may have provided a better indicator of class status. Furthermore, other potential differentiating variables such as value of capital stock and nature and extent of tenancy may shed more light on class status than levels of cereal sufficiency.

Table 7.15 Mean asset scores according to cereal sufficiency, Purbalach sample

Cereal sufficiency	Mean asset index value
Less than 6 months	1.4889
6 to 8 months	1.3318
9 to 12 months	1.4690
Surplus	1.4713

Studies on differentiation in Bangladesh are clearly divided between those that see differentiation in class terms (Rahman, 1986) and the neo- Chayanovian works by Van Schendel and Bertocci that see the rise and fall of households over the generations as a matter of pure demography or as a combination of demography and economic factors (Van Schendel, 1982, Bertocci, 1976). Which factors hold true for the Purbalach sample was put to the test. In order to determine possible differentiating factors for the Purbalach sample, dependency ratios for the households were calculated as they were for Hasanpur.

Table 7.16 Relationship between Dependency Ratios and Wealth using Pearson Correlation Coefficient, Purbalach sample

		Dependency ratio	Asset index
	Pearson Correlation	1	.080
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.543
	Number of households		60

Given that there is no statistically significant relationship, the table above implies that dependency ratios and thus demographic life cycles do not influence levels of wealth. I also compared asset scores across households in the still living category with partitioned households and found no significant difference. The importance of partitioning for rural households in Bangladesh has been brought forth by Van Schendel who in his empirical work and resurveys of villages in Comilla, Rangpur and Bogra districts has argued that partitioning is by far the single most important change that has occurred for peasants in Bangladesh (Van Schendel, 1982). The survey findings indicated no clear direction towards betterment or deterioration of well-being across undivided and partitioned households as there was no statistically significant differences between the asset index for these categories, thus negating all possible demographic factors that can explain differences in wealth, at least for the Purbalach sample.

Table 7.17 Household Type and Asset Index, Purbalach sample

Household type	Asset Index	Number of households
Still Living	1.33	27
Partitioned	1.52	22

p>.05

In Hasanpur, as discussed in the previous chapter, although no significant differences in wealth could be found across the aforementioned categories, the three households in the highest land category were found to all belong to the still living category.

The wealth indices of households with sharecroppers and/or laborers was also compared as shown in Table 7.18.

Table 7.18 Laborer households according to wealth, Purbalach sample

Households with sharecroppers or agricultural laborers	Number of households	Mean asset score
Yes	21	1.1551 **
No	39	1.6101 **

p= .001

The sharecropping households were those in the receiving end of sharecropping agreements who generally possessed no agricultural land of their own or a very marginal landholding. Again, as for Hasanpur, a significant difference in wealth was found between these households with that of others in the sample. However, longitudinal change in landholdings bears no significant relationship with wealth for the Purbalach sample, though this was not the case for Hasanpur.

Table 7.19 Wealth categorised by Longitudinal change

Category	Mean asset score
Growing	1.5066
Declining	1.4205
Stable	.9700

p > .05

This may be due to the fact that the majority of declining households in the Purbalach sample had migrants either overseas or abroad. As such, a household accumulating

more land is not necessarily better off than a household losing land to finance migration but receiving remittances in turn. In Hasanpur, owing to the lesser degree of migration overseas and the lesser degree to which land was used to finance migration, longitudinal change still reflected some degree of difference in wealth, though this has also been called to question in the previous chapter given the fluctuations in longitudinal status amongst households based on time frame.

The above tables indicate that the only differentiating variable that can account for differences in wealth across the sample has more to do with the nature of labor employment than household size or changes in accumulation or dispossession of land. However, as discussed earlier in this chapter, a significant difference in wealth was also found for households with a longstanding migrant (either overseas or domestically). Land size clearly showed no bearing on differences in wealth across the Purbalach sample. In Hasanpur, although there was no overall relationship between land possession and wealth, the two extremes of landownership did display a significant difference in wealth. However, the top most land category in Hasanpur was shown to be a category partially influenced by demography as each of the households in this category were those whose primary respondent was still living (from the time of the earlier survey conducted by M. Ullah). In fact, even in the Purbalach sample, all of the households in the top two land categories (1.5 acres and above) belonged to the still living category. The exception was a new household (not previously surveyed by M. Ullah) for which no assessment could be made of still living or partitioned.

Whether the growing households recorded for the Purbalach sample could be labelled as capitalist or potentially capitalist, though not the key aim of my research was explored. The reason behind focusing on growing households was premised on the assumption that capitalist farmers would tend to increase scale over time and thus, accumulate landholdings. Nonetheless, this does not necessarily rule out capitalist farming for the other declining or stable households considering that increase in scale through intensification can be achieved within limited acreage. The top most land

categories in Purbalach (and Hasanpur) could clearly not be considered a capitalist class out of land size alone as they constituted a partially demographic grouping of households that had not been partitioned rather than a class(though this did not preclude members of this landholding category from belonging to a potentially capitalist class). The previous chapter explored the growing households in Hasanpur only to find that these households who were accumulating more land were generally not financing these purchases of land through agricultural surplus but through remittances. Some of these growing households had also sold land and thus, were declining or stable households at another period of time. Although this does not necessarily rule out possible 'capitalist farmer' status, it certainly does not support the proposition either. In Purbalach, the growing households had in fact not engaged in land purchases over the fifteen year recall period. Whatever land was purchased was done long ago beyond fifteen years. Some households also may not have fully reported the land transactions they engaged in. Furthermore, these households did not report surplus cereal sufficiency. The two households that did engage in land purchase over the recall period were still declining households and their land size was still in the small landholding category. Although the identification of the 'capitalist' or 'potentially' capitalist farmer requires far more information on capital stock, extent of hired labor and levels of marketable surplus as Rudra and Patnaik have intensely debated (Patnaik, 1990), the data collected from the survey villages in Purbalach and Hasanpur does not suggest any strong inclination towards capitalist farming based solely on longitudinal changes in landholding and the existence of an overwhelming majority of declining households. This is considering the fact that the net purchase of all of the landsize categories (see table 7.5) was mostly negative or reported no change at all. The earlier evidence for Purbalach and Laxshmipur that clearly shows a lack of concentration is consistent with the absence of any potentially capitalist farmers within the Purbalach sample. However, it is important to note that such an indication is only suggestive as an assessment of the extent of capitalist farming would require a full-fledged examination of conditions of production.

7.5 CONCLUSIONS

To summarise, the Purbalach findings do indicate a significant wealth differential between households with longstanding migrants overseas versus other households and particularly laborer households engaged in sharecropping who were clearly the poorest households within the sample. Though in Hasanpur, the possesion and accumulation of land have bearing on levels of wealth, this is not the case for the Purbalach sample where no clear and distinct demarcation could be made across land size categories or longitudinal change in landholdings. In Purbalach, there was a far higher incidence of landlessness across the sample of which a number of overseas migrant households were constituents. Clinging to the land was no longer the case in this village. Furthermore, it was found that longstanding migrant households were clearly better off in terms of wealth rankings when compared specifically to households with landholdings above 2.5 acres. Thus, migration does appear to form a distinct condition of reproduction in Purbalach forcertain households. These households sell land to finance migration for the most part, some to the extent of becoming landless, in order to channel their resources for migration overseas. As such, the ownership of land is still an enabling factor in entering into high return non-farm activities.

Again, it is important to reiterate that my purpose in seeking to find differentiating variableswasnottogenerateanexhaustiveset of variables that can be used to determine class status. This has already been done by Rahman (1986) and Patnaik (1987). Rahman's work on rural differentiation as discussed in earlier chapters focused on a wide range of differentiating variables including crop mix, ownership of draught animals and so on. Patnaik, in her work on peasant class differentiation in India formulated a labour exploitation index that included net labour days of hired labour, rent on land and net interest payments, all calculated in terms of labour days. This is by far one of the most comprehensive methods generated to quantify and operationalise class status. In her construction of a labour exploitation index, Patnaik identified several classes broadly

distnguished as those who were primarily exploited by others, primarily self-employed and primarily exploiting labour of others (Patnaik, 1987, p. 60). More specifically, they were classified as landlord, and rich peasant all of whom primarily exploited labour of others; middle peasant and small peasant who were primarily self-employed and finally poor peasant (tenant and laborer with land) and landless laborer who were primarily exploited. These categories were demarcated based on the value of the labor exploitation index.

An approximation to class status, as Patnaik's work essentially was, however, did not take into account the role of non-farm sector work or migration. Given that households do tend to retain their agricultural landholding and thus retain their peasant status even if members of their household migrate, such an omission is a large one to make in the face of determining class status. The next chapter will discuss further on how migration enters into the analysis of peasant class differentiation .

Chapter 8: ANALYTICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN ASSESSING LAND, MIGRATION AND RURAL DIFFERENTIATION IN BANGLADESH

8.0 Introduction

This chapter brings together the key findings from the surveys and in so doing, seeks to determine where these fit into the larger frame of analysis at the national level. Firstly, the chapter will begin with the advantages in using longitudinal data that this dissertation has heavily relied upon to inform its findings. This will be followed by a discussion on whether concentration in landholdings, as was found in the surveyed areas, is in fact a phenomenon that is occurring within the wider country context and if so, what are the processes that can be attributed to such a phenomenon. The next section will explore the continued immanence of the "small peasant farmer" in relation to the phenomenon of clinging to the land across the two studied villages. Finally, the chapter will conclude with a discussion on rural ontology as it pertains to the localized context of the two surveyed villages and present a possible analytical framework in understanding changes to such ontological situations.

8.1 Factors leading to change in concentration in landholdings

As discussed in chapters 6 and 7, the district level scenarios of changes in distribution of landholding coupled with the survey level findings suggest that further concentration of landholdings is not occurring despite there being an acute level of inequality within these regions. In the surveyed villages, the results indicated that there was very minimal net increase, if at all, of landholdings across all land size categories. However, the question of whether this lack of further concentration is the case nation-wide is a thorny one to unknot due to the wide discrepancies in data for Bangladesh. Such factors notwithstanding, an incredible deal of information with regard to trends and changes can be discerned with the data that is available and will be investigated further in this section.

Table 8.1 Degree of Inequality in the Distribution of Land-ownership and Per Capita Incomes

	Share (% of land)		Share (% of income)	
Position with respect to land owned per capita income	**1987**	**1995**	**1987-88**	**1994-95**
Bottom 40%	2.1	1.9	18.7	15.7
Middle 40%	29.6	27.9	39.3	35.8
Ninth Decile	21.0	19.6	15.8	16.9
Top 10 %	47.2	50.6	26.2	31.6
Top 5%	30.0	34.6	16.0	19.9
Gini Ratio	0.67	0.69	0.35	0.42

Source: Reproduced from Hossain and Rahman, 1997

Table 8.1 reveals a clear, seemingly undisputable account of increase in concentration of landholdings during the late 1980s and the first half of the 1990s and further corroborates similar findings by Rahman (1986) and Januzzy and Peach (1980). However, discrepancies arise when we consider for instance the work by Khan and Sen (2001) which for the years 1991-92 and 1995-96 uses a Gini ratio of 0.649 for that entire period, thus reflecting no change at all in concentration over the said period. Khan, in a later work has also generated Gini land ratios for the years 2000 and 2005 with the following values respectively: 0.682 and 0.686 (Khan, 2008). Such discrepancies are ample cause for confusion as they represent possible reversal of trends in concentration altogether. If, for instance, we use the data used by Hossain and Rahman as presented in the table above, then there is reason to assume that concentration has actually gone down. However, if we use the earlier data as presented by Khan and Sen, then concentration has actually increased leaving an unsettling question unanswered. However, it is important to note that the later work by Khan and Sen focused on actually revising estimates of inequality based on the official Household Income and Expenditure Surveyes (HIES) that were considered to use inaccurate definitions of income as well as procedures in measuring inequality. The findings of the Khan and Sen paper very lucidly reached the conclusion that the level of inequality is actually far lower than the official estimates although the rate of increase in inequality over the period 1991-1996 was higher. It

appears that if we use the data provided by Khan and Sen, concentration in land ownership has increased but with a more levelling off for the periods between 1991 to 1996 and 2000 to 2005 given the very small increase in concentration over the five year period.

