

REPORT

Displaced, Denied

Access to Food and Nutrition among Climate-Displaced Communities in Satkhira

Brot für die Welt

KHANI খানি FOOD SECURITY NETWORK BANGLADESH

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A study of food, water, housing, livelihoods, social protection and access to remedy

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Foreword

Bangladesh is among the countries most exposed to climate-induced disasters and internal displacement. Floods, cyclones, tidal surges, waterlogging, river erosion and salinity are forcing people to leave their homes, land and livelihoods. For many displaced families, however, displacement does not end when they reach a new location. In urban informal settlements, they often face insecure housing, unsafe water, limited livelihood opportunities, inadequate sanitation, weak access to health and education, and exclusion from social protection. These interconnected challenges directly affect their ability to enjoy their fundamental human rights, particularly the Right to Food and Nutrition.

Against this context, Bangladesh Food Security Network, KHANI, initiated the present study to examine how climate-induced displacement affects the everyday enjoyment of human rights among displaced communities living in informal settlements in Satkhira Municipality. The study focuses on access to adequate food, nutrition, safe water, housing, livelihoods, education, health services and social protection, as well as the ability of residents to claim their rights and entitlements. It also examines these conditions through the lens of Bangladesh's National Strategy on Internal Displacement Management 2021 and relevant national and international human rights frameworks.

The findings presented in this report are based on a household survey of 358 households across 35 informal settlements in Satkhira Municipality, preceded by a field visit conducted by a joint team from KHANI and its member organisations on 9 July 2026. The assessment also drew on an earlier review of newspaper coverage concerning informal settlements in Satkhira Municipality. The team visited Islampur Colony 1 to observe living conditions and assess residents' access to food, nutrition, water, sanitation, healthcare, housing, education and social protection. A key informant interview was also conducted with the Social Development Officer of Satkhira Municipality.

According to the household enumeration conducted by Uttoron, Satkhira Municipality has 47 informal settlements accommodating an estimated 7,573 climate-displaced families. Of these, 35 settlements comprising 6,272 families were included in the study, while 12 settlements comprising 1,301 families were not covered. These settlements have developed on land belonging to Satkhira Municipality, government khas land and the Bangladesh Water

Development Board. Residents have different tenure arrangements. Some live on leased land, rented houses or privately purchased plots, while others occupy public land without formal legal title.

The findings present a concerning picture. A large proportion of surveyed households experience severe food insecurity, limited food reserves, unsafe and unreliable water access, loss of productive assets, insecure tenure, livelihood decline and very limited access to formal social protection. These challenges are interconnected. Loss of land and livelihoods reduces household income, while low and unstable income restricts access to nutritious food. Unsafe water and inadequate sanitation increase health risks. Insecure housing and the risk of eviction undermine household stability. Documentation and information barriers can further restrict access to social protection and other public services. Together, these conditions demonstrate how displacement can become a prolonged human rights challenge rather than a temporary humanitarian event.

The National Strategy on Internal Displacement Management 2021 provides an important policy foundation for addressing these challenges. It recognises the rights of displaced people to food, water, sanitation, health, education, livelihoods and social protection, while promoting meaningful participation, tenure security, livelihood restoration, access to essential documents and durable solutions through return, local integration or resettlement. The situation documented in Satkhira highlights the importance of translating these commitments into practical action at the local level.

This study is intended to contribute to a deeper understanding of the human rights dimensions of climate-induced displacement in Bangladesh and to support evidence-based advocacy for practical and rights-based solutions. It is hoped that the findings will encourage government institutions, local authorities, civil society, development partners and the media to strengthen action towards restoring the rights, dignity and resilience of displaced communities.

Bangladesh Food Security Network, KHANI, is a national coalition of NGOs, activists, researchers and development practitioners working to promote the Right to Food and Nutrition, strengthen food security and advance the rights of marginalised and vulnerable communities. Through research, policy engagement, networking and community-based advocacy, KHANI seeks to contribute to equitable, inclusive and rights-based food systems and social protection.

Nurul Alam Masud
General Secretary
Bangladesh Food Security Network (KHANI)

Acknowledgements

KHANI Bangladesh is deeply grateful to everyone who made this study possible. Above all, we thank the climate-displaced families living in Satkhira's informal settlements and slum colonies. They opened their homes to us and shared their struggles, losses and hopes with remarkable honesty. This report is built on their voices.

We extend our sincere appreciation to:

- Society of Development and Education for Small Households (SoDESH) for its close partnership, local knowledge and support in organising the fieldwork;
- Satkhira Municipality, especially the Social Development Officer, for sharing valuable information and insights;
- Uttoron, whose household enumeration of the slum colonies provided the sampling frame for this study;
- The enumerators and field supervisors, who carried out the household survey with care and dedication;
- KHANI member organisations for their efforts in study design, data collection, analysis and documentation.

We gratefully acknowledge Bread for the World for supporting this study under the Right to Food and Nutrition Campaign.

Executive Summary

This study examines what happens to human rights after climate-induced displacement has already happened. It focuses on climate-displaced households living in informal settlements in Satkhira Municipality and asks a simple question: after people lose their homes, land, and livelihoods, can they rebuild a life in which their rights are actually accessible?

The evidence points to a persistent protection gap. The households studied have moved away from areas repeatedly affected by floods, waterlogging, tidal surges, cyclones and river erosion, but many have not reached a durable solution. Instead, displacement has been followed by insecure tenure, unsafe water, inadequate sanitation, weak livelihoods, limited access to health and education, and exclusion from formal social protection. The result is a cycle in which loss of livelihood reduces purchasing power, weak purchasing power reduces access to nutritious food, insecure housing increases exposure to hazards, and weak documentation and institutional access make it harder to claim public support.

The assessment covered 358 households and 1,341 individuals across 35 of Satkhira Municipality's 47 informal settlements. According to Satkhira Municipality, these settlements are identified as slums. Following the UN-Habitat operational definition used for SDG Indicator 11.1.1, a slum household refers to a household in an urban area whose inhabitants experience one or more of the following housing-related deprivations: lack of access to improved water, lack of access to improved sanitation, insufficient living space, inadequate or non-durable housing, and lack of security of tenure. This definition recognises slum conditions as multidimensional deprivations rather than simply a condition of poverty. This study did not independently verify all five deprivations. The study covered 35 informal settlements comprising 6,272 families, drawn from Uttoron's enumeration of 7,573 families across 47 settlements.

The study used a structured household survey with internationally recognised food security indicators, including the Food Consumption Score, Food Insecurity Experience Scale and reduced Coping Strategies Index. The final household selection used a snowball approach because complete settlement-level household lists were unavailable; the Uttoron enumeration provides family counts by settlement. The findings should therefore be treated as strong case evidence, but not as a statistically representative estimate for every displaced household in Satkhira Municipality.

