St**or**ies of Targeting:

Process Documentation of Selecting the Ultra Poor for CFPR/TUP Programme

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Executive Summary

The targeting process for the CFPR/TUP programme aims to bring together diverse strands of knowledge on poverty (indigenous, local, programmatic and academic) in identifying and selecting CFPR/TUP beneficiaries (Matin and Halder 2002). The targeting process is, therefore, multi-staged and involves a variety of actors and processes.

The targeting process has four stages. Through each stage of the targeting process, diverse streams of knowledge are combined to identify a smaller and more defined sample from which ultra poor beneficiaries may be selected. The following are the targeting stages:

- Rapport Building
- PRA Meeting
- Survey and Preliminary Selection
- Final Selection

Four researchers were trained in Dhaka in Process Documentation Research (PDR) specifically and Qualitative Research, generally. They were then sent to PDR sites around the country to document the various stages of the targeting process. In between March 19, 2003 and April 30, 2003, the researchers sent back 28 reports covering 108 events/activities/stages to the Head Office. These process documentation reports have been consolidated into this final report.

The process documentation revealed the wealth and diversity of activities and interactions that constitute the various stages of the targeting process. We shall look at the trends and patterns in each of these stages separately, before commenting on the broader themes and issues that have emerged from the process documentation.

Rapport Building

The Rapport Building stage is, generally, the first point of contact between BRAC and community members in the context of the CFPR/TUP programme. Exceptions occur if the BRAC Area Office is close to the target locality or if the targeting process had been conducted in a neighbouring area, recently.

Determining a Target Area and Selecting a PRA Venue

POs have to determine the boundaries of the target area, covering approximately a 100 *khanas*. They also have to select a venue for the PRA meeting that is, ideally, central, shaded, relatively quiet and acceptable to the general community. In conducting these activities, POs follow two general strategies; either, they walk around the community collecting a diversity of opinions and observing various areas of the locality, or POs will ask one of the first community members they encounter to determine the target area and/or select a PRA venue. POs that followed the latter strategy often encountered difficulties; e.g., picking a venue that is unacceptable to a section of the community.

Inviting Community Members to the PRA Meeting

POs walk around the community members to the PRA. The process documentation has illustrated the significance of vocabulary in these invitations. POs use the term *dawat* frequently, and emphasize the religious significance of a *dawat* and a Muslim's duty to attend a *dawat*.

On the other hand, POs use the term *jorip* (survey) to describe PRA activities. While community members react positively to a *dawat*, they are more negative in their reaction to the term *jorip*. In some instances community members confuse BRAC's activities for a *bhumi jorip* (land survey). The researchers have noted that community members react more positively when the PRA is described as a meeting. The invitation is usually phrased as a *dawat* to a *jorip*; it may be more effective if phrased as a *dawat* to a meeting.

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The PRA Meeting

The PRA meeting, generally, takes on the character of a local event. Community members come and go from the PRA venue, standing around in circles and talking and laughing about a diversity of issues.

Mapmaking

PRA participants are asked to collectively draw a map of the target area indicating the major landmarks and distribution of *khanas*. The term *khana* causes some confusion and POs have to explain the term repeatedly. Once the term *khana* is explained, the PO usually selects someone to draw the map or asks for a volunteer. The mapmaker is usually a young man in his twenties or thirties. There were no instances of a female mapmaker.

The *khana* cards pinned on the maps indicated name of the *khana* head, husband's/father's name and occupation. Difficulties in filling in the information on the cards were solved in innovative ways. These included, asking *murubbis* (elderly), sending children from the PRA venue to the relevant *khana* or getting a copy of the voter list.

Wealth Ranking

The number of participants and the level of participation, generally, increased with the commencement of the Wealth Ranking. The Wealth Ranking was the scene of many *jhogras* (quarrels). In general, participants would try to prove themselves to be poor and many *jhogras* arose as a result. However, all *jhogras* cannot be characterized by selfish motives. *Jhogras* are also a sign of participation and debate. Many *jhogras* result from participants attempts to provide correct information - "What is the point of providing incorrect information." *Jhogras* may also result from participants attempts to prove others to be very poor.