Although the data on national level concentration of land ownership is inconclusive, a few clear, unquestionable trends do come forth. First, there are significant timeframes within which there is very little if not no change in levels of concentration if we take into account the Khan and Sen data as a more accurate source for comparison. Furthermore, rural income inequality as measure by Gini coefficients have consistently been rising from 0.27 in 1991/92 to 0.31 in 1995/96 to 0.36 in 2000 (Khan and Sen, 2001). The rates of change for rural income inequality are far higher when compared to changes in concentration of land ownership, reflecting in turn the growth of non-farm incomes and remittances. As such, for over the same timeframes, we have periods of no change or very minimal change in land concentration within a backdrop of more heightened income inquality. The rate of increase in rural income inequality can easily be accounted for by the rise in non-farm incomes. However, the overall negligible change in concentration in land ownership is one that requires further discussion.

As I have discussed in chapters 6 and 7, in both of the surveyed villages and across all of the landsize categories, net purchase of landholdings was generally negative or nil. Although there were a number of growing households found in both of the surveyed villages, their net purchases were not adequate enough to generate positve changes in landholdings for the specific land size categories to which they belonged. Nevertheless, it is important to note that there may have been a bias against reporting all land transactions. Furthermore, when comparing relative size of farms in the study areas, it was found that many of the large farms once identified in the previous surveys no longer existed. The decline of large farms in Bangladesh, both in terms of number and area, has been discussed by Hossain Zillur Rahman (1998) and M. Khan (2000). Demographic factors such as Islamic inheritance laws partly explain why acute increase in concentration of landholdings is not occurring. However, it does not explain why

households in the highest land categories are not gaining land through purchases acquired from sources either within agriculture or outside of agriculture.

One explanation could be the one provided by Khan (1989) who argued that the rural rich in Bangladesh no longer invest in land but rather in politics as a means of accumulating power, a power that will ensure their existing landholdings are protected. This phenomenon has also been found in certain states of India where the rural rich were found to invest their agricultural surpluses into nonproductive sectors and in "networks of politicians, bureaucrats and criminals" as a way to siphon off state administered development resources (Wilson, 1999, p.318). Harriss reiterates the same and includes investments in education as a long-term strategy to secure employment in the public sector (Harriss, 2004). Bernstein (2003, p.6) also contends that the rural rich have diverse portfolios and investment strategies ranging from moneylending and crop trading to rural transport and business. What these altered investment practices may point towards a diminished importance of land as a signifier of power and status, particularly at the higher end of land size categories, owing to the spread of other more lucrative sources of economic accumulation and in a backdrop of expropriation of landholdings, albeit one that may be sporadic and irregular. Although the nature of investments undertaken by the rural rich was outside the purview of this dissertation, the fact that households belonging to the highest land categories (in Hasanpur village, these households were also the richest) were not growing households further supports the argument that the rural elite have a far wider portfolio of investments beyond the purchase of land.

8.2 Intervillage comparison of 'clinging to the land'

The survey findings indicated that in one of the surveyed villages (Hasanpur), a clinging to the land phenomenon was observed as those households whose longitudinal possession of landholdings was measured were found to still possess landholdings, however minimal. This was not the case for Purbalach where far more landless households (with only homestead land) were found (see chapters 6 and 7). A deeper analysis of this trend however reveals that the phenomenon of clinging to the land largely hinges on the

duration of time used in the analysis, thus presenting an optical illusion of sorts. As discusssed in chapter 6 and 7, when the fifteen year timeframe was used to calculate previous landholdings in order to make a logitudinal comparison, far more stable households were found in both of the surveyed villages (in Hasanpur, far more stable households, than in Purbalach). When the amount of inherited land was used as the initial landholding, implying that the length of comparison varied based on inception of households and could be greater or less than the fifteen years used in the previous analysis, the number of stable households in both of the surveyed villages dwindled.[34] In Purbalach, not a single stable household was found; in Hasanpur, there were still more stable households found but not enough to make the claim that the phenomenon of clinging to the land still persists.

The presence, absence, or timebound presence of such a phenomenon can reveal a great deal about agrarian change, adding, in turn, another unit of analysis to reflect on the overarching positions of "persistence of the small farmer" or "death of the peasantry," "deagrarianisation" or "repeasantisation" and so on. For one, the fact that the fifteen year land transaction summaries used for the surveyed households in both of the surveyed villages point towards stability in landholdings provides a strong argument that persistence of the small farmer is indeed a durable phenomenon and one slow to change, though not immutable. However, the data also very clearly shows that a combination of demographic factors alongside the emergence of non-farm economic opportunities including migration overseas has altered the dynamics of household accumulation strategies, thus reflected in longitudinal changes in landholdings. In Hasanpur, it was evident that households still cling to the land though in Purbalach, landlessness was evident within the sample.

Decline in household landholdings spanning two generations as evidenced in the surveyed villages does not, however, spell the death knell to the small peasant, though studies from an earlier period which pointed in the opposite direction towards an

[34]A full-fledged cohort analysis could not be taken due to time constraints and as such, comparability across all households posed a problem. However, using both the fifteen year time frame alongside inception of households was useful in interpreting the data.

overwhelming majority of stable households concluded in turn the 'persistence' of the small farmer (Bhaduri, Rahman and Arn, 1986). In fact, the majority of sampled households still engaged in agricultural activities to varying degrees, regardless of whether they possessed their own cultivable landholdings and the extent of other sources of economic remuneration. Hossain et al's (2002) countrywide evidence of increase in tenancy in agriculture in Bangladesh further corroborates that the existence of the small 'peasant' cannot be ruled out, despite the pressures that lead to decline of landholdings and eventually, landlessness and notwithstanding the emergence of new non-farm opportunities and in particular, migration.

8.2.1 Landlockedness: boon or bane?

Although the long-term longitudinal trend is one of decline in landholdings in both the surveyed villages, households within the Hasanpur sample were still found to cling to whatever land they did possess as reflected in the dearth of household land transactions and the virtual lack of complete landlessness within the sample. Purbalach, on the other hand, exhibited a far higher rate of landlessness within the sample. As the table below shows, households with marginal landholdings of less than half an acre when compared across both the villages were found to have statistically significant differences in wealth as meaured by the asset index. In Purbalach, the majority of households belonged to the land category of less than .05 acres were landless whereas in Hasanpur, these households held minimal landholdings and were thus, tied to the land. Table 8.2 clearly indicates that households in Hasanpur village that own half an acre of land or less are significantly worse off than their counterparts in Purbalach who are mostly landless.

Table 8.2 Intervillage comparison of asset indices for households with landholdings less than half acre

Household	N	Mean asset index
Purbalach	29	**1.3327
Hasanpur	8	**.9149

p=.043

In the Purbalach sample, the amount of land owned or gained through accumulation had no bearing on levels of wealth. Furthermore, when comparing the wealth indices of overseas migrant households with households in the top most land category, it was found that the former category was better off. On the other hand, in Hasanpur, both the possession of land and the accrual of land did influence levels of wealth. Although there are differences in context that an intervillage comparison may not fully account for, I felt it was important to compare across both the study villages in order to fully examine the landlockedness hypothesis. Such an analysis would be useful considering that in one village, there was a clear case of clinging to the land and in the other a far higher degree of landlessness coupled with migration overseas. The implications of such a divergence across the two villages are far reaching in that they counter a populist logic that the possession of land, however marginal, accrues economic benefits to its owner and in turn, provide further ground to the argument that landlockedness restricts economic mobility and in turn limits levels of household accumulation and wealth. However, it is equally important to note that land ownership does enable higher income in the non-agricultural sector as evidenced by households in both the survey villages who sold land to finance migration. In Purbalach, some of the households had gradually become landless through the sale of land to finance migration whereas in Hasanpur, landlockedness was still common.

It was in this creation of free labor with unrestricted economic mobility, Marx argued would lie the seeds for capitalist development. As Marx states,

> *...Free labourers, in the double sense that neither they themselves form part and parcel of the means of production, as in the case of slaves, bondsmen, &c., nor do the means of production belong to them, as in the case of peasant-proprietors; they are, therefore, free from, unencumbered by, any means of production of their own. With this polarization of the market for commodities, the fundamental conditions of capitalist production are given. (Das Kapita, 1974)*

The survey findings reveal that the emergence of what may constitute the free, landless laboring class is uneven and depends in large part on factors external to agriculture, particularly migration overseas, and not capitalist transition within agriculture. In the Purbalach sample, there were far more landless households, as discussed earlier, though they did not fully subsicribe to the class of proletariat; rather these households were part peasant, part migrant, and involved in a range of non-farm activities. Such changes only go to show that the very nature and dynamics of rural classes is already in flux.

8.3 Towards a rural ontology befitting the present day

This section proposes an ontological schema for the two surveyed villages based on an analysis of conditions of reproduction for the households surveyed. From the outset, I will clarify why I prefer to use the term ontology as opposed to class. Firstly, the logic of class may not fully encapsulate emerging social formations that do not fall neatly into a central contradiction of capital and labour. Although an ontological analysis may appeartobe predictive or speculative, it is important to emphasise that the same claim can be made for any analysis of class, however strong the empirical foundation for such an analysis. Thus, an ontology rooted in an empirical analysis of conditions of reproduction provides a wider lens to understanding processes of rural differentiation that go beyond class but nevertheless does not subsume the importance of class.

Discussions on the nature of rural differentiation date back to the classical literature particularly in relation to its role in fueling capitalist agrarian transition. Lenin broadly identified three classes of peasants: the rich, middle and poor peasant who in turn would be polarised into two classes as the middle peasant joined the ranks of the dispossessed (1899). This poor peasant was generally landless or with a very minimal landholding and thus, relied upon the rich peasant who mostly hired out agricultural labor. The middle peasant was for the most part self-sufficient. Engels also distinguished the small peasant in his schema but his small peasant was one who would occasionally need to sell labour though not as regularly as Lenin's interpretation of the poor peasant turned

proletarian (Rahman, 1986). In fact, as Rahman discusses, Engels "small peasant" resembled more closely Lenin's "middle peasant." A more detailed discussion on differentiation and its role in agrarian transition is provided in chapter 3.