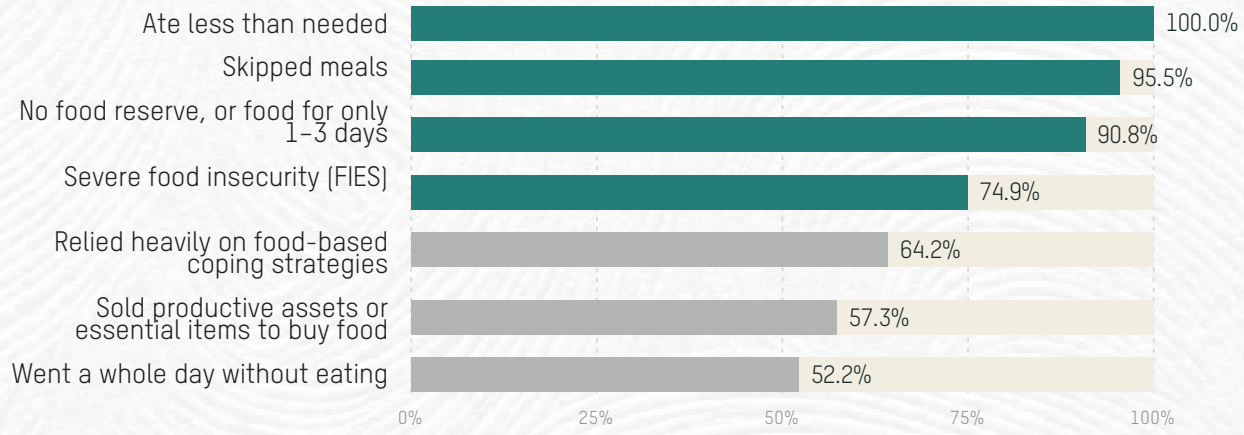
The central finding is stark. 74.9 percent of surveyed households experienced severe food insecurity. 100 percent reported eating less than they needed. 95.5 percent reported skipping meals. 52.2 percent reported going a whole day without eating. 64.2 percent relied heavily on food-based coping strategies. 57.3 percent had sold productive assets or essential household items to buy food. 90.8 percent had no food reserve or enough food for only one to three days.

These are not only indicators of poverty. They show barriers to the enjoyment of the right to adequate food. Under Article 15 of the Constitution, the State has a fundamental responsibility to secure basic necessities including food, shelter, education and medical care, and to provide social security in specified circumstances. Article 18 places nutrition and public health among the State's primary duties. Article 32 protects life and personal liberty. Articles 27 and 28 establish equality before law and protection against discrimination.

The National Strategy on Internal Displacement Management 2021 is particularly relevant. It adopts a rights-based approach and explicitly identifies food, water, sanitation, health, education, livelihood, social protection, documentation, participation and durable solutions as part of the State response to displacement. It also recognises local integration as a possible durable solution for permanently displaced people and calls for in-situ upgrading, tenure security, livelihood support, restored documentation and participation in public life.

The study therefore identifies a gap between policy recognition and lived access. The Strategy says displaced people should be able to pursue durable solutions with safety, adequate living standards, livelihoods, housing and land, essential documents, participation and access to remedies.

The central finding: share of surveyed households (N = 358)



Defining Displaced: *"Persons, groups of persons, households, or an entire community who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence temporarily or permanently or who have been evacuated as a result of disasters caused by sudden and slow-onset climatic events and processes, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border."*

(National Strategy on Internal Displacement Management, 2021; see also the Peninsula Principles, 2013)

The Findings at a Glance

74.9%

were severely food insecure (FIES); 100% ate less than needed and 52.2% went a whole day without eating.

Why it matters for human rights

The right to adequate food requires physical and economic access to sufficient, nutritious food and freedom from hunger.

96.9%

reported relying at least partly on saline or iron-contaminated shallow tube-well water for household use, while only 17.6% reported that their main water source was always available.

Why it matters for human rights

Unsafe and unreliable water undermines health and the conditions necessary for adequate food and nutrition.

30.7%

informally occupied government land, and 59% of these households (approximately 18% of all surveyed households) reported eviction or threats of eviction.

Why it matters for human rights

Insecure tenure undermines housing, safety, livelihood recovery, and stable access to essential services.

92.7%

lost livestock or poultry, while 41.1% lost agricultural land. In addition, 46.3% of earning members for whom comparison was possible reported lower income than before displacement.

Why it matters for human rights

The loss of productive resources reduces people's ability to feed themselves and rebuild sustainable livelihoods.

7.5%

Only 7.5% of surveyed households were enrolled in a government social safety net programme. Separately, 92.7% of surveyed households did not know where to lodge a complaint when assistance was denied or inadequate.

Why it matters for human rights

A rights system needs accessible remedies and non-discriminatory access to social protection.

33.2%

of assessed school-age children were not recorded as students. Among 16- to 18-year-olds, only 35.3% were students.

Why it matters for human rights

Education, livelihood and food insecurity are interconnected. Household economic stress is pushing children toward work and away from education.

Key recommendations

- Satkhira Municipality should recognise the 47 informal settlements as a municipal displacement and inclusion issue, include them in municipal planning, and establish a quarterly community forum and an accessible complaint mechanism.
- The Department of Social Services and other social protection agencies should hold settlement-level entitlement and enrolment clinics so that displaced households can enter, or continue in, social safety net programmes.
- The Election Commission and local administration should run mobile NID and voter registration camps to resolve address and documentation barriers.
- The Department of Public Health Engineering should test water quality across the settlements and prepare a joint water and sanitation improvement plan.
- The Ministry of Land and housing authorities should develop a tenure security and local integration proposal for households on government land, in line with the National Strategy on Internal Displacement Management 2021.
- Education, women affairs and labour authorities should map out-of-school children in the settlements and act on child labour and child marriage.

What the Evidence Says in Brief

The central story is not that climate-displaced people arrived in Satkhira and became poor. It is that many households report losing land, livelihood assets, secure housing and institutional access through displacement, and the systems intended to protect them have not yet restored a pathway to food, dignity and durable inclusion.

Section 1

From Displacement to Rights Deprivation

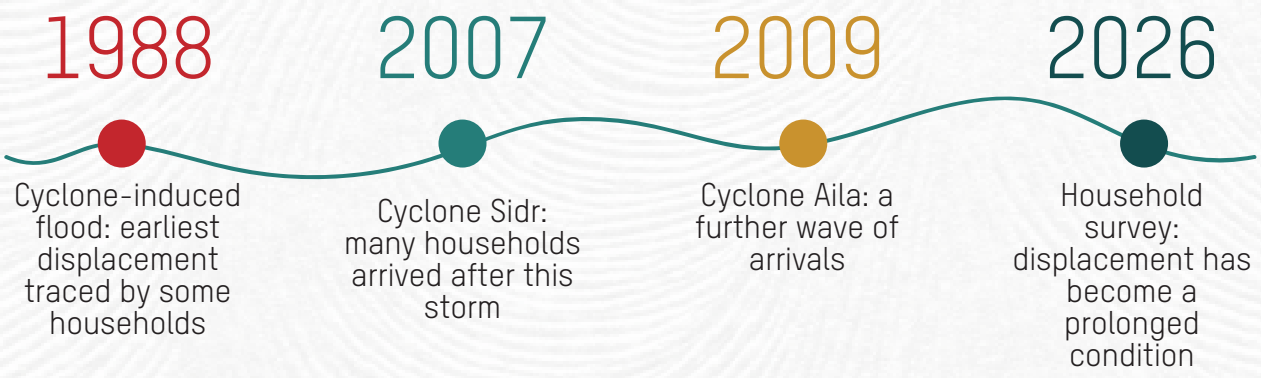
single event that ends when a household reaches a new location. For many families in Satkhira, displacement has become a prolonged condition. Some surveyed households trace their displacement to the 1988 cyclone-induced flood, while many others arrived following Cyclone Sidr in 2007 and Cyclone Aila in 2009. Flooding and waterlogging were reported as the most common immediate triggers.

The National Strategy defines internally displaced persons broadly to include people forced or obliged to leave their homes because of disasters and climatic processes without crossing an international border. It also distinguishes temporary, intermediate and permanent displacement.