Survey and Preliminary Selection

POs conduct a designed-questionnaire survey of the *khanas* ranked in the bottom one or two categories during the PRA Wealth Ranking. Although POs use a designed questionnaire, they do not ask questions directly from the questionnaire. In fact, POs ask indirect questions and play "Devil's Advocate" to extract the truth from respondents. Examples of such questioning include:

- I see you have built your house with nice new tin, does your husband do any work?"

- Did they give less wheat this time?

- *Bhabi*, don't you pay *kisti* (installment) on Sunday?

- Did you pay the loan that you had taken from Prashika back?

Through repeated and indirect questions, POs are actually able to extract "true" information from respondents. However, Respondents might react to such questioning, specially if they are telling the truth already. Examples of such reactions include:

- "what is the *beta* (young man) saying? I am poor but I do not get any wheat. Today's rule is that whoever has the stick is given wheat."

- "I do not have any income, so I do not have any *shomiti* (microfinance)."

POs use physical observations and these indirect questions to preliminarily select ultra poor for the CFPR/TUP programme.

Final Selection

The RSS or AC conduct the Final Selection. They visit the homes of preliminarily selected *khanas* and decide whether or not to finally select them. The RSS or AC uses many of the same techniques used by the PO during Survey and Preliminary Selection in finally selecting ultra poor.

The Final Selection itself is, however, debated between POs involved in earlier stages of the targeting process and the RSS or AC conducting Final Selection. POs develop a sense of attachment to the ultra poor that they have selected. They wait, expectantly, at the Area Office for the AC or RSS to return from Final Selection and to hear his decisions. One of the researchers compared the mood of the POs to students waiting for examination results. If the PO disagrees with the RSS or AC's decision, they will debate with them and there have been occasions when the RSS or AC has reviewed and revised their earlier decision.

Issues and Themes Emerging from PDR

There are several issues and themes than run throughout the stages of the targeting process. These issues emerge from the interaction of a variety of players and institutions. The community expresses certain reactions towards the entrance of BRAC into their local areas. The management of such a complex and multi-staged targeting process also raises certain issues. BRAC's person on the ground - the PO - usually has to negotiate and manage the issues that arise from the interactions of BRAC and the local community.

Community Reactions

The community reactions towards BRAC illustrate the local-level complexities that underlie the whole targeting process. BRAC's entrance into a local community is not, by any means, a straightforward and simple process. Community members develop and express a diversity of opinions and emotions towards BRAC. There are two generalized and primary community reactions towards BRAC:

- Expectations of Assistance from BRAC
- BRAC as an anti-Islam, pro-Bush and Christianizing Organization

Expectations of Assistance from BRAC

The community expresses expectations of assistance from BRAC, throughout various stages of the targeting process. Expectations of assistance were, most frequently, vaguely

expressed - along the lines of BRAC will do "something". Expectations were, usually, of *gomer card* (VGD cards), *shomiti* (microfinance committee), BRAC school, tin for their houses, *goru-chhagol* (cows-goats, i.e. assets), etc.

Expectations grow as a result of repeat visits from BRAC representatives. The POs visit to selective houses after the PRA meeting raises resentment amongst the larger community and deepens expectations amongst surveyed households. Expectations climax with the arrival of "*boro sir*" (the AC or RSS) on his motorcycle.

BRAC as an anti-Islam, pro-Bush and Christianizing Organization

Throughout the targeting process, several community members expressed strong suspicions of BRAC as an anti-Islam organization. During Rapport Building, some community members attempted to dissuade people from attending the PRA meeting by saying that they will make Christians over there. During the PRA mapmaking, some community members asked if they are making a map to give to Bush so he can bomb the community, like Iraq. During the survey, some community members suggested that BRAC is playing on people's greed to make them Christians.

The side-by-side existence of expectations of assistance and suspicions of BRAC's motives creates an interesting situation. In some cases, one view of BRAC will override the other; i.e., expectations of assistance will overrule suspicions of BRAC and community members will accept assistance regardless or vice versa, and community members will refuse BRAC's assistance.