In Bangladesh, it has been argued that rural differentiation has been observed since the British period. Table 8.3 shows that three different classes emerged as a result of the Permanent Settlment of the British period. These classes were broadly the landowners or supervisory farmers, the raiyats who fell in line with Lenin's conception of the middle peasant and finally the sharecroppers and agricultural laborers who were mostly landless. Class III, as Mukherjee noted, was generally dependent on Class I for livelihoods. Class II was considered to have existed prior to the British period; the remaining two classes developed only after the Permanent Settlement of Bengal in 1793. The systematized imposition of rents lead to a massive rise in subinfeudation as a manner of averting the high taxes associated with proprietorship (Rahman, 1989). Such state-led differentiation Bhaduri termed as "differentiation from above" thus bringing to light the importance of historical context and particularly colonialism in understanding the processes of rural differentiation. However, even to make the argument that rural differentiation occurred as a direct result of the colonial British state is too hasty considering the level of differentiation that predated the colonial state and existed during the Mughal period. As Ray and Ray contend, "The impact of colonisation cannot be visualised as movement from no differentiation to considerable differentiation (Ray and Ray, 1975, p. 2854). As they further contend, rich peasants and pre-colonial "rural oligarchies" existed in Bengal during the Mughal period well before the time of the British raj.

Table 8.3 Schema of Rural differentiation in Bangladesh during British period

	Bell (1942)	**R.Mukherjee (1971)**
Class I	Landowners (zamindars, taluqdars, patnidars) and rich farmers (jotdars, gatindars and haolodars)	Landed gentry, v.z. the landholders and supervisory farmers of subinfeudatory landlords and prosperous noncultivating or supervisory farmers
Class II	Self-sufficient peasants (raiyats)	Self-sufficient peasantry; artisans and traders also included in this class

Class III	Sharecroppers (bargadars) and agricultural laborers (krishans)	Remaining occupations: sharecroppers, agricultural laborers, service holders and others

Source: Data for this table taken from A. Rahman (1986)

Other studies have also done the same in attributing class formation to certain historical processes without a careful inspection of whether these classes preexisted. Take for instance a work on agrarian class formation in modern Bengal by S. Mukherji (1986). In this paper, Mukherjee asserts that a new form of "agrarian entrepreneur" came to the fore during the 1940s during the period of the Great Bengal Famine and thereafter (1986, p. 24). These agrarian entrepreneurs were not the traditional moneylenders who solely provided loans but those who also engaged in grain trade from the surplus they generated on their own cultivable lands. They also managed to appropriate the lands of poorer sharecroppers as a consequence of the moneylending and the ensuing debt. Mukherji cites the following passage from the Floud Commission in 1939 describing this new grouping:

> Among other reasons encouraging the growth of sharecropping, we may notice the growth of a new type of landlord – the moneylender-cum-landlord. He has made his money by the exploitation of the cultivator...this new type of landlord is already a trader in grain or jute...They generally have acquired their lands by buying them in auction sales caused by the eviction of tenants who were their own debtors (Mukherji, 1986, p. 25).

There is no reason to question the existence of such a class (or sub-class) but to attribute the quality of "new" presupposes that such a class did not exist prior to the period commencing from the Great Depression. Such an argument, especially if it is a mistaken one, is just as dangerous as a 'rooted in antiquity' argument which denies the very occurrence of historical trends and transitions (Wickham, 2007). As Ray and Ray (1975) have discussed, even grain-dealing cum moneylending jotedars existed during the Mughal period. Whether these jotedars also managed to agglomerate lands or were constrained to do so is not discussed; however these rich jotedars clearly resemble the agrarian entrepreneurs that Mukherjee describes. The processes that Mukherjee is describing may actually be reflecting a process

of concentration of landholdings and consolidation of a class rather than the emergence of a new addendum to a class structure.

What does presently exist in the form of rural class is just as thorny to untangle as when they came into emergence. Patnaik provides a useful classification, or rather, an approximation of class using an index of labour exploitation (1987). This approximation of classes is shown in Table 8.4. The labour exploitation index Patnaik incorporates the following all in terms of a common unit of net surplus labour appropriated: through hiring out labor and through self-employment, leasing out land, and interest payments. Taking into account the empirically puzzling situation of households that both hire in and hire out labour, Patnaik uses net surplus labour days to distinguish between rich peasants and poor peasants who both partly have tenant status: the rich peasant leasing in land to expand operated area would hire labour to a greater extent in comparison to poor peasants who would lease in land and use far more family labour on the operated land. Patnaik goes on to add interest payments as another demarcator of class particularly to bring in those who may not possess land but may still possess financial capital through which they have the means to exploit surplus in the form of loan interest (Patnaik, 1987, p.57). The labour exploitation index goes so far as to even demarcate 'capitalist' peasants from the more 'feudal' peasants based on the nature of rents appropriated as reflected in the value of the index.

Table 8.4 Economic Characteristics According to Class

Class	**Defining Characteristics**	**Remarks**
Landlord	No manual labour in self-employment, large employment of others' labour	Primarily exploiting labour of others
Rich peasant	At least as large an employment of others' labour as self-employment	
Middle peasant	Smaller employment of others' labour than self-employment	Primarily self-employed
Small peasant	Zero employment of others or working for others to smaller extent than self-employment	

Poor peasant (poor tenant and labourer with land)	Working for others to a greater extent than self-employment	Primarily exploited by others
Landless labourer	No self-employment; working entirely for others	

Source: Utsa Patnaik (1987), Peasant Class Differentiation

The pertinence of such a schema proposed by Patnaik is what must be evaluated for the Bangladesh scenario and in particular, the surveyed villages. To take on an exhaustive, empirical categorisation of the surveyed households based on Patnaik's index would be a far too tedious and not entirely useful endeavor considering that in all probability, each of the peasant classes as listed in the above table would be found in broad terms. The lowest strata in the differentiation schema, the sharecropper and landless laborer was already identified as having significantly lower wealth scores in comparison to other households within the surveyed villages (see chapters 6 and 7). Despite Patnaik's comprehensive index, processes such as the emergence of microfinance and non-farm opportunities (migration, in particular) may actually loosen the bonds of exploitation that tie the rich peasants with the poorest. Kabeer discusses exactly this when she writes that the poor are no longer dependent on a few landlords or on credit due to the proliferation of microfinance organisations as well as migration opportunities which have loosened their ties with the local power structure (Kabeer, 2003). Nevertheless, in the case of migrants, they may be inserted into other social power structures though not necessarily the local. However, Adnan's expose on the fierce competition for char lands in Noakhali means that one's link with the local power structure remains an integral part of economic outcomes, particularly those associated with land (2010). However, this local power structure dominated by jotedars may undergo change as overseas migrants return with a view towards acquiring land, power and eventual jotedar status. In light of this, what is more important is to determine whether there are elements of rural expropriation and accumulation by certain groups, classes or strata evident in the surveyed villages and perhaps in a wider scale that are absent in Patnaik's schema.

Oya (2004) provides further methodological tools in the assessment of class using broadly the following two criteria: 1) nature of labour appropriation and 2) degree of

reliance on own means of production as opposed to labour. More, specifically, Oya takes into account Patnaik's labour exploitation index but also brings more elements into the empirical approximation and thus includes levels and investments in education, nature of consumption between luxury durable goods and means of production, investments in land, and degree of capitalisation in the production process. Oya however focuses strictly on the large and mid-scale farms and in so doing, identifies the following categories of farms based on the criteria described above: non-capitalist, semi-capitalist and capitalist. Again, both Patnaik and Oya's methodical approximation of class can be lauded; however, whether these encapsulate the totality and complexity of rural life in every setting, particularly in the manner in which these modes of existence are intertwined with the urban and periurban, can be called into question.

Take for instance, the following commentary provided by Shah and Harriss-White (2011):

> What we are seeing in India is not the classic agrarian transition. Poor Indians with homes in rural areas are no longer simple peasants or rural wage labourers. They are also dependent on migrant wage labour, on working in the rural non-farm economy and on petty commodity production and trade in the capitalist economy. This calls for revisiting the relevance of categories such as "poor peasant", "middle peasant", "rich peasant" by exploring the significance of the links that almost every single rural household seems to have (for its reproduction) with the wider economy beyond the village confines.

Banaji also argues in a similar vein as the passage below illustrates.

> The peasantry, we may insist, is an ensemble of groups who stand in no fixed or stable relation to each other. On the other hand, in agriculture, the buying and selling of labour-power has always assumed forms in which the wage relation is suppressed beneath other modes of appearance(in sharecropping, wages are paid as a share of the crop but the labour contract takes the form of a lease; in attached-labour contracts, labour-mortgaging, etc. landowners treat the advance payment of wages as a loan, which of course is a pure fiction) and labourers take on the appearance of 'small peasants'. Thus the 'peasantry' is both amorphous *and* profoundly divided, and stratification terminology(rich/middle/poor) is the

> least helpful way of trying to make sense of this shifting and ambiguous reality (2008, p.297).

If the classical terminology used to demarcate rural classes no longer encapsulates rural life completely, the need to determine what does indeed fully embody the changes described above gains currency. Studies to approximate rural class in various settings such as those done by Patnaik (1987) and Oya (2004) are in fact a response to this very problem posed. Bernstein has referred, for instance, on the need to theorise on an economic form of agricultural petty commodity production that is situated within 'shifting places of agriculture within the international division of labor of imperialism' (Bernstein, 2003, p.14). This does not make void the rural wage relation that drives the formation of the classic exploited and exploiter classes in general terms; in fact, this wage relation still remains central to the contradiction between capital and labour that defines class - what it does demand, however, is an analysis of how this wage relation, defined beyond the confines of a rural setting, manifests itself within a rural class structure.

Rudra's writings on agrarian class as they pertain to India from as far back as the late 1970s argued that the rich/middle/poor are not valid categories of class in India; rather his contention was that only two classes exist in structural opposition to one another: the rural rich or provincial propertied class as Balagopal (1987) refers to them and the laborers (Rudra, 1978). Rudra went on to argue that there is no validity in distinguishing between tenants who lease in land versus those who lease out land as these categories are not structurally opposed to one another; that is their co-existence is not defined by a contradiction in their relation to capital and labour. In turn, he brought together all of the rural rich who may be part-tenant, part-owner, into a single collective class as there is no analytical advantage, Rudra argued, in distinguishing across these sub-groups. Although Rudra's analysis is a forceful one that does take the concept of class back to its analytical Marxian roots, his lumping of all other social formations as residual is too hasty and far too violent a binary categorisation that may in fact omit important groups who, though not in the present in structural opposition to the

classes he defines to be in existence, may portend changes that underlie the very nature of the contradiction that defines class relations.