The Strategy states that local integration is appropriate when people cannot return because environmental conditions have degraded or because hazards such as riverbank erosion and salinity make return unsafe or unviable. It specifically calls for in-situ upgrading of informal settlements, tenure security, low-cost housing, livelihood support, restored documentation and participation in local public life.

This makes Satkhira an important test of implementation. The question is no longer only how to evacuate people during the next disaster. The question is how to ensure that people who have already lost their original homes and livelihoods can live with dignity, access services, claim entitlements and participate in decisions that affect their lives.

Displacement as a prolonged condition: milestones reported by surveyed households



For households displaced decades ago, retrospective estimates of pre-displacement income may be affected by substantial recall bias, particularly where displacement dates back to 1988.

Three durable solutions recognised in the National Strategy

Return
Going back to the place of origin, where safe and viable

Local integration
Appropriate when people cannot return because environmental conditions have degraded or hazards make return unsafe

Resettlement
Relocation to a new, planned location

What local integration requires under the National Strategy



In-situ upgrading of informal settlements



Tenure security



Low-cost housing



Livelihood support



Restored documentation



Participation in local public life

Section 2

Why This Is a Human Rights Case

From

"What assistance do these families need?"

To

"What rights are they unable to enjoy, what barriers prevent access, and which institutions have responsibilities to remove those barriers?"

The study is framed around the principle that people affected by displacement are rights-holders, while public authorities carry duties. This changes the question from "What assistance do these families need?" to "What rights are they unable to enjoy, what barriers prevent access, and which institutions have responsibilities to remove those barriers?"

The right to adequate food is central to this analysis. Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recognises adequate food as part of an adequate standard of living and identifies freedom from hunger as a fundamental right. General Comment No. 12 explains that the right to adequate food is realised when everyone has physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or the means to obtain it. It also emphasises that States have duties to respect, protect and fulfil the right, including taking action to alleviate hunger during disasters.

The right to food therefore cannot be reduced to the presence of food in markets or the number of calories consumed. Economic access matters. Safe water, sanitation, health, housing, livelihood, social protection, land and information all shape whether people can obtain adequate food sustainably. The framework used for this study similarly identifies productive resources, employment and income, gender equality, health, sanitation, social protection and education as key conditions for realising the right to food.

Bangladesh's Constitution provides a strong national foundation. Article 15 identifies food, clothing, shelter, education and medical care as basic necessities that the State has a fundamental responsibility to secure. It also recognises the right to work and social security. Article 18 identifies nutrition and public health as primary duties. Articles 27 and 28 establish equality before law and prohibit specified forms of discrimination, while Article 32 protects the right to life and personal liberty.

For this case study, Article 32 is especially important when read together with the State's constitutional responsibilities under Articles 15 and 18. A life protected in law requires conditions in which people can survive with dignity. The study does not claim that every documented deprivation automatically constitutes a judicially established violation.

It shows, however, that serious and persistent barriers exist between constitutional commitments and the lived enjoyment of rights.

The National Strategy strengthens this interpretation. It states that displacement has grave implications for rights and entitlements, including unequal access to essential goods and services, loss of documents, lack of effective complaint mechanisms, unequal access to employment and livelihoods, forced relocation, unsafe return or resettlement, and lack of property restitution and access to land.

Legal and policy frameworks underpinning the right to adequate food

Constitution of Bangladesh

Art. 15: basic necessities & social security · Art. 18: nutrition & public health · Arts. 27–28: equality · Art. 32: life & liberty

National Strategy on Internal Displacement Management 2021

Food, water, sanitation, health, livelihood, social protection, documentation, participation, durable solutions



Right to adequate food and nutrition

Physical and economic access, at all times

ICESCR Article 11 & General Comment No. 12

Adequate food as part of an adequate standard of living; freedom from hunger; duties to respect, protect and fulfil

UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement

Safety, nutrition, health and hygiene; displacement no longer than circumstances require

Section 3

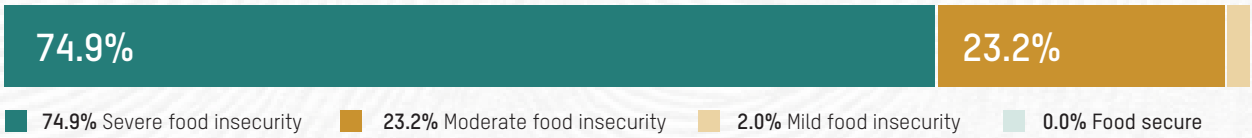
What the People Are Experiencing

3.1 Food Is Available in the Market, but Access Is Failing

The strongest finding of the study concerns food access. Three complementary indicators, the Food Consumption Score (FCS), Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES), and household coping indicators, show that households are experiencing serious and persistent food stress.

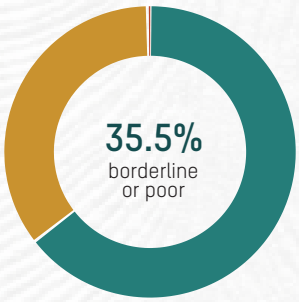
The FCS classified 64.5 percent of households as having an acceptable food consumption score, while 35.2 percent were classified as borderline and 0.3 percent as poor. The FCS categories shown here use WFP's standard cut-offs (poor: 21 or below; borderline: 21.5–35; acceptable: above 35). WFP also publishes adjusted cut-offs (28/42) for contexts where these are appropriate. The share classified as acceptable may decrease if adjusted cut-offs are applied; this has not been recalculated in the present tabulation. FCS alone should not be interpreted as proof of a nutritionally adequate diet.

Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES): no surveyed household was food secure



Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding (N = 358; n = 268, 83 and 7).

Food Consumption Score (FCS)



64.5% Acceptable (>35) n=231

35.2% Borderline (21.5–35) n=126

0.3% Poor (≤21) · n=1

Acceptable is not adequate.

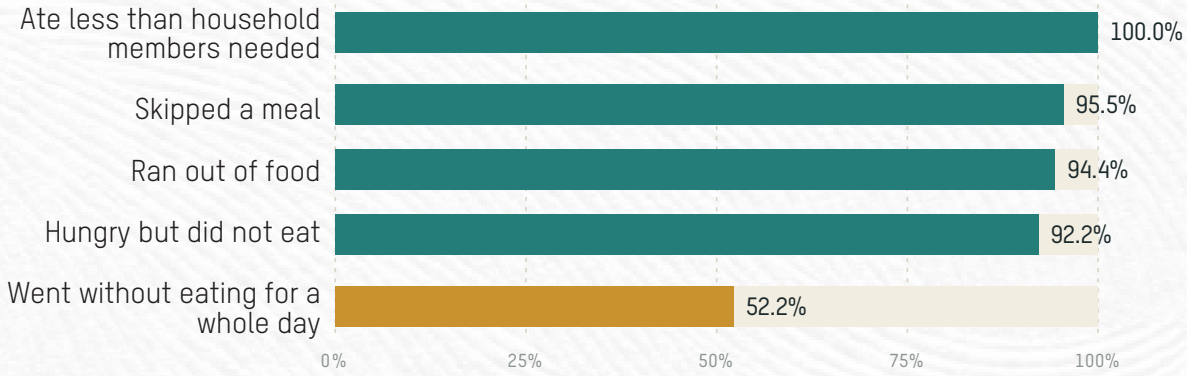
An acceptable Food Consumption Score should not by itself be read as evidence of a nutritionally adequate diet.

Experience-based indicators show that three in four households are severely food insecure.