Programmatic Issues

The management of the targeting process involves several actors and institutions and, as a result complications may arise.

Visits from the head office put the targeting process under strain. On one occasion, POs did not conduct a designated PRA meeting because of a visit from the Head Office. In

another instance, POs rushed through Rapport Building in several areas, conducted under stress and unsatisfactorily, because senior management from the Head Office might attend the PRA meeting.

Also, senior management in the Area Office often give a low priority to the CFPR/TUP programme. ACs or RSSs often delay the Final Selection and there are many preliminarily selected TUP awaiting Final Selection. The POs are often disheartened by these delays.

Further, asset-ing and targeting are taking place simultaneously in many neighbourhoods. This undermines one of the objectives of the targeting, keeping BRAC's programmatic purposes secret.

Gender Imbalances

A disturbing trend throughout the targeting process was a tendency to exclude women, not only on the part of male community members but POs as well. There was a tendency to exclude women during each and every stage of the targeting process. E.g.,

- "[To the husband] It is very important you attend the meeting. [To the wife] You can come, if you want" (a PO making invitations during Rapport Building).

- "If the *daal* rises higher than the *bhat*, there is a problem" (A male participant during a PRA Meeting).

- "Why do you have to talk to her, can't you just talk to me?" (Respondent's husband during survey)

BRAC certainly needs to do more to ensure inclusion of women during the targeting process. POs themselves expressed an unwillingness to involve women because they have a tendency to quarrel too much and do not always provide correct information. Besides, they are of the opinion that men know more as they spend more time outside the house.

Celebrating Human Capabilities

The targeting process brings together diverse streams of knowledge on poverty in selecting the ultra poor. The process documentation has demonstrated the complexities and complications that arise at the confluence of diverse knowledge streams. The human figures at this confluence - community members and BRAC POs - have demonstrated tremendous capabilities, worthy of celebration, in negotiating complications and complexities in successfully carrying out the targeting process.

Community members demonstrate considerable local knowledge and accumulated wisdom in their participation in the targeting process. Without these contributions, the targeting process would not be able to bring together diverse knowledge streams. Community members have facilitated the targeting mechanism in a variety of small but important ways, with seemingly minor suggestions or physical acts of assistance.

The BRAC POs also contribute their own knowledge on poverty, accumulated through experiences in the field, to the targeting process. POs, additionally, have to negotiate between several difficult positions. BRAC's person on the ground has to negotiate between community expectations of BRAC and community suspicions of BRAC and deal with programmatic difficulties in successfully implementing the targeting process.

The successful implementation of the targeting process is, ultimately, dependent on these two groups of actors who stand at the confluence of the knowledge streams - BRAC POs and Community Members. The tremendous capability they demonstrate in successfully implementing this process and selecting the Ultra Poor is worthy of celebration.

Future Research Issues

The process documentation is a valuable resource for future research into a variety of issues. The richness of the data makes it possible to conduct a variety of research activities. We offer three research ideas below as examples:

- The origins and sources of BRAC's image as an anti-Islam Organisation

- The Politics of Targeting: How the composition of participants in the PRA effect the quality of targeting?

- Are there qualitative differences in the livelihoods of people excluded during the various stages of targeting?

However, it is worth remembering that the process documentation makes it possible to explore a vast range of research topics beyond the few ideas we are offering.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The CFPR/TUP Programme

BRAC launched the *Challenging the Frontiers of Poverty Reduction/Targeting the Ultra Poor (CFPR/TUP)* programme in 2002. The primary focus of the CFPR/TUP programme is enabling the ultra poor to develop new and better options for sustainable livelihoods.