The emergence of landless migrant households in Purbalach, for instance, places them in a distinct category separate from that of landless laborer households as this submultiple of landless households is clearly not structurally opposed to rich, landed peasants. Nevertheless, their part-peasant status as tenants requires that they be situated somewhere within the agrarian structure; Rudra's analysis would either place them within the rich peasant class or as residual, neither of which is fully representative of the emergence of this group and its manner of reproduction. In fact, here Althusser's theory of conjunctural existence implying that within a society, multiple contradictions exist at any given time, and not just a singular contradiction between capital and labor is relevant. Nevertheless, in the last instance, Althusser argues, it is this economic contradiction that dominates the passing of one conjunctural existence to another (Bosteels, 2001). Thus, by excluding key social formations that may not reveal themselves as classes centered on a singular contradiction, we run the risk of reducing a rural ontology to one that is univocally determined only Max Weber's line of argument about the importance of not only property but also power and prestige in determining social hierarchies and the nature of stratification also has relevance here (Tumin, 1967). In Bangladesh, the importance of patron-client networks and complex forms of lineage and kinship known as gushti as well as religious and communalities (samaj) play important roles in determining economic outcomes (Lewis and Hossain, 2007).

Weber's account of status groups in particular who command a certain degree of honor or prestige falls in line with the overseas migrant category. It is the overseas migrants who have "flown a plane" or "gone to Hajj" and thus are accorded respect and conferred a certain status (Interview with WARBE, 2012). Such multiplicities are none the more apparent than in Bangladesh where a marked increase in non-farm activities has occurred and particularly, migration, both domestic and overseas. Take for instance the case of overseas migrants in Bangladesh. These overseas migrants were found to come from the small and medium land size category; the top most land categories generally did

not have migrants overseas as chapters 6 and 7 revealed. In a country where land is scarce, land grabbing and the use of political power to maintain one's landholdings is quite common. Shakeeb Khan showed that the rural elite or jotedars in Bangladesh generally invest in politics, not land (1989). Perhaps more appropriate would be to argue that the rural elite need to invest in politics to maintain landholdings and even to grab additional landholdings. Overseas migrants, generally male, may fall victim to such land grabs by the rural elite during their tenure abroad. When they return, their savings may go towards land acquisitions through similar channels, thus leading perhaps to a tension between these two groups, a tension not fully consolidated but impending.

Whether such changes in rural livelihoods can be amended and added to the existing classifications thus far discussed or do we need an altogether different schema that is more reflective of such changes is the question that must be explored. Patnaik does incorporate the non-agricultural component of rural incomes into her analysis; such income represents the income earned from hiring out labour. Patnaik further classified the non-agricultural component into three parts: 1) salaries, pensions and remittances; 2) the sale of human and animal labour power and 3) the sale of inputs and hire of equipment (Patnaik, 1987, p. 149). In turn, Patnaik in her application of this labour exploitation index to a sample in India noted that the poorest peasants accrued non-farm income from the second category while the rich accrued absolutely no income. The middle peasants accrued the most income from the third category. Interestingly, the first category was a negligible one, particularly the salaries component although remittances were important for all classes. Patnaik observed that the proportion of nonagricultural income to total income was highest for the poorest peasants who needed to meet a deficit in consumption needs, and vice versa for the richest peasants (ibid, 1987). Thus, according to Patnaik's analysis, even the addition of nonagricultural incomes into the analysis of class does not in any manner reshuffle the distinct classes divided along the broad lines of levels of labour exploitation in agriculture.

Such a finding is surprising and questionable as to its relevance in other contexts, particularly in the case of regions with high levels of migration as in the surveyed

villages. In fact, in the surveyed villages, many small and medium peasants also held salaried positions or engaged in non-farm businesses, a component of nonagricultural income that was dismissed as negligible in Patnaik's application of the labour exploitation index to Punjab and Haryana, a region historically known for its widespread application of Green Revolution technologies and also considered to be an agricultural surplus region. Further problems arise when we consider the landless laborers who are in turn at the bottom rung of the class structure, having only their labour power to sell. Though this was not the case in Hasanpur village, in Purbalach village (see chapter 7), a number of households, currently landless, sold land to finance migration overseas. These households also have only their labour to sell or maintain small tenancies and yet, are connected to the wider economy through the remittances they receive. Such an inflow of global financial flows has in turn greatly enhanced levels of household consumption. Some of these households, owing to the extent to which they hire out labour would in turn be designated to the bottom categories of class as proposed by Patnaik. Although it is true that these overseas migrant households with lesser landholdings or landless altogether are at the receiving end of an exploitive relationship, they are distinct from other landless households who are sharecroppers or agricultural laborers. For one, when taking into account the historical process that lead to landlessness, these households have joined the ranks of the landless in a distinct manner; they have used the sale of land as an investment in labour, and particularly labour that is linked to global capital. Patnaik's index, thus, provides a static, ahistorical approximation of class that does not account for these processes of migration finance and land transactions.

The fact that land size is no longer an accurate indicator of class status has been widely discussed in the literature (see chapter 3). My own research findings also displayed that there is no clear distinction in terms of wealth rankings across land size categories (with exception to two size categories constituting the highest and lowest land size categories in the case of Hasanpur only). Land sizes were in no way used to signify rural

differentiation; rather they were used to assess Rigg's thesis of 'delinking' of livelihoods and to examine overall movements towards fragmentation or concentration of landholdings. In fact, the utilisation of technology and the relative size of factor proportions (though such data could not be obtained due to time constraints and problems related to recall bias) determine far more, the level of output produced and in turn, the extent of surplus generated, thus making land size an obsolete indicator of class. It may be argued that a similar situation has occurred or is in the process of occurring in specific contexts with respect to levels of labour exploitation, although wholesale generalisations cannot be made. That is to say, in rural areas with high levels of migration overseas, the nexus between levels of labour exploitation and class status has become weaker. Some of these overseas migrant households may have sold land and are either currently landless or own and or/ operate a very marginal landholding such that the hiring in of labour is minimal. Others may still retain larger landholdings although the majority of these migrant households as the survey findings suggest belong to the small and medium category of land size. But what is important to mention here is that their overall economic status is not reflected in the relative exploitation of labour but rather in the nature and duration of migration overseas. In fact, as the average landholding size diminishes further as is the case for Bangladesh, the use of labour exploitation as an index in distinguishing across class will become more muddled and vague.

Another way of approaching the analysis of class is through the conditions of reproduction for each of the classes (Adnan, 1985). Although Adnan discusses such conditions from the standpoint of capitalist transition in agriculture, it is equally important in light of the discussion on class and differentiation. In fact, using the conditions of reproduction as opposed to conditions of production to distinguish across households gives an equal importance to both agricultural and nonagricultural economic activities in processes of differentiation. Solely relying on conditions of production such as extent of hired labor for instance, presupposes that agricultural production remains the only basis for rural differentiation. As discussed in chapters 6 and 7 which present the survey findings, significant differences in wealth (based on asset scores) was found

between households with migrants overseas and all other households. A similar difference in wealth was also found for households who either engaged in sharecropping or day labour. However, the mere difference in wealth cannot fully capture class status. The Marxist conception of class involves both an assessment of ownership of the means of production as well as the exploitive relations that define the manner in which the means of production is appropriated. Broadly when we consider the surveyed villages, four categories of what may or may not wholly constitute 'class' emerge:

Landless sharecroppers, laborers : These households primarily reproduce by selling labour, or engaging in tenancy of small plots owned by richer peasants and engage in petty non-agricultural activities.

Migrant households (overseas migrants): These households reproduce in part from migrant remittances sent from absent household members but also rely upon tenancy and rents from leasing of land; they may be landless or own small to medium landholdings. These households can also fall under Bernstein's concept of classes of labour (2010). These households could also have domestic migrant members.

Small/middle 'peasants': These include the small peasants who mainly engage in self-cultivation using family labour but may also be engaged in a range of non-farm activities and may have some operated land in addition to owned land; these households cannot reproduce solely from agriculture and thus, require a combination of activities straddling farm, off-farm and non-farm. In fact, the term peasant may not be fully appropriate as these households need to engage in nonagricultural activities for their reproduction. Bernstein prefers to use the term "classes of labour" for these households who as he argues have to "pursue their reproduction through insecure, oppressive and typically increasingly scarce wage employment and/or a range of likewise precarious small-scale and 'informal economy' survival activity, including marginal farming (Bernstein, 2010, p. 111). No plausible analytical distinction could be made between small and middle peasants, although empirically,

it could be argued based on levels of labour exploitation that such a distinction clearly exists. Furthermore, no analytical distinction could be made between households from this category who had domestic migrants and those who did not.

Rich 'peasants': These are the households who reproduce primarily through agricultural surplus and may use a combination of family and hired labor They do not necessarily have to be large landowners but can also maintain ownership over other productive resources such as irrigation technologies.

At the outset, the aforementioned categories appear to be descriptive; however, it is important to mention that the ontic precedes the ontological or the descriptive precedes the analytical. Let us look in detail at each of these categories to determine how they relate to one another. Firstly, we have the sharecropper/agricultural laborer class. These households had the lowest asset indices as expected and did not have any migrants overseas. This category thus represents the worst off within the spectrum of labour relations for the sample. Lerche has cogently discussed such an occupational hierarchy of rural labour based on levels of casualisation and thus leading to varying levels of income and power (2010). Using the framework of classes of labour, Lerche has in turn argued that rural labour relations in India vary in range from bonded labour at the very bottom of the hierarchy to more formal, wage-based employment at the top. Such an analysis is useful in that it juxtaposes both the agricultural labourer who stands in structural opposition to the rich peasant in classic Marxist terms as well as other categories of rural labour within a single framework.

Although sharecropping is a form of tenancy, households with either sharecroppers or agricultural laborers were considered identical in terms of class status. Banaji (1990) argues that sharecropping is essentially a wage relation that has been "suppressed." Rudra's explanation is also a compelling one:

> A poor tenant working under the directions of his landlord, with means of production largely supplied or advanced by the landlord, is not very different in his functions or status from a labourer, the relation between such a landlord and such a tenant can be just as capitalistic as that between an employer and a

> labourer can be under Indian conditions ... We shall treat poor tenants as belonging to the class of labourers (Rudra, 1978, p.1001).

Adnan (1985) however argues that the emergence and persistence of sharecroppers as a class is distinct from the emergence of wage workers as part of a capitalist transition in agriculture. These sharecroppers, he argues, are distinct from wage workers in the sense that they retain and own a portion of their product whereas wage workers have no such "burden of ownership" and risk of production outcomes. Hence, the need for capitalist supervision of wage work is considered necessary. Adnan criticises Banaji for "conflating diametrically opposed relations of production" and argues further that as a result, there is no "theoretical space for posing the question of capitalist transformation: it becomes by default, a 'continuous' function of time and cumulative indebtedness (Adnan, 1985, p.60). However, Adnan (1985) maintains that such conflation was the case only during the colonial period of agrarian subinfeudation in Bengal and not in the contemporary period in which sharecroppers and wage workers can co-exist. Although Adnan's arguments are cogent as far as arguing that sharecroppers are not analytically the same as wage workers, in a precapitalist setting, it is also important to recognise that despite their being analytically different categories owing to the modes of production in which they are prevalent, they can and do coexist In fact, within the surveys, it was evidenced that households engaged in sharecropping also tended to be engaged as irregular agricultural wage laborers. Rich and middle peasants were involved in neither of these activities. Thus, although they are analytically distinct and can in no way both be considered capitalist as Rudra argues above, they may still represent the same class. Next, we have the overseas migrant households. These households are clearly not a class on their own but constitute a social formation in the form of a status group or sub-class straddling both small and middle peasants. They cannot be lumped together with all other migrant households considering their significantly wealthier position in comparison to all other households. Furthermore, the majority (though not all) of the growing households in both the surveyed villages had at least one member overseas. This goes to show that these households are seeking to consolidate their position through land accumulation. Furthermore, anecdotal evidence

also suggests that these households are engaging in moneylending and other traditional jotedar activities either to consolidate their middle peasant status or to even move up to jotedar status (Interview with Warbe, 2012). They cannot be ignored as a distinct category and treated as merely middle peasants due to the distinct nature in which they have acquired capital. It is this capital, acquired overseas and not through agricultural surplus, that has given them the means to retain their class status.