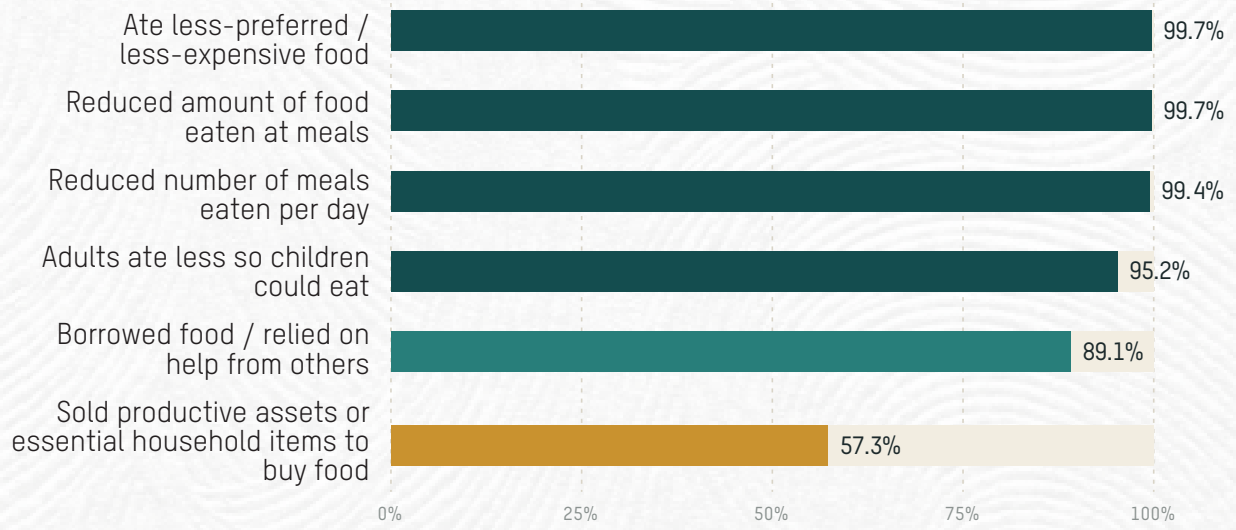
Thus, 35.5 percent of households had a borderline or poor FCS. This finding becomes more concerning when considered alongside the experience-based indicators. No surveyed household was classified as food secure on the FIES. Overall, 74.9 percent of households were severely food insecure, 23.2 percent moderately food insecure, and 2.0 percent mildly food insecure.

The FIES item responses show what these figures mean in everyday life. Every surveyed household reported eating less than household members needed. In addition, 95.5 percent reported skipping a meal,

Food deprivation experienced by households (N = 358)



Coping strategies used to manage food shortage



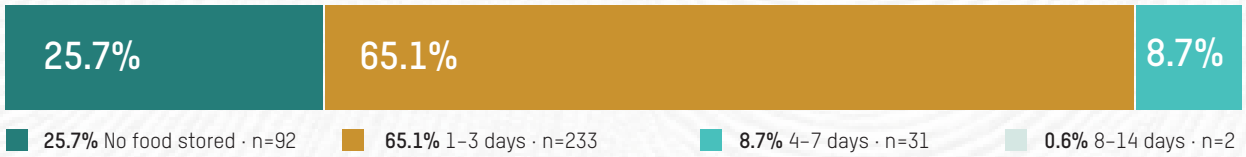
The last bar is an asset-based coping strategy; all others are food-based.

Chart note: N = 358; recall period: past 7 days. "Adults ate less so children could eat" is calculated among households with children

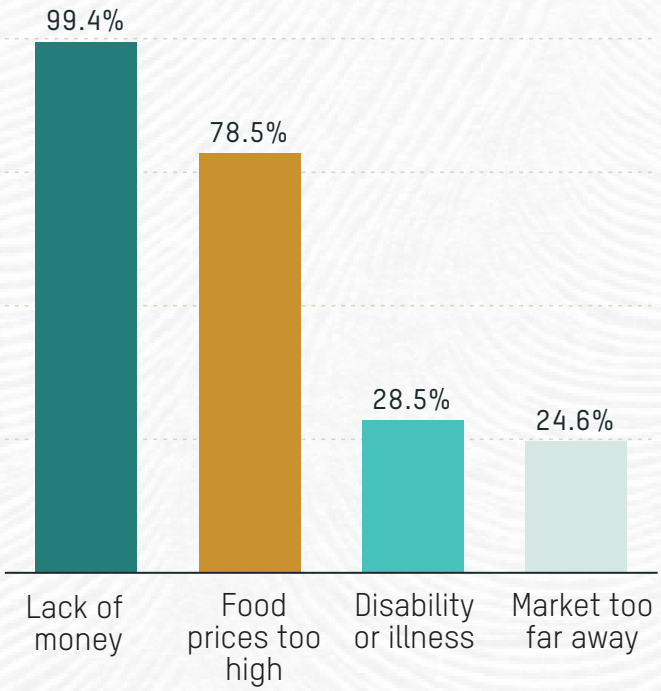
94.4 percent ran out of food, 92.2 percent experienced hunger without eating, and 52.2 percent went an entire day without eating. Households also reported reducing meal sizes, buying cheaper foods, reducing the number of meals, borrowing food or relying on help from others, and reducing adult food consumption so that children could eat.

The food-reserve data further reveal how fragile household food access is. Overall, 90.8 percent of households had either no food stored or enough food for no more than three days. Specifically, 65.1 percent had food available for one to three days, while 25.7 percent had no food stored. Households therefore remained highly dependent on regular purchases and borrowing, making food access particularly vulnerable to income loss, high food prices and disruptions in informal support.

Household food reserve on the day of the survey



Barriers to obtaining food



Money, not markets.

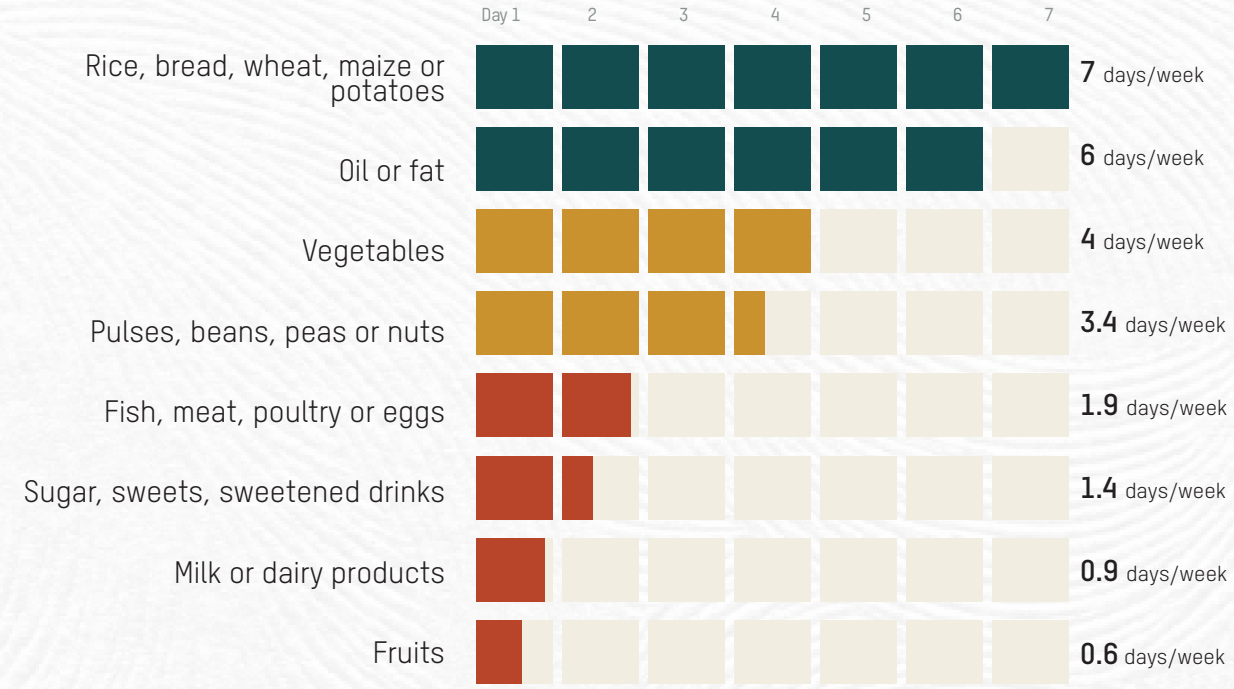
Almost every household (99.4%) named lack of money as a barrier, and 78.5% said prices were too high.