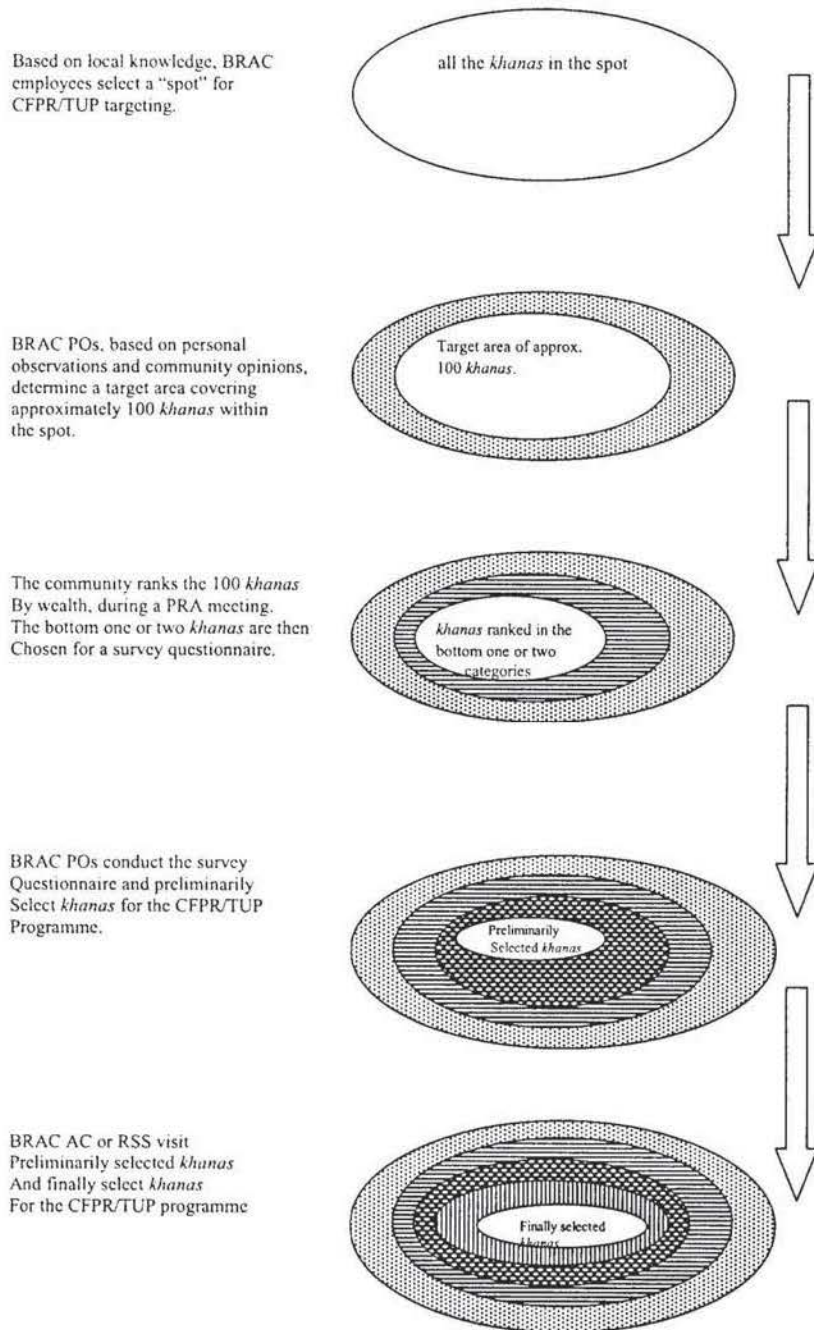The CFPR/TUP programme has two broad dimensions:

- "pushing down" the reach of development programmes through specific targeting of the ultra poor

- "pushing out" the domain within which existing development programmes operate by addressing dimensions of poverty that other, more conventional development approaches fail to address.

Targeting Process of the CFPR/TUP Programme

In order to ensure that the CFPR/TUP programme does indeed "push down" the reach of development, BRAC has instituted a targeting mechanism that combines several targeting approaches and seeks to combine programmatic and local streams of knowledge on poverty (Matin and Halder, 2002). The multi-stage and multi-dimensional targeting mechanism is intended to identify extremely poor households that will be able to participate in the CFPR/TUP programme.

Figure 1 is a diagrammatic representation of the various stages of the targeting procedure. As the figure illustrates, through each stage of the targeting process, groups of people are selected who are more likely to fit BRAC's targeted ultra poor profile. The figure also demonstrates how local knowledges (through the PRA meeting) are combined with BRAC's local knowledge and programmatic knowledge (through targeting criteria).