The small and middle peasants (or classes of labour) are generally those who have small landholdings, who either engage family labor or hire in labor sporadically, and also require some non-farm work for their social reproduction. Rudra in fact suggested for the case of India that no middle peasants existed but only rich peasants and landless sharecroppers/labourers. His argument was based on the classical Marxist argument that no contradiction or structural opposition existed between these middle peasants and the rich peasants and thus they constituted a single class regardless of how much difference existed with regard to extent of hiring in labour or hiring out of labour. Such an omission however belies the fractious and competitive nature of class assertions, or if not class assertions, at least assertions for command over local resources. For instance, jotedars in their often times violent assertions for land means that they are not necessarily co-existing with middle peasants. In fact, overseas migration from the middle peasant category only makes the jotedar assertions for land easier in their temporary absence. Furthermore, the fact that these overseas migrants are attempting to make similar assertions through remittances means that a certain tension exists between these groups though it may not be a full-fledged structural opposition. The “middle peasant thesis” for instance points out that the middle peasants in India, not the rural rich, have been the most militant due to the changing balance of power in terms of the sheer number of this category and area of land controlled (Lennenberg, 1988; Charlesworth, 1980). On the other hand, Bardhan has argued that these middle peasants have generally allied with the rich farmers (1979). In Bangladesh, this question of middle peasant militancy has little relevance given the dominance of multi-class, factional, patron-client alliances as discussed by M. Khan (2004). This, however, does not negate the existence of a middle

peasant class who are distinct from the rich jotedar class in terms of their temporary accumulation strategies such as migration overseas.

The rich peasants, or jotedars, constitute the final group. Many of these jotedars are considered to wield the most political influence both locally and nationally and, as S. Adnan has discussed, are involved in a violent struggle for land in many of the char areas in Noakhali. The survey results indicate that they do not have any migrants overseas nor did they ever at any point take on such a strategy. As such, they are different from those in the small to middle peasant category who have turned to other sources of income and savings generation. Although the dissertation focused primarily on land, a body of literature exists on how the rural elite also dominate over other resources such as irrigation technologies like shallow tubewells (STWs) and deep tubewells (DTWs). These 'waterlords' in turn market the services to smaller farmers who do not have the financial means or the influence within the rural power structure to own such technologies (Chowdhury and Uddin, n.d.). In fact, counter initiatives to transfer these resources to landless groups and women have been far too small-scale to be considered effective (Sultana and Crow, 2000). Lewis and Hossain (2007) have pointed out how the rural power structure in Bangladesh is not static and has undergone changes due in particular to Green Revolution technologies like irrigation which in turn has reduced the importance of land ownership as the sole criterion of influence and power. They have also argued that these rural elite are in turn exploring new avenues such as politics and also the establishment of NGOs. Thus, these rich peasants are far more indicative of Bernstein's 'classes of capital' who own not only land but also other key productive resources important to agriculture.

As Bernstein (2003) maintains, "The impulses to economic change generated by globalisation, and how they are mediated by the diverse class structures and dynamics of the imperialist periphery, can consolidate certain spaces for agricultural petty production, and create new spaces as well as destroy existing ones" (p.14). This entry into global labor markets as evidenced in Bangladesh has undoubtedly affected a class structure once solely defined by agricultural surplus and the nature in which it was generated to one that

is far more dependent on the movement of free labour. Such processes go to show that changes in rural class structures can occur bypassing any form of capitalist agrarian transition, an important point raised by Kautsky and reiterated by Bernstein. However, these changes can be largely uneven across regions and even reversible. Considering the fluctuations in demand for migrant labor from countries, the sub-class of migrant households is clearly an inchoate one. The same can also be said of the rich peasant category as well. In both of the surveyed villages, the households who constitute the rich peasant category, that is those households who are primarily engaged in agriculture and do not have migrants overseas all belonged to the still living category (see chapters 6 and 7). This explains the jotedars' violent assertions for more land in Noakhali. Whether these households, after the division of land through the generations would still exist as a class in the future is questionable. What this points to is a fluidity of class structures, influenced not only by the dynamics of agriculture but also globalisation and demographics. The unevenness of such changes driven by local and regional context has been pointed out by Shah and Harriss-White (2011). Bernstein (2003, p.14) has also argued that such processes can also be reversible and in some instances, repeasantisation can occur just as much as the oft-mentioned process of deagrarianisation. Thus, to make wholesale generalisations such as depeasantisation may be premature.

Chapter 9: Conclusions

9.1 Summary of chapters

The preceding chapters have focused on the nexus between land, migration and rural differentiation as it pertains to two selected villages in rural Bangladesh. Chapter 1 provided an overall framework and key research questions to be explored in depth. These included the rationale for an overall ontological analysis of the rural peasantry and the need to assess where migration fits in to the larger picture. Chapter 2 provided a background of what constitutes poverty and the need to view poverty from a relational perspective centered on conditions of reproduction. Chapter 3 provided further analysis of land as it relates to poverty based on secondary literature and an analysis of the new wave of global thinking on processes such as the delinking of land with livelihoods and deagrarianisation. In this chapter I discussed the importance of non-farm work and migration and the neopopulist logic of promoting smallholder agriculture. The next chapter provided an overview on land, poverty and rural differentiation as it pertains to the Bangladesh context.

Chapter 5 laid out the methodology chapter and a profile of the surveyed villages. The key distinguishing element of the methodology as discussed in this chapter was the longitudinal resurvey which allowed for a timespan of thirty years to be covered in the analysis of changes in landholdings. These longitudinal changes in landholding in turn would be used to determine levels of persistence of the peasantry, a question often debated in the agrarian transition literature. Later in section 9.3, I discuss the strengths and weaknesses of using a resurvey. Chapter 5 further introduced the asset index methodology as an alternative to standard income measures of poverty as a more appealing and practical manner of measuring relative levels of deprivation. Chapters 6 and 7 reflected the survey findings for Hasanpur and Purbalach villages respectively. Finally, chapter 8 provided an overall analysis of the findings, in turn pointing to the complexity of rural life making any ontological analysis a difficult one.

9.2 Key research findings

One of the key questions this dissertation sought to uncover was the relationship between land and poverty, particularly within the context of migration. This question was important considering the bulk of the global literature that focused on livelihood diversification (Bryceson, 2002; Ellis, 2000; Barrett et al, 2001) and a possible delinking of land from livelihoods (Rigg, 2006) as discussed in chapter 3. In Bangladesh, a host of studies have also signaled that rural livelihood diversification and in particular, migration, is increasingly becoming the norm (Toufique and Turton, 2003; Siddiqui, 2003). As such, it was important to investigate what such diverse livelihood strategies imply for the relationship between land and poverty. What the national level data for Bangladesh indicates (discussed in chapter 4) is that although there remains an inverse relationship between ownership of landholdings and incidence of poverty, there is now a far higher incidence of non-poor households across the lower land size categories. The sample findings for Purbalach also indicated that landlessness cannot unequivocally be associated with poverty considering that many overseas migrant households had become landless over time. As the findings indicated in Chapters 6 and 7, land was sold to finance migration overseas, more so in Purbalach than in Hasanpur and this coincided with a higher incidence of landlessness within the sample for Purbalach. However, in Hasanpur, land possession still remained a useful indicator of levels of wealth. What this goes to show is that the nexus between land and poverty cannot be generalised to reflect an inverse relationship but depends on the specific context of migration and the nature of the non-farm sector. As such, the use of overarching statements that highlight the 'delinking of land from livelihoods' must be used in caution as it clearly depends on local context.

I also used the index of variation as employed in the original survey by Mahbub Ullah to determine the relative change in landholdings within the Hasanpur and Purbalach samples. What I found is that declining households formed the majority in both the study villages though more so in Purbalach. In Hasanpur, stability in landholdings, though not prevalent as was the case in the original survey, was still observed. This goes to show

that the 'persistence' of the small farmer is an enduring phenomenon. In Hasanpur, such persistence was manifested through lower levels of landlessness and a general trend of 'clinging to the land.' Nevertheless, the clear difference across the villages in terms of persistence goes to show that wholesale essentialist statements cannot be made about the peasantry. In order to comprehensively analyse the role of land in determining levels of wealth, I also examined whether landlockedness is detrimental to overall economic outcomes. In Hasanpur, this appeared not to be the case although there was a very low incidence of landlessness within the sample to make the comparison. In Purbalach, however, it was found that the overseas migrant households, some of whom were landless, were better off than households belonging to the highest land size category of 2.5 acres and beyond. I also did an intervillage comparison so as to fully exhaust all possibilities of comparison. In so doing, I found that households belonging to the lowest land size category in Purbalach were better off than those in Hasanpur belonging to the same category. In Purbalach, this category constituted mainly the landless while in Hasanpur, these were the households who still possessed some land. Such findings suggest that landlockedness can potentially restrict the highest economic outcomes, particularly in contexts where migration overseas is a prevalent income generating strategy as it was for Purbalach. In Hasanpur, on the other hand, the accumulation of land still coincides with higher levels of wealth.

Another key component of the dissertation was an analysis of conditions of reproduction. As I discussed in chapter 2, I focused on conditions of reproduction in order to examine rural differentiation. In order to fully assess conditions of reproduction, I collected data on sources of income, remittance use and nature of land transactions. Again, and as I have mentioned throughout the dissertation, this was not to negate the importance of conditions of production in understanding the structural relationships and contradictions within the study area but to make way for a more inclusive assessment that takes into account all possible processes – farm, off-farm, and non-farm – that promote rural differentiation. I would argue that one of the key drawbacks in using conditions of production as the means to articulate processes of rural differentiation is the

danger in conflating distinct classes or social formations. For instance, Adnan (1985) has contended that the merchant cum moneylender is analytically distinct from the capitalist farmer in just the way the indebted small farmer is distinct from the wage laborer (p.59). Using an analysis of conditions of production, such distinctions could easily be blurred when the common facets of their existence particularly with relation to capital and labour subsume all differences in the conditions of their reproduction. A similar analogy could be made of landless, overseas migrant households who could possibly be conflated with landless laborers, despite their being a significant difference in the kind of labour markets that the two types of laborers are able to access.