Distance to market was a barrier for 24.6%, far fewer than those citing lack of money.

Multiple responses allowed; N = 358.

The nutritional dimension is equally important. Cereals were consumed every day on average, while fish, meat, poultry or eggs were consumed on average only 1.9 days per week, dairy products 0.9 days, and fruits 0.6 days. Therefore, an acceptable Food Consumption Score should not be interpreted by itself as evidence of a nutritionally adequate diet. The findings indicate that the adequacy of household diets must be considered in terms of both quantity and dietary diversity.

Dietary frequency: average number of days per week each food group was eaten



Cereals every day; animal protein under two days a week; fruit less than one day a week.

The findings indicate serious barriers to the enjoyment of the right to adequate food among surveyed climate-displaced households. Widespread hunger, reduced food consumption, declining income, loss of productive assets, limited food reserves, and reliance on coping strategies demonstrate a substantial gap between the right to adequate food and people's lived conditions. The findings therefore raise serious concerns about the effective fulfilment of the right to food.

3.2 Unsafe Water Is Undermining the Right to Food and Health

Water insecurity is not a separate issue from food security. 96.9 percent of surveyed households reported relying at least partly on shallow tube-well water that they described as saline or iron-contaminated for household use. Survey tabulations reported a distance of approximately 244 metres to drinking-water sources and a collection time of about 21 minutes. The available summary does not specify whether the distance represents a mean or a median, or whether the collection time covers one-way or return travel. Only 17.6 percent reported that their drinking water source was always available throughout the year.

Water quality · household use

96.9% reported relying at least partly on shallow tube-well water described by respondents as saline or iron-contaminated for household use.

Water availability · drinking

82.4% main water source was not always available, or only periodically available

Health impact

50.0% of households reported at least one member experiencing a potentially water-related illness during the previous month (self-reported; not clinically confirmed).

Treatment response among affected households (n = 179)



52.5% No formal treatment / household care **41.9%** Partial treatment **5.6%** Complete treatment

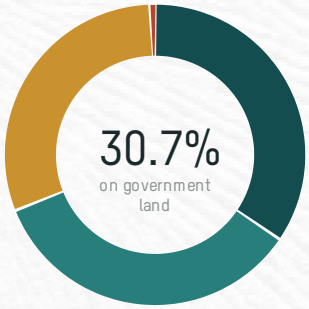
The health consequences are visible in the data. Half of surveyed households reported at least one member experiencing diarrhoea, dysentery, fever, skin disease or another waterborne or water-related illness (self-reported) in the previous month. Among affected households, 52.5 percent received no formal treatment or only household care.

The connection to the right to food is direct. Adequate food must be safe, and the right to health depends on underlying determinants including safe water, sanitation, food and housing. International human rights standards therefore treat these rights as interconnected rather than isolated entitlements.

3.3 Housing and Land Insecurity Keep Displacement Alive

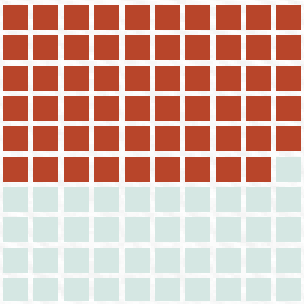
Only 34.1 percent of surveyed households reported owning the land they occupied. 34.1 percent rented their dwelling, 30.7 percent informally occupied government-owned land and 1.1 percent reported other arrangements. Among the 110 households living on government land, 59 percent reported eviction or threats of eviction. Households renting their dwelling also lack secure tenure, so the share without secure tenure is larger than the 30.7 percent on government land.

Current housing and land tenure



- **34.1%** Own land
- **34.1%** Rented dwelling
- **30.7%** Occupied govt. land
- **1.1%** Other

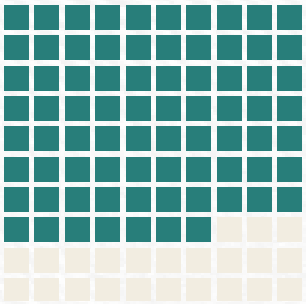
Eviction risk on government land



59%

of households living on government land reported eviction or threats of eviction (n = 110)

Flooding of the dwelling



77.1%

of households had their dwelling flooded in the preceding 12 months

Housing insecurity affects more than shelter. A household that can be evicted cannot easily invest in housing improvements, sanitation, food storage, livelihood assets or productive activities. It may also remain outside formal municipal planning and service systems. The study found that 77.1 percent of households experienced flooding of their dwelling during the preceding 12 months.

The National Strategy explicitly calls for in-situ upgrading of informal settlements, tenure security for urban poor, low-cost housing and protection during eviction. It also says that durable solutions must include adequate living standards, livelihoods, housing and land, essential documents, participation and access to justice.

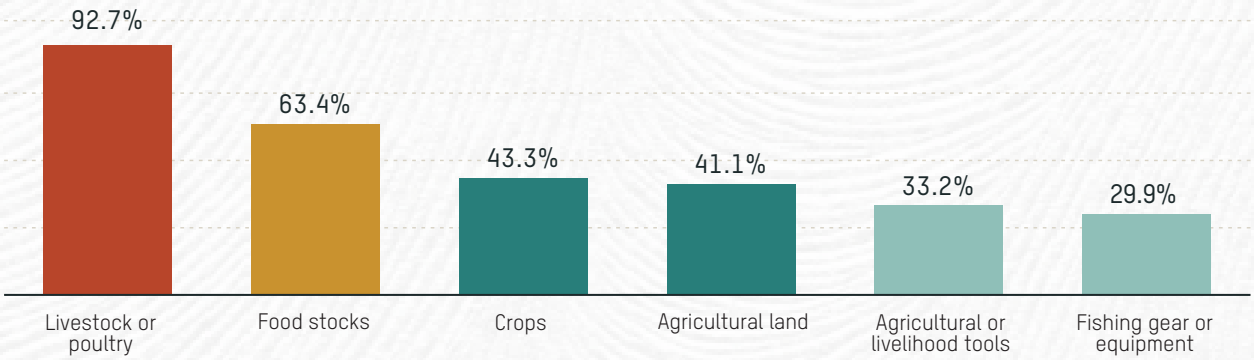
International housing standards similarly treat security of tenure, safe water, sanitation, food storage, drainage, access to employment and services as elements of adequate housing.

3.4 Households Report Major Loss of Productive Assets and Livelihood Options

The displacement experience involved major loss of productive assets. 92.7 percent of households lost livestock or poultry, 63.4 percent lost food stocks, 43.3 percent lost crops, 41.1 percent lost agricultural land, 33.2 percent lost agricultural or livelihood tools, and 29.9 percent lost fishing gear or equipment.

