

Abstract

Primarily this study is an exploration of the governance dimensions in the context of the food security of the ethnic minorities of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT). In the age of globalization, governance becomes a catalytic factor among the community, state and global agencies because it is the process of exercising power in an institutional context with the main aim of directing, controlling and regulating activities concerned with the public interest (Salih:2009:501). The role of governance is diverse as the United Nations Organization, the Breton Woods Institutions, EU, ADB, USAID and civil society emphasis governance to ensure the rule of law, accountability, democracy, development and many current debating issues. But, the issue of governance in the case of the current global food crisis has not been properly emphasized by many of the policy makers, professionals and scholars (ibid). Thus food security should be a core focus of governance because it is the precondition for human security. Here, I have tried to analyze food security from the governance dimensions in order to grasp the real scenario of the field because food security inevitably interacts with the governance dimensions. I have employed three basic dimensions of the governance such as the joined up governance which requires cross portfolio action (Victoria Working Paper: No.1: 2007), the global governance which is concerned with regulating some global issues like climate change, food security etc (Rosaneu:1999) and the community governance which may make a vital contribution to governance where market contracts and government fiat fail (Bowles and Gintis: 2002). I have purposively selected the food security of the ethnic minorities of the CHT as a field of the study in order to have the various forms of governance dimensions. For the following grounds, CHT is culturally a mosaic like land, geographically different than rest part of the alluvial plains and administratively composes of a unity among diversity where traditional administration and special local government have been functioning with the presence of national structure of

administration. Thus this study has employed most of the qualitative research methods like participant observation, interview, focus group discussion and participatory rural appraisal which have given an ethnographic approach. In order to understand the whole scenario, I have tried to give a brief profile of the people and the field of the CHT which shows that the CHT comprise of a unique ecology, geography and culture. Moreover, I have come out with some findings from the experience of the fieldwork that have presented the food production system of the ethnic minorities of the CHT and their food security threats. As the ethnic minorities have been practicing a traditional cultivation system which is known as *jhum* thus their nature of food security threats are different than the rest of the country. I have analyzed some food security threats which are such as: land problems, reducing fallow period, administrative complexity, Bengali settlement, soil erosion, the reserve forest, deforestation and afforestation, animal attacks to the cultivation fields, the language barrier, and imbalance development project like Kaptai Dam, the market and the climate change. Finally I have tried to analyze the role of the governance dimensions in addressing these food security threats and the contribution for achieving food security of the ethnic minorities of the CHT.