I would further go on to argue that it is important to assess not only changes such as technological advances or levels of exploitation that occur internally within the logic of agricultural production but also processes external to agriculture at the local, national, and in this case study, the global level, that trigger rural differentiation. This interaction between internal and external processes is exactly what Dobb had argued to be one of the key reasons behind the decline of feudalism (Sweezy et al, 1976). In this voluminous literature on the transition from feudalism to capitalism, there was a great deal of importance given to the increase in trade and commerce and the growth of towns (ibid, 1976). Though it is not the purpose of this dissertation to review this literature, it does shed light on an important debate between the internal conflict as reflected by the structural contradictions within agricultural production and external processes. In my own case study, I found that Purbalach village which was closer to an urban market was also characterised by a higher incidence of migration, higher landlessness within the sample and in turn, a reluctance to cling to the land. As I have discussed earlier, this was not the case in Hasanpur. What these differences across the survey areas go to show is that forces of change are not necessarily bound within conditions of agricultural production but can be influenced by wider processes of change.

In both of the villages, overseas migration was a differentiating variable as households with migrants overseas were in fact better off than other households. However, only in Purbalach did migration overseas represent a distinct condition of reproduction. This was evidenced by the fact that only in Purbalach did I come across households who had gradually become landless and relied upon migration overseas as the minimum requirement for their reproduction. The financing of migration overseas through remittances was also observed in this village. Although they did engage partially in agriculture through tenancy, their predominant strategy for accumulation of wealth centered on migration overseas. This was not the case in Hasanpur where households still possessed land in addition to other income earnings in the non-farm sector including migration overseas. Moreover, the fact that the majority of growing households in both the studied villages did have migrants overseas also indicates that accumulation of both land and wealth is dependent on migration overseas, thus suggesting even further that it is a distinct condition of reproduction, at least in one of the study villages. As Adnan (1985) had discussed, the conditions of reproduction for the simple commodity producer are distinct in that it can still survive without a normal profit. In the case of migration overseas, it appears that its distinct conditions of reproduction lie in its linkage to the global labor market though this does not rule out petty commodity production at the local level. The accumulation of land and other productive assets by these households is conditioned upon migration overseas, not agricultural surplus.

What the relationship between land and poverty and the distinct conditions of reproduction demonstrate are very telling. What the findings suggest is that in addition to conditions of production, migration overseas is also fueling rural differentiation. As mentioned in chapter 8, the overseas migrants in both the study villages were better off; the sharecropper/labourer households, in turn, were the worst off. In Hasanpur, the households with landholdings above 2.5 acres were still the best off even when compared to households with migrants overseas. However, these households all belonged to the still living category. This is important in that it suggests that in addition

to class and the structural contradictions that define them, demographic factors cannot be entirely ruled out in an assessment of rural differentiation. However, what my research has shown is that an analysis of rural differentiation focused solely on conditions of production would not take full account of new and distinct conditions of reproduction that are forming and the role that these may have in fueling social formations.

9.3 The resurvey and longitudinal analysis

One of the key methodological features of this dissertation was the use of the resurvey to trace the household level changes in land and livelihoods in two villages. Without the resurvey, such a long assessment of longitudinal change spanning thirty years could not have been achieved, given the limited scope of time involved in completing this dissertation. The importance of longitudinal analyses also must be underscored, without which a study on agrarian change would merely be an ahistorical, static account of agrarian structure. Longitudinal resurveys as done by Ramakumar and Raut (2011) and Rodgers and Rodgers (2001) only bring to light the importance of this methodology in fully encapsulating rural change. A longitudinal analysis gives the space with which to invoke the past; to invoke the past, in turn, is the very basis for understanding agrarian change. As Irfan Habib cogently writes,

> *Marxism sees an innate unity between perception of the past and present practice. This unity implies continuous interaction: as time passes and history (human experience)lengthens, we draw greater lessons from it for the present; and as our present experience tells us more about the possibilities and limitations of social action, we turn to the past and obtain new comprehensions of it (Habib, 1995).*

Rodney Hilton also focuses on the element of change when he writes the following:

> *There is a law of motion of feudal (as of other) societies, as well as a particular set of structural relationships in them (in Sweezy et al, 1978, p.12)*

Thus, in order to fully comprehend the forces of rural change as well as the forces of the status quo, the dimension of time comes central to the analysis. Although Marxist historiography goes only so far in explaining the complexities that give rise to various social formations outside of the ambit of class, the element of continuity which it strives for cannot be understated in its importance. The resurvey, thus, provided a lens with which to assess the dynamics of households over time. The longitudinal duration of inquiry, as discussed in chapter 6 and 7 lead to differing conclusions, particularly when probing the phenomenon of clinging to the land. As I used both shorter and longer time frames within the same survey, the shorter being a land transaction history covering fifteen years and longer being the point of inception of households, the divergence in findings that I generated actually reinforced the importance of the unit of time in fully understanding agrarian change and the absence of change.

This is not to say that the resurvey methodology is without problems. For one, using a resurvey means that a great deal of time must be spent in maintaining consistency across surveys as far as the method of inquiry. In the case of my resurvey, a key difference in method was with regard to measures of poverty. I chose to use an asset index for reasons I have discussed in chapter 5 whereas the original survey relied upon income data. With regard to longer timeframes, there is also the challenge of identifying the same households also discussed in chapter 5. Especially when considering high incidence of migration, the identification of households for a resurvey can be a difficult task. Apart from the methodological problems, another key problem with the resurvey particularly as it pertained to my research was the phenomenon of landgrabbing which could not be fully taken into account as I was restricted to an analysis of households based on the original survey. In the deltaic region of Noakhali, it is generally the corporations that pursue land grabs (Adnan, 2010). Furthermore, even if jotedar households were engaging in land grabs, it would hardly make its way into a household survey.

Regardless of these empirical problems, the resurvey still remains an important tool particularly in analyses of rural differentiation and agrarian transition which can only

be assessed over time. The examination of the persistence of the small peasant for instance requires a longitudinal analysis. In fact, both persistence and transition are both aspects of rural differentiation that can only be understood using time as the central frame of reference. Although cross-country comparisons and wider data sets within a country may shed light on the multidimensional aspects of poverty, it is only through a longitudinal analysis that poverty from a relational perspective and rural change can be fully deciphered. The resurvey could also be useful for the more recent work on chronic poverty as discussed in Chapter 2 which focuses on duration and movements near the poverty line and thus necessitates longitudinal analysis.

9.4 Implications of research findings

What the research findings have demonstrated is that wholesale generalisations about the role of land in rural livelihoods cannot be made and clearly depend on the specific context of various factors and processes that shape rural change. However, the findings do indicate that migration is a distinct livelihood strategy taken on by households. A number of policy implications emerge from the analysis and will be discussed further in this section.

As the field level findings have shown, there were very few households within the study area who relied solely on agricultural surplus for their reproduction; rather, they straddled a range of off-farm and non-farm activities, one of which included migration. Further to this end, accumulation of land was contingent upon non-farm earnings such as migration, not agricultural surplus. The importance of these pathways out of poverty appear to have received scant attention in policy circles. The rhetoric-policy nexus has retained steadfastly its attachment with the ‘small farmer’ owing in part to the large canon of literature that had established the inverse relationship between size and productivity as a rule of law almost. Although such findings have been largely discredited within academic circles (see Dyer, 2000; Byres, 2004; Patnaik, 1999; Johnston and Le Roux, 2007), the policy arena has been lagging behind, still

championing the small farmer as the key agent for change in the development trajectory. The fetish with the small farmer is also supported by the school of neopopulist thought that proposes a radical egalitarianism, particularly in the area of land reform. The message of the neopopulist school is appealing: egalitarianism does not have to come at a cost; equity and efficiency can be achieved simultaneously, this being a minor point of departure from the neoclassical school's rigid theoretical backing of trade-offs. Such a continued emphasis on the small farmer remains despite the latest direction taken by the World Bank in its World Development Report (WDR 2008) which does in fact, take the small farmer off the pedestal it had been placed on as the engine of agrarian growth. The need for large-scale agribusiness is cited as necessary but within a cloud of vagueness and characteristic contradiction, the kind that Rizzo (2009) has centered on as being the reason for the perpetual hegemony of such institutions. As Rizzo discusses furthermore, the criticism of the WDR 2008 by non-governmental organizations such as Oxfam and ActionAid has been weak, touching on important, though not the overriding problems inherent in the World Bank's logic. For instance, ActionAid still retains the neopopulist logic of smallholder efficiency, only to state that structural adjustment has dismantled the once utopian small farm. This proclivity to target the small farmer may arise from a moral appeal and a belief, for instance, that growth and egalitarianism can occur simultaneously without the existence of an unhappy trade-off.

Lipton (2006) has, in fact, refuted the arguments made of the fallacy of the inverse relationship when tested over time and space, contending that the small farmer should still remain the central priority of rural development for the following reasons: (1) the poor's major asset continues to be land and therefore, more poverty reduction is likely to be achieved by raising returns to cultivable land; (2)small farms have a more intensive demand for labor and thus redistribution will raise labor demand and thus, generate more employment and; (3) the dollar poor spend a significant share of their income on food and staples and given that transport costs are high, local farming stabilizes the price of food. In the course of this analysis, Lipton shies away from providing a pithy reasoning as to why the large-scale farm cannot achieve the same effect of generating labor

demand, stabilizing prices and ultimately, reducing poverty. It has in fact been demonstrated that large farms do possess scale advantages, and can in turn, generate higher yields in comparison to smaller sized holdings. For instance, Helfand (2002) and Towfique (2001) have both shown in the cases of Brazil and Bangladesh respectively that the inverse relationship breaks down either due to consolidated landholdings of beyond 200 hectares as in the case of Brazil or in advanced geographic regions as in the case of Bangladesh.

Thus, the logic that poverty reduction will come about through increases in production on small parcels of land owned by the poor sidesteps the possibility that large-scale farms can produce more in a situation of scale economies. The same holds true for labor demand and prices of foodstuffs. For instance, Lipton cites the example of Pakistan wherein farms above 60 hectares engaged only 0.12 workers per hectare while small sized farms below 0.4 hectares engaged approximately 9 workers per hectare[35]. Based on similar findings in other countries, Lipton concludes that egalitarian redistribution will raise overall labor demand without regard for a comparison of wages in these differential size farms and whether the large farms were in fact, capitalist farms or not. In fact, it is only through economies of scale in production that large-scale farms, and capitalist farms in particular, can generate both a greater employment and maintain lower price of foodstuffs in comparison to the typical small family farm.

As discussed in chapter 3, Rigg mentions both the "old" or established answers on how best to assist the rural poor and the "new" answers based on rural economies in transition. The established answer is centered on redistribution of land and overall investments in agriculture as part of a pro-poor strategy of rural development. Rigg refutes these set of policies, in turn, maintaining that supporting the poor to leave agriculture will be of crucial importance. The new or "revisionist" answer Rigg purports to be the key manner in which the rural poor should be assisted is through supporting

[35] These figures are based on 1972 data which Lipton himself admits is outdated.

people's efforts to leave farming by way of provisioning the requisite skills in the pursuit of those ends (Rigg, p.197). Rigg, in turn, claims it is necessary to reskill the poor as the association between pro-poor policies and small-holder farming has been broken. Such a conclusion rests on the key propelling factors previously discussed; namely, that farming is no longer profitable and there is simply not enough land to pursue a land based strategy of reform. No doubt, the prevalence of non-farm opportunities is envisioned as the new pathway out of poverty; a policy, in turn, should focus on reskilling the poor such that they may avail of these opportunities in a wider scale. Whether such reskilling is adequate within a wider context of stagnant economic growth is not an area that Rigg enters into debate. In fact, and as discussed earlier in Chapter 3, this represents a key tension within Rigg that is representative of an older political economy debate about whether the non-farm sector also reinforces the same inequalities existent within agriculture. However, this question of demand for educated labor or skilled labor is a plausible one. Birdsall et al discuss the cases of Egypt, Philippines Sri Lanka and the former Soviet Union where, despite investments in education, a weak demand for labor may explain why these countries did not perform well in terms of growth (1995, p.486). The authors compare these aforementioned countries with countries comprising East Asia that invested heavily in education and exacted high returns from this investment, particularly due to a higher demand for such labor. A later work done by Bennell has expressed a similar concern about overall demand for primary education in the backdrop of limited expansion of formal sector employment in sub-saharan Africa (2002).