Displacement also changed the economic base of households. Many moved from farming, fishing and pastoral activities into day labour, van or rickshaw driving, domestic work and small informal trade. Among respondents for whom a retrospective income comparison was possible, 46.3 percent reported lower current earnings than before displacement. 52.8 percent of households said their ability to access sufficient and nutritious food had decreased since displacement.

Productive assets lost due to displacement (% of households)



Multiple responses allowed; N = 358.

Before displacement
Farming
Fishing
Pastoral activities

After displacement
Day labour
Van or rickshaw driving
Domestic work
Small informal trade

46.3%

reported lower current income than before displacement

52.8%

said their ability to access sufficient, nutritious food had decreased

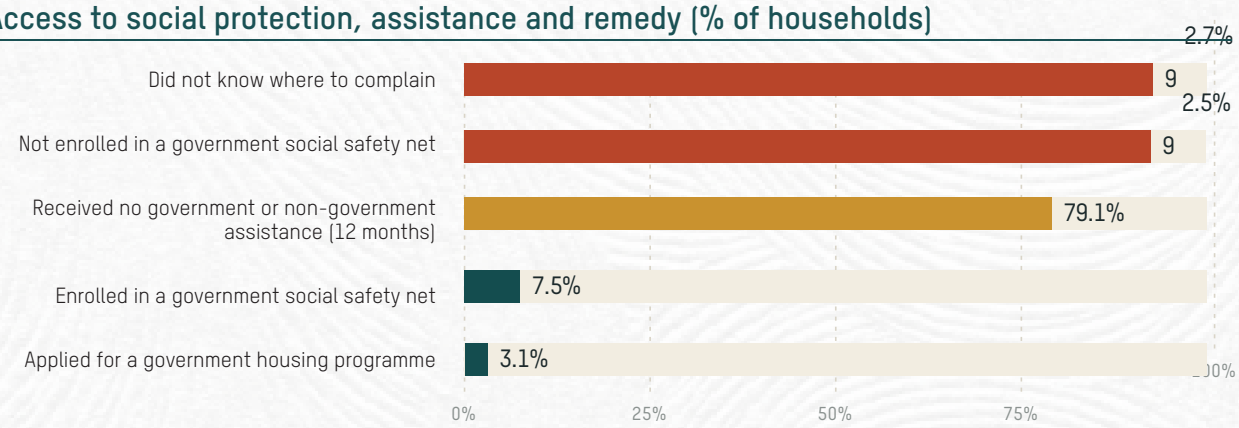
This is precisely the type of gap the National Strategy identifies. It calls for livelihood diversification, off-farm employment, skills development, market analysis before training, access to jobs, and special attention to women and other marginalised groups.

3.5 Social Protection Is the Missing Bridge

Only 7.5 percent of surveyed households were enrolled in a government social safety net programme. 92.5 percent were not enrolled. Only 3.1 percent had applied for a government housing programme. 79.1 percent had received no government or non-government assistance during the previous 12 months.

The problem is not only coverage but also access to information and remedies. Respondents identified lack of accurate information, missing NID documents, permanent-address requirements, unresolved voter registration and perceived discrimination or favouritism as barriers. A total of 92.7 percent of surveyed households did not know where to lodge a complaint when assistance was denied or inadequate. The survey summary records one household reporting a resolved complaint, but does not separately specify the number that lodged complaints. A complaint-resolution rate therefore cannot be calculated from the available summary.

Access to social protection, assistance and remedy (% of households)



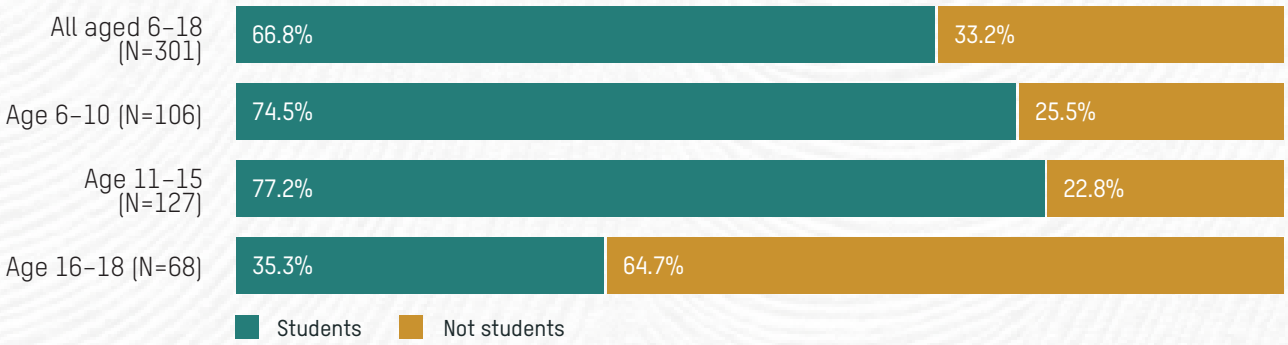
The National Strategy calls for a special provision so displaced people can continue receiving social protection after displacement. It also calls for restoration of documents, NID registration at new residences and participation in public affairs.

This creates a practical advocacy opportunity. Some exclusion appears administrative rather than purely financial. A community that knows its eligibility, possesses the required documentation and has a clear complaint pathway may be able to access existing programmes more effectively. That makes rights literacy and administrative facilitation important components of the solution.

3.6 Education Is Being Sacrificed to Manage Food and Income Stress

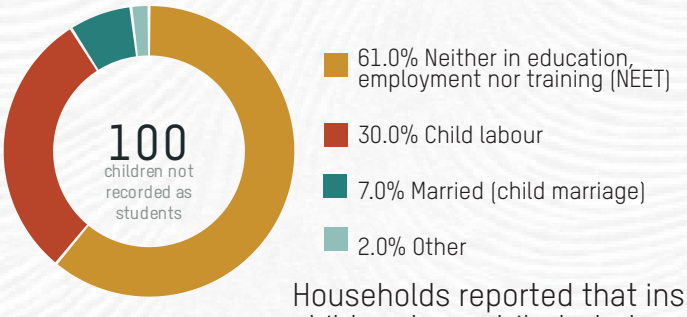
Among the 301 assessed household members aged 6–18 years, 66.8 percent were recorded as students, while 33.2 percent were not recorded as students. Student participation is lowest among adolescents aged 16–18 years, of whom only 35.3 percent were recorded as students. Among the 100 children and adolescents who were not recorded as students, 61 percent were not engaged in education or training. A further 30 percent were engaged in child labour, while 7 percent were married before the age of 18, which constitutes child marriage.

Table 1 · Educational enrolment of children and adolescents aged 6–18



Some children aged six may not yet have been enrolled, which partly explains the share of non-students in the 6–10 age group.

What children not in school are doing (N = 100)



The steepest drop is at 16–18.

Only 35.3% of adolescents aged 16–18 were recorded as students, compared with 77.2% of those aged 11–15.

Households reported that insufficient food or income, pressure on children to contribute to household earnings, and documentation problems contributed to school disruption. The National Strategy explicitly states that displaced children should have access to education and that lack of previous school records should not be used to deny access. It also links skills and education to the right to livelihood.

Section 4

The National Strategy Is Already a Roadmap. The Gap Is Implementation

The National Strategy on Internal Displacement Management 2021 provides a strong basis for responding to the situation documented in Satkhira. It adopts a rights-based approach and places prevention, protection during displacement and durable solutions within one framework. The Strategy states that its future programmes and actions should be designed under the Strategy and encourages other stakeholders to use it in supporting displaced populations.

The table below identifies where the Satkhira evidence intersects with commitments already present in the Strategy. The issue should move from an informal settlement problem to a recognised municipal displacement and inclusion issue.

National Strategy commitment	Evidence from Satkhira	Rights concern
Ensure rights to water, food, sanitation and medical treatment.	96.9% relied at least partly on water reported as saline or iron-contaminated. 74.9% were severely food insecure. Half of households reported a member with water-related illness in the previous month.	The rights to food, health, water and adequate living conditions are not being fully enjoyed.
Continue social allowances after displacement.	Only 7.5% were enrolled in a government social safety net.	Displacement appears to interrupt access to entitlements.
Restore documents and ensure NID registration at new residence.	92.7% did not know where to complain. NID, address, and voter registration problems were reported as barriers.	Administrative exclusion can block access to rights and public services.
Ensure local integration of permanently displaced people through in-situ upgrading and tenure security.	30.7% informally occupied government land. 59% of those households reported eviction or threats.	Insecure tenure undermines housing, safety, livelihood recovery and service access.
Provide livelihood support and access to jobs.	46.3% reported lower income than before displacement. 92.7% lost livestock or poultry and 41.1% lost agricultural land.	Loss of productive resources restricts economic access to food.
Ensure meaningful participation in decisions on integration and resettlement.	Residents described limited institutional routes for complaint and participation (field visit and key informant interview; not measured in the household survey).	People affected by decisions have weak influence over decisions affecting their lives.

Section 5

Who Needs to Act?

Actor	Priority responsibility	Immediate engagement route
Satkhira Municipality	Local integration, water, sanitation, drainage, urban services, inclusion in municipal planning and complaint mechanisms.	Quarterly community forum dialogue and municipal rights scorecard.
District Administration and relevant disaster management authorities	Displacement coordination, protection, relief linkage, durable solutions and coordination across agencies.	Present settlement evidence and request a displacement coordination meeting.
Department of Social Services and social protection agencies	Programme access, targeting, enrolment and continuity of benefits after displacement.	Settlement-level entitlement and enrolment clinics.
Election Commission and local administration	NID and voter registration, correction and restoration of documentation.	Mobile registration and documentation camps.
Department of Public Health Engineering and relevant water authorities	Safe drinking water, water quality, sanitation and infrastructure.	Joint water map, testing and service improvement plan.
Education authorities	School enrolment, documentation flexibility, school feeding and prevention of dropout.	Settlement child education mapping and school access plan.
Health authorities	Accessible primary health, nutrition and referral services.	Mobile or outreach clinics and referral mapping.
Ministry of Land and housing authorities	Land access, tenure security, housing and durable resettlement options.	Evidence-based tenure and local integration proposal.

Section 6

Right to Food Framework

Bangladesh is bound by international human rights commitments that reinforce the national framework. The right to adequate food is recognised under Article 11 of the ICESCR. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights explains that adequate food requires physical and economic access at all times and that States must act to mitigate hunger even during disasters.

The UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement provide a complementary framework. They emphasise that displacement should not last longer than required by circumstances and require protection of safety, nutrition, health and hygiene. They also require authorities to explore alternatives to displacement and minimise its adverse effects. As affirmed in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (1993), all human rights are indivisible, interdependent and interrelated.

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) approach to durable solutions, reflected in Bangladesh's National Strategy, identifies safety and security, adequate living standards, livelihoods, housing, land and property, essential documents, participation, access to remedies and family reunification as eight interconnected criteria. The Satkhira findings show gaps across seven of these eight criteria; family reunification was not assessed.

Safety and security	Adequate living standards	Livelihoods	Housing, land and property
59% **of households on government land (~18% of all surveyed) faced eviction or threats**	96.9% relied on saline or iron-contaminated water	46.3% reported lower income than before displacement	30.7% informally occupied government land

Essential documents	Participation	Access to remedies	Overall
NID address and voter registration problems reported as barriers	Limited **reported in field visit and key informant interview; not measured in the survey**	92.7% did not know where to complain	7 of 8 assessed family reunification not assessed

In line with international human rights principles on internal displacement, affected persons should be recognized as rights holders whose voices, priorities, and meaningful participation are central to all decisions that affect their lives.

Section 7

Methodology

Design and Sampling Frame

This study adopted a cross-sectional household survey design based on Uttoron's enumeration of 7,573 climate-displaced families across 47 informal settlements in Satkhira Municipality. The survey covered 358 households in 35 settlements (6,272 families) across nine wards, with at least five households interviewed per settlement. Households were recruited through non-probability snowball sampling; therefore, findings are not statistically representative of all displaced families.

Complementary qualitative inputs included a field visit to Islampur Colony 1 on 9 July 2026, a key informant interview with the Municipality's Social Development Officer, and a review of newspaper coverage. These informed the study context but were excluded from quantitative estimates.

The required sample size was calculated using Cochran's formula for a single proportion, subsequently adjusted with a finite population correction (FPC) to account for the known size of the sampling frame. At a 95 percent confidence level (Z = 1.96), an assumed proportion of p = 0.5 (maximum variance) and a margin of error of e = 5.06 percent, the uncorrected sample size was calculated as:

Sample Size Determination

Confidence level
95% (Z = 1.96)

Assumed proportion
p = 0.5

Margin of error
e = 5.06%

Sampling frame
N = 6,272

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 p(1-p)}{e^2} = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}{0.0506^2} = \mathbf{375.10}$$

Finite population correction for a sampling frame of N = 6,272 families:

$$n = \frac{n_0}{1 + \frac{n_0 - 1}{N}} = \frac{375.10}{1 + \frac{375.10 - 1}{6{,}272}} = \frac{375.10}{1.0596} = 353.99 \approx 354$$

354 households

This gave a target of 354 households. A total of 358 household questionnaires were completed, covering 1,341 household members. Because households within each settlement were identified through snowball sampling rather than random selection, and no design effect was applied for clustering by settlement, the margin of error stated above is indicative only and should not be read as a formal measure of sampling precision.

Sample allocation

The study included 35 selected colonies comprising 6,272 families out of the 7,573 families enumerated across 47 colonies. The completed sample of 358 households was distributed across the 35 selected colonies, with a minimum allocation of five households per colony. Table 2 presents the resulting allocation.