With regard to the non-farm sector, re-skilling the poor represents the key policy conclusion as presented by Rigg. There is scant mention of the role that the industrial sector can play in absorbing the poor with these new skills thus leading one to conclude that the non-farm sector will be the space to fall back on, but with improved skills that can perhaps reap higher returns. Nevertheless, it seems far too simple, yet appealing a conclusion, that reskilling will lead to the poor availing of higher return non-farm activities which were once inaccessible when so much more than mere skills may be required to avail these very opportunities. With specific regard to migration overseas,

however, there is a clear need to focus on skill development tailored towards the specific labour markets of countries that receive overseas migrants. This will help to not only promote migration overseas but also to ensure that these migrants enter into more high-return, skilled positions overseas.

Despite the overt insistence on non-farm economic activity as a viable path out of poverty, there is very little in the way of what causes this sector to grow, much less a theoretical premise of the interlinkages between agriculture, industry and this new non-farm sector.

In fact, Rigg draws a similar note of caution in the following passage:

> *…it may be that policies should be aimed at oiling and assisting the process of transformation of farmers into non-farmers and rural people into urbanites, rather than shoring up the livelihoods of small holders through agricultural subsidies, land reforms, and piecemeal employment creation schemes. This, though, is only likely to operate in a developmentally positive fashion in circumstances where there is a vibrant industrial (non-farm) sector able to absorb rural workers (p. 195)*

In keeping with the research findings, a number of policy implications emerge. Firstly, the neopopulist logic of focusing on the smallholder farmer requires a rethinking, particularly considering the importance of non-farm work and migration. Bernstein's 'classes of labour' for instance calls for a greater attention to be given to labour markets. Secondly, in order to make the most out of opportunities from migration overseas and even within the country, re-skilling is important so as to ensure that households can reap the most benefits out of non-farm activities. It will be equally important to focus on how overseas migrant remittances can be channeled towards more productive investments, both within agriculture and outside of agriculture. As the survey findings indicated, remittances were mostly directed towards consumption expenditures. These remittances can be an important source for fueling local growth,

particularly if they can be channeled away from potential usury towards more productive investments.

9.5 Future directions for research

This dissertation has assessed the conditions of reproduction of households to examine the underlying relationship between land, migration and rural differentiation. In so doing, it has argued that overseas migrant households do constitute a distinct social formation characterised by a distinct condition of reproduction. It is important that future studies on rural differentiation assess both conditions of production and reproduction in assessing rural class formations or social formations aside from class.

Not only who exists as a class but when these classes came into formation historically are tricky questions prone to error but nevertheless valid and important queries to answer. The surveys in the two studied villages indicated that there does exist a group of households with large landholdings and who mostly rely upon agriculture but their existence appears to be partially explained by demography. (see chapters 6 and 7). This, however, does not preclude the importance of class in an analysis of rural ontology. Rather, it goes to show that both demographic processes and the inherent contradictions between capital and labour work hand in hand, a point made cogently by Banaji in his discussion of the classical, widely polarised debate between Chayanovian and Leninist explanations of rural dynamics as being a superficial one and one that belies how both the processes in fact reinforce each other (1976). In fact, the pressures of fragmentation of landholdings through inheritance laws and population pressure perhaps serve to increase for instance jotedar class assertions in the form of landgrabbing.

The survey findings also suggest that new social groupings are forming, fueled in particular by migration overseas; hence, the landless are no longer entirely impoverished agricultural labor households dependent and exploited by other classes but may in fact belong to a wealthier sub class of landless households with migrants overseas. As such, the classic structural opposition between the landless and the rich peasant is not wholly

evident (in one of the surveyed villages). The fact that land and agriculture is not the sole means for accumulation of wealth has major implications for policy as well. There are in fact "classes of labour" who rely partially on labor markets for their reproduction. As such, although these households have not been fully stripped of their 'peasant' status, they are increasingly becoming laborers in both formal and informal markets. Pro-poor policies that still identify accumulation strategies with farming would in turn miss out on the importance of developing labor markets as important channels for poverty reduction and wealth accumulation.

However, the intense competition over land by jotedars indicates that class assertions centered on land and productive agricultural resources are strong and remain *in the last instance*, using Althusserian terms, perhaps the most important (Bosteels, 2001). Nevertheless, in taking the route of a solely classical Marxian class analysis to determine rural agrarian structure, many phenomena will largely not be fully accounted for. Despite this, Wickham cogently writes that" this pluralism has not established a paradigm of interpretation and explanation which is robust enough to offer an alternative to the Marxist schema" (Wickham, 2007, p.42). To theorise this pluralism in a manner that is not merely descriptive but emabarks on an analysis of the dynamics of change is the key challenge.

Negri provides an apt description of Marxism in the following passage:

> Even historical materialism entails a law of evolution: but this law is anything but necessary, linear, and unilateral; it is a law of discontinuity, leaps, and unexpected syntheses. It is Darwinian, in a good sense of the word: as the product of a Heraclitean clash and an aleatory teleology, from below; because the causes of the metamorphoses that invest the multitude as a whole and singularities as a multitude are nothing but struggles, movements and desires of transformation (Negri, 2002).

It is important to contribute to the scholarship on agrarian change and rural differentiation that moves away from what appears to be an essentialist project of the kind that presupposes that rural classes are immutable and characterised by an 'essence' or a core set of properties that distinguishes them from the other. Here, Delueze's ontology offers

a more convincing method for comprehending beyond the general and the particular; that is, the general categories and their particular 'innate' characteristics(1994). In place of the general and the particular, Deleuze probes deeper in his analysis by going beyond phenomena and their underlying, observable difference in search of the nuomena that actually drive those differences; his is an ontology centered on univocity in which the differences that are perceived derive from a singular substance. This he states in the following manner:

> *Difference is not diversity. Diversity is given, but difference is that by which the given is given...Difference is not phenomenon but the nuomenon closest to the phenomenon...every phenomenon refers to an inequality by which it is conditioned...(1994, p. 222).*

In Deleuze's philosophy, intensive individuation processes drive the difference that transforms or materialises the virtual (nuomenon) into diverse phenomena. In fact, Marx's theory of capital did just this – expose the nuomena that drive class formation and transition. However, it is important to investigate whether the nature of the virtual nuomenon as Deleuze puts it has altered so as to explain the emergence of new types of phenomenon. As a result of these essentialist studies, it could very well be that many phenomena in the form of new classes, sub-classes or social groupings are missed in the analysis.

In fact, the very construct of rich/middle/poor as classes within the peasantry if deconstructed[36] falls into a violent arbitrariness. When does the rich peasant become a middle peasant or a middle peasant a poor one and so on? When Banaji writes of the 'amorphous' character of the peasantry and their relevance of rich/middle/small categorisation (in chapter 8), he in fact may be considered to be alluding to this very fact that these categories, albeit important analytically, do not do justice to the ontological richness of what constitutes rural life. Banaji argues the same in his contention that more or less unfree labour is a more apt way of understanding degrees of

[36]Derrida's work Spectres of Marx provides a compelling deconstruction of Marxism. Gayatri Chakrabarty Spivak also uses deconstruction in her analysis of Marxism.

unfree labour for instance as opposed to the binary characterisation of free or unfree labour. Patnaik's empirical index to approximate class status alludes to the same diversity or continuum notwithstanding her use of the same rigid terminology (1987). In fact, it is surprising that current historiographies have not managed to strip themselves of what Prakash calls a Eurocentrism and the terminology of the nineteenth century (Prakash, 1994). These arguments do not negate the existence of class but rather question the language in which class assertions are articulated. Badiou's seminal work on Being and Event (2005) can provide some insights for further research, particularly in placing these 'missing groups' into a theoretical framework.

Badiou utilises set theory in his ontological analysis of being; in so doing, he distinguishes between two notions, that of belonging and inclusion as used in set theory to differentiate between elements of a set (or multiples) and subsets. The elements of a set belong to that set whereas subsets are included in the larger set of which they are part. Badiou relegates the utmost conceptual importance to this distinction between belonging and inclusion, in turn contending that there lies a distinction between a set constituting a structure composed of elements which form multiples that belong to it and a metastructure which completes the initial structure, including all of the sub-compositions of multiples and inclusions (Badiou, 2005, p. 83). This metastructure, however, is distinct from the initial structure though by what measure and degree is the point of inquiry that Badiou probes in his ontological inquiry of being. Badiou explicates in this way:

> *For the first time we have to employ here an ontological theorem...the theorem of the point of excess. This theorem establishes that within the framework of the pure theory of the multiple, or set theory, it is formally impossible, whatever the situation be, for everything which is included (every subset) to belong to the situation. There is an irremediable excess of sub-multiples over terms. Applied to a situation – in which to 'to belong' means: to be a consistent multiple, thus to be presented, or to exist – the theorem of the point of excess simply states: there are always sub-multiples which, despite being included in a situation as composition of multiplicities, cannot be counted in that situation as terms, and which therefore do not exist (Badiou, 2005, p.96).*

By situation, Badiou means a structure, that by which the count-of-one is established which in turn structures the situation; that is, a set in which the count-of-one can be applied. The metastructure refers to the state of the situation composed of parts. As Badiou states, what is *included* in a situation *belongs* to its state (Badiou, 2005, p.96). If we take for instance the situation of rural agrarian structure composed in turn of classes: rich, middle, poor and so on, there exists a metastructure or state of this situation which in turn is composed of sub-multiples and subsets which do not directly belong to the situation but do belong to its state. Thus, a subset of households with migrants who may be subsets of any of the multiples belonging to the initial situation would belong here within the metastructure, as also would those rich peasants who may not constitute a class as they owe to their existence the chance of demography. Badiou goes further by presenting a typology of being in connection with the distinction between belonging and inclusion, structure and metastructure, situation and state of the situation. He proposes the following possibilities: normality, singularity and excrescence. By normality, Badiou refers to those multiples which both belong to the situation and are included in the state of the situation. Singular terms are only found in the situation but as they are indecomposable to the extent that it is not presented in the situation in a separate manner. Excrescence refers to terms which are found in the state of the situation but not within the situation (Badiou, 2005, p.99).