Families in the sampling frame and households sampled, by ward

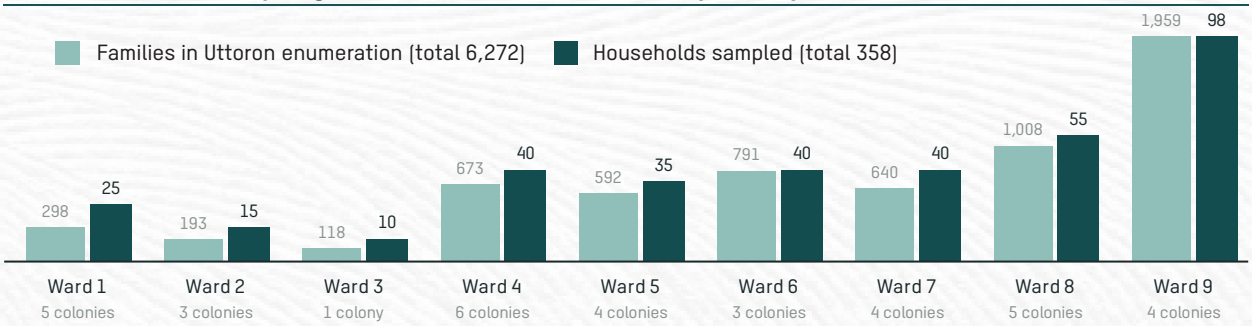


Table 2 · Sample allocation by ward and colony

SL	Ward	Colony / Para	Families	Sample
1	1	Katiya Math Para	103	5
2	1	Katiya Moddhopara	49	5
3	1	Uttor Katiya	47	5
4	1	Godaibil	30	5
5	1	Katiya & Dashpara	69	5
6	2	Das Para	35	5
7	2	Rajarbagan, Munjitpur & Munshipara	93	5
8	2	Katiya Sarkar Para	65	5
9	3	Puraton Satkhira Ghoshpara	118	10
10	4	Sultanpur Colony	317	15
11	4	Sultanpur Sarderpara	89	5
12	4	Sultanpur PTI	81	5
13	4	Sultanpur Shaha Para	64	5
14	4	Sultanpur Jhill Para	76	5
15	4	Sultanpur Kazipara	46	5
16	5	Gorar Kanda	378	20
17	5	Bagan Bari	104	5
18	5	Bhatkakhali	65	5
19	5	Dangipara	45	5
20	6	Bakal Islampur	418	20
21	6	Thanagata Colony	231	10
22	6	Kukhrali	142	10
23	7	Itagachha	277	15
24	7	Itagachha Bow Bazar	115	10
25	7	WAPDA	144	10
26	7	Itagachha Purbopara	104	5
27	8	Kamalnagar	377	20
28	8	Dakhin Kamalnagar	263	15
29	8	Polashpole Dakhin	150	10
30	8	Malek Para	106	5
31	8	Polashpole	112	5
32	9	Modhumollardangi	1,090	53
33	9	Rasulpur	591	30
34	9	Mehedibag	234	10
35	9	Char Balitha Debhata	44	5

Within each sampled colony, a snowball technique was used to identify eligible households, that is, families displaced by environmental factors, since no complete, updated household listing existed at the colony level to permit strict random selection at the final stage.

Data collection instrument and procedure

The research team developed a structured questionnaire in English and then translated it into Bangla for household data collection. The questionnaire was programmed using KoboToolbox. The questionnaire covered household demographics, displacement history, livelihoods and income, housing and land tenure, water and sanitation, health, food security, and access to social protection. The food-security module incorporated the Food Consumption Score, Food Insecurity Experience Scale, and Reduced Coping Strategies Index. A household roster recorded each member's age, sex, occupation, educational status, and possession of identity documents.

Enumerators and supervisors participated in a full-day training session covering the questionnaire, interview procedures, research ethics, the code of conduct, safeguarding, and the use of KoboToolbox. The training also included field testing to assess the questionnaire's clarity, sequencing, technical functionality, and suitability for field implementation.

One field supervisor accompanied four enumerators and monitored their work throughout the data-collection process. Completed questionnaires were transmitted electronically to the PRAAN office in real time. The research team reviewed each submission for completeness, internal consistency, accuracy, and potential data-entry errors before approving it for inclusion in the final dataset.

Data Processing and Analysis

The cleaned dataset of 358 households and 1,341 household members was analysed using descriptive statistics. Food security indicators were computed as follows. The FCS was categorised using the WFP standard thresholds of poor (≤21), borderline (21.5–35) and acceptable (>35). Oil or fat was consumed on an average of six days per week, whereas sugar and sweets were consumed on an average of 1.4 days per week. WFP provides both standard FCS cut-offs (21/35) and adjusted cut-offs (28/42) for relevant contexts. The reported distribution uses the standard cut-offs, and the distribution under adjusted cut-offs is not presented here. Therefore, the 64.5 percent of households classified as having acceptable food consumption under the standard cut-offs should not be taken, by itself, as evidence of nutritionally adequate diets.

The FIES raw score (0–8) was grouped into mild (1–3), moderate (4–6) and severe (7–8) food insecurity, with a score of zero denoting food security; these raw-score cut-offs are a commonly applied approximation, and FAO's Rasch-based prevalence estimates were not

computed. The rCSI was grouped into medium (4–18) and high (>18) reliance on food-based coping strategies, following commonly applied field thresholds. All percentages reported in Section 3 are calculated against the number of households or individuals for whom a valid response was recorded for that item.

Ethical considerations

Before each interview, enumerators explained the purpose of the study, that participation was voluntary, and that respondents could decline any question or stop at any time. Verbal informed consent was obtained from an adult household member. No individual names or addresses are reported in this publication. Survey responses were captured using KoboToolbox and transmitted electronically to the PRAAN research team for quality review; the data were accessible only to the research team. Information about children, including school status, work and marriage, was collected from adult respondents through the household roster; no child was interviewed directly.

Classification thresholds

Food Consumption Score (WFP thresholds)



Food Insecurity Experience Scale (raw score 0–8)



Reduced Coping Strategies Index: households by reliance



No surveyed household scored low enough to fall into a "minimal" category.

Limitations

1
Single point in time

Cross-sectional design cannot establish causal trends.

2
Self-report and recall

7-to-30-day recall periods, mitigated by validated instruments.

3
Snowball selection

Possible bias toward more socially connected households.

4
No comparison group / untested water

Water quality was self-reported; no non-displaced comparison group.

Four limitations should be borne in mind when interpreting the findings. First, the cross-sectional design captures conditions at a single point in time and cannot establish causal relationships; links between displacement and current deprivation are based on household reports. Second, food security and health indicators rely on household self-report and 7-to-30-day recall periods, which are subject to standard recall bias, though this is mitigated by the use of internationally validated, standardised instruments; reports of pre-displacement income and assets rely on much longer recall. Third, the 35 settlements were not selected at random, and the snowball technique used to identify households within each settlement is a non-probability method, chosen because no complete household listing existed at settlement level. This may introduce selection bias toward more socially connected households, and the estimates are unweighted. Fourth, there is no comparison group of non-displaced households, and water quality was reported by respondents rather than tested. The findings should therefore be interpreted as indicative of the surveyed households within the 35 covered settlements, comprising 6,272 families, rather than as statistically representative estimates of all 7,573 families across the municipality's 47 settlements.

Section 8

Conclusion: From Being Displaced to Being Heard

The Satkhira case demonstrates a form of displacement that does not end when people leave the hazard zone. For many households, displacement has been followed by another set of risks: insecure land, unsafe water, fragile livelihoods, weak social protection, limited access to health and education, and inadequate routes for claiming assistance.

The evidence is especially compelling on the right to food. Severe food insecurity, meal reduction, hunger and asset sales are occurring alongside unsafe water, livelihood loss and social protection exclusion. These conditions are interconnected. A household cannot sustainably realise the right to food when its income is insecure, its home is under threat, its water is unsafe and its access to public entitlements is blocked.

Bangladesh does not lack a policy direction. The National Strategy on Internal Displacement Management 2021 already calls for a rights-based approach, continued social protection, access to food and water, livelihood support, documentation, participation, tenure security and durable solutions. The priority now is implementation at the local level.

The practical pathway begins with recognition. The residents of these settlements should be recognised as rights-holders and as part of the municipality's social and development landscape. Community forums can then turn evidence into organised demands, document barriers, engage duty-bearers and monitor commitments. The aim is not indefinite relief. It is a pathway from displacement to rights, from vulnerability to voice, and from temporary coping to durable inclusion.

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To learn more about the campaign:
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