Such a typology of being provides an ontological framework that can situate the social formations which a Marxian class analysis would sidestep. In keeping with the Marxian analysis, Badiou argues, the bourgeoisie would constitute a normal term, both existing within the structure and within the metastructure which is both the state of the situation and the State; the proletariat would constitute a singular term existing within the situation but not represented by the State; finally the State itself as an excrescence, an excrescence which in time will no longer exist with the dissolution of the State, the universality of the singular, and the formation of a classless society. As Badiou writes of the Marxian view, “the ultimate foundation of the State is that singular and normal terms maintain a sort of antagonistic non-liaison between themselves, or a state of un-

binding (p.109). However, Badiou critiques the Marxian dialectic of antagonism as the dialectic of the void and excess cannot be seen as an antagonism. Furthermore, Badiou maintains in a critique of Engels' theorisation of the State that it "reduces the machinery of the count-as-one to an excrescence because he does not understand that the excess which it treats is ineluctable, for it is a theorem of being "(p.110).

In terms of Badiou's typology, both the categories of landless migrant households and rich peasants (not as a class but due to demography) cannot be considered normal terms that both exist within the situation and the state of the situation. The landless migrant households may not form a submultiple of the class of landless households as the very existence of such a multiple (of rural classes) is defined by the nature of exploitation; these landless are those who primarily sell their labour to the rich and middle peasant classes. On the other hand, those rich peasants who exist merely out of a chance of demography are clearly a submultiple of the class of rich peasants but as they do not constitute a class, they may be considered to in-exist within the situation though they belong to the state of the situation in what may be termed as excrescence. What is more important than placing these observed social formations within Badiou's typology of being is the contention thus articulated, that Marxian class remains central to an understanding of rural agrarian structure but the distinction between belonging and inclusion and the ontological implications of such a distinction provide a far more wider lens with which to comprehend the variegated processes of social formation. This is presciently summarised in Toscanó's appraisal of Badiou's ontology:

> ...Badiou makes the provocative claim that our times, in which the rule of Capital is seconded by the vacuous emblems of "democracy", are *devoid of world* – that is, they mount a protocol of exclusion but do not effect a transcendental distribution of existence...The implication here is that the hegemony of Capital, seconded by an unstable mix of "humanitarian" oratory (Blair) and brazenly imperial pronouncements (The Project for the New American Century), does not constitute a "world" proper. The reasons for this, however, are problematic: the "unworldly" nature of Capital is connected by Badiou to its evacuation of any *names* that could be the bearers of subjectivity... (Toscano, 2004, p.19)

Further research could focus further on the traditional hierarchies that dominate the agrarian transition literature and how these hierarchies can be supplemented with new understanding of social formations. Althusser's concept of overdetermination, Negri's multitide and Badiou's theorem of excess all provide, some within the context of poststructuralism and others outside, an entry point with which to fully comprehend processes of rural differentiation in its totality.

ANNEXURE: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Serial # _____
Name of Enumerator _____

Date of first visit	_____	Duration of visit	_____
Date of second visit	_____		_____
Date of third visit	_____		_____

INSTRUCTIONS TO ENUMERATOR

I. Inform the key adult respondent that the purpose of the study is for purely academic purpose and is in no way affiliated with the government, any political party or any quasi governmental agency. Furthermore, response to this survey is not linked to any form of loan, aid or compensation.

II. Inform the respondent that the survey will take approximately x hours.

III. Ask for the consent of the respondent in proceeding with the survey. Only once consent is given, proceed.

Sign below to confirm that the aforementioned instructions have been followed.

Signature of Enumerator _____

1. DEMOGRAPHIC HOUSEHOLD PROFILE

1.1 NAME OF RESPONDENT: _____

1.2 VILLAGE**:** _____ DISTRICT: _____

1.21 NAME OF BARI (homestead) _____

1.22 NAME OF PARA (group of villages) _____

1.23 NUMBER OF WARD _____

2.0 HOUSEHOLD OCCUPATIONAL PROFILE

A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**	**H**	**I**	**J**	**K**	**L**	**M**
Name	Age	Highest grade passed	Relationship to respondent	Sex (M/F)	Residing at home	Nature of migration	Location of migrant	Remits or remitted (yes or no)	Regularly or irregularly	Amount in a given year	Primary occupations throughout year	Most profitableoccupations
1												

2.1 NUMBER OF MEMBERS IN HOUSEHOLD (inclusive of all those who are financially dependent and including those who contribute financially but are not in residence) ___

<u>If there are migrants (both in country and abroad) in the household, please answer 3.0. If no migrant, skip this question.</u>

3.0 MIGRATION AND REMITTANCES

3.1 Please state the ways through which migration were financed. (Use code)

_____

3.2 Overall cost of migrating abroad and securing job

_____(in Taka)

3.3 Overall cost of migrating in country and securing job

_____(in Taka)

3.4 Remittance from abroad used for which purpose (s) Please see code
(Note: More than one code may be used for both 3.1 and 3.2)

_____

3.5 Remittance from within country used for which purpose (s).

_____

Code for 3.4 and 3.5:
1 Purchase of land
2 Business
3 Livestock/poultry purchase
4 Education/training
5 Migration of additional member of household
6 Living costs (food)
7 Construction of home
8 Loan to another member. If so, then need to specify what this loan was in turn utilized for
9 Gift or bribe. Please specify
10 Social costs (dowry, etc.)
11 Health related expenditure
12 Other. (please specify)
_____

4.0 ASSET PROFILE

4.1 AMOUNT OF LAND OWNED BY HOUSEHOLD(in decimals) : _____
OR
(in acres) _____
OR
(in alternative unit) _____

4.2 AMOUNT OF LAND OWNED DURING FIRST SURVEY**:** _____

4.3 AMOUNT OF HOMESTEAD LAND _____ (please specify unit)

4.4 AMOUNT OF POND LAND _____

4.5 SUMMARY OF LAND TRANSACTIONS FOR HOUSEHOLD IN PAST FIFTEEN YEARS: (Please see code)

A	B	C	D	E
Amount of land (in decimals or alternative unit) Pls specify	**Purchased or sold** 1 Purchased 2 Sold	**Cause**	**Method of financing**	**Time (year)**

5. POVERTY PROFILE

5.1 TOTAL CEREAL PRODUCTION ON LAND OWNED/LEASED OR AMOUNT OBTAINED THROUGH SHARECROPPING IN LAST TWELVE MONTHS: _____(in kilograms)

OR

_____(income earned in Taka)

5.2 If household owns land, the amount produced on this land is adequate for which of the following: _____

1 Less than 6 months
2 6-8 months
3 9 to 12 months
4 Surplus

5.3 CEREAL GRAINS RECEIVED THROUGH GOVERNMENT/CHARITY IN LAST TWELVE MONTHS _____

5.4 OUTSTANDING LOANS AND DEBT

5.41 From moneylender (state amount in taka) _____
5.42 From microfinance institution _____
5.43 From commercial bank _____
5.44 From individual (other than moneylender) _____

5.5 INVENTORY OF CURRENT HOUSEHOLD ASSETS (Excluding land) (please check)

Specify number or amount if possible

Asset	**Yes (1) No (2)**	**Quantity**
Chicken/ducks		
Goats/sheep		
Cows/bulls/buffalo		
Fuel/stove		
Rickshaw/van		
Car/Truck		
Cart		
Motorcycle/scooter/tempo		
Bicycle		
Watch		
Chair		

Table		
Wardrobe (almari)		
Fridge		
Mobile phone		
Television		
Radio		
Flush Toilet		
Latrine		
Tin roof		
Brick/cement structure		
Rooms		
Other (please specify)		

6.0 ADDITIONAL NOTES

Signature of Enumerator _____
Date: _____

Signature of Enumerator _____
Date:_____

CODES

Code for 2.0 Column E

1 Spouse
2 Child
3 Parent
4 Grandparent
5 Nephew/Niece
6 Uncle/Aunt
7 Stepparent
8 Son-in-law/Daughter-in-law
9 Stepchild
10 Friend
11 Neighbor
12 Distant Relation
13 Other

Code for 2.0. Column F
1 Yes (regularly)
2 No
3 Occasionally. If so, then specify on average number of days in a year in space

Code for 2.0, Column G

Note: The following categories refer to migrants for both abroad and within country

1 New migrant
2 Return migrant
3 Seasonal migrant
4 Migration made and repeated
5 Long standing migrant
6 Long standing seasonal migrant

Code for 2.0, Column H:
1 Abroad
2 Within country

Code for 2.0, Column J:
1 Every month
2 Every few months
3 Every year
4 Every few years
5 Irregularly

Code for 2.0, Column K:
A: Less than $100 (7000Tk)
B: Between 7000 Tk to 15, 000Tk

C: Between 15,000Tk to 45,000Tk
D: Over 45,000Tk

Code for 2.0, Columns L and M:
1 Direct production on owned land including homestead
2Direct production on leased land
3 Leasing out land
4 Livestock/poultry
5 Sharecropping/tenancy on other's land
6 Agricultural wage labor
7 Fishing
8 Non-farm work in transportation (rickshaw pulling, van, etc.)
9 Construction work
10 Non-farm salary work (teacher, nurse, service holder, peon, manager, assistant, social worker)
11 Firewood/honey collector/stone
12 Non-farm business (restaurant, café, grocery, apparel, pharmacy, etc.)
13 Non-farm domestic help (cook, cleaner, gardener)
14 Barber
15 Carpenter
16 Tailor
17 Artisan/handicrafts/pottery
18 Electrician
19 Midwife
20 Recycling materials (clothes, plastic)
21 Medical advice/quack (i.e doctor without degree)
22 Doctor MBBS or other degree
23 Non-farm business (scouting prospective migrants)
24 Wage work in shrimp farm
25 Wage work in brick kiln
26 Wage work in mill (rice, newsprint, etc.)
27 Non-farm business (leasing equipment/transport)
28 Wage work in garments
29 Wage work in leather, battery, matchbox, etc. (manufacturing)
30 Rice husking
31 Seed preservation
32 Child care
33 Healer
34 Retired
35 Sweeper
36 Other

Code for 3.1
1 Through sale of land

2 Through agricultural surplus
3 Through loan or gift
4 Through wage/salary income
5 Through remittance from migrant
6 Other (please specify)

Code for 3.4 and 3.5:
1 Purchase of land
2 Business
3 Livestock/poultry purchase
4 Education/training
5 Migration of additional member of household
6 Living costs (food)
7 Construction of home
8 Loan to another member. If so, then need to specify what this loan was in turn utilized for
9 Gift or bribe. Please specify
10 Social costs (dowry, etc.)
11 Health related expenditure
12 Other. (please specify)

_____

CODE (for 4.5, column C):
1 Food deficit
2 To invest in business
3 To get job in Bangladesh
4 To get job abroad
5 To buy another piece of land
6 Ceremonial expenses
7 Educational expenses
8 Illness
9 To buy urban land
10 To repay debt
11 Litigation
12 Building construction
13 To buy other forms of assets
14 Shifting
15 Other

Code (for 4.5, column D):
1 Surplus crop income
2 Income from pond, orchard or other

3 Crop and orchard, pond income
4 Selling land
5 Service income
6 Trading (business) income
7 Sale of non land asset
8 Selling labor power
9 Unspecified income
10 Loan from Krishi Bank or other NGO
11 Remittance income
12 Dowry money
13 Sharecropping income
14 Leasing out land
15 Leasing out non-land asset
16 Other

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