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Figure 1: The Stages in the CFPR/TUP Targeting Process

Based on local knowledge, BRAC employees select a "spot" for CFPR/TUP targeting.

all the *khanas* in the spot

BRAC POs, based on personal observations and community opinions, determine a target area covering approximately 100 *khanas* within the spot.

Target area of approx. 100 *khanas*.

The community ranks the 100 *khanas* By wealth, during a PRA meeting. The bottom one or two *khanas* are then Chosen for a survey questionnaire.

khanas ranked in the bottom one or two categories

BRAC POs conduct the survey Questionnaire and preliminarily Select *khanas* for the CFPR/TUP Programme.

Preliminarily Selected *khanas*

BRAC AC or RSS visit Preliminarily selected *khanas* And finally select *khanas* For the CFPR/TUP programme

Finally selected *khanas*

Process Documentation Research

BRAC RED undertook a Process Documentation Research (PDR) of the targeting process. Four field researchers observed several complete cycles of the targeting procedure and documented various activities and community responses during the various stages of the targeting process.

PDR is a social science research technique that provides systematic recording of activities and interactions of various groups involved in the field level implementation of a programme. The research technique provides, among others, the following benefits:

- PDR is a factual chronicle of the learning process experienced in the implementation of a programme (de los Reyes 1984)

- PDR contributes to the understanding of social learning processes encountered in the field-level imprementation of projects

- PDR is a management tool that can be used to monitor and evaluate events, issues and problems in project implementation.

- PDR provides historical documentation that may be useful in improving a programme or in implementing future programmes.

- PDR can generate future research topics relevant to programme development and/or enriching our knowledge and understanding of social processes.

Figure 2 below is a diagrammatic representation of the possible benefits that may be derived from PDR research. The diagram graphically represents the points that have been made above. From a programmatic perspective, PDR provides an opportunity for on-going monitoring of a project. Also, it provides a rich resource for improving the programme in subsequent cycles or replicating the programme elsewhere. From a research perspective, PDR provides historical documentation of a programme. This documentation is a knowledge bank that can generate varied research topics and can act as a useful resource for a variety of research issues.

Figure 2: Possible Programmatic and Research Benefits of PDR
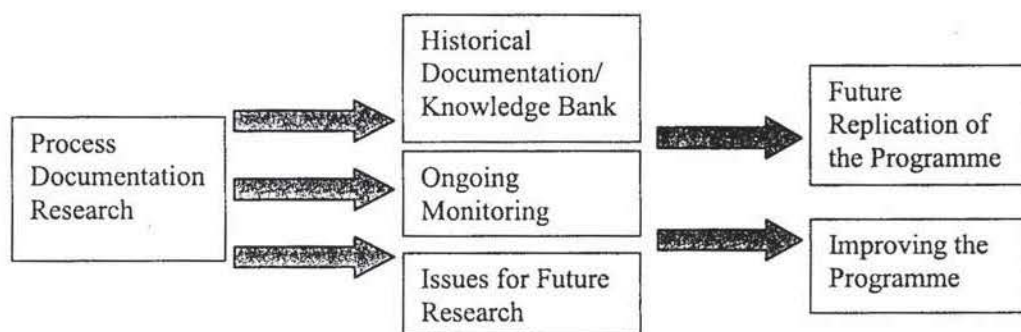
PDR emerged as a useful research technique in the 1970s, specially with the PDR carried out on a communal irrigation project in the Philippines in 1977. Subsequently, many research projects utilized this technique focusing on the "learning process", or the interaction between irrigation association members and community organizers in project areas (Chaiong-Javier, 1978; Chaiong-Javier, 1980; Borlagdan, 1979; and Quidoles, 1980). Plan International Bangladesh conducted a PDR on the implementation of their Child Focused Development Approach in different sites around Bangladesh in different time periods between March 2000 to June 2002.

PDR Research Team

BRAC recruited four field researchers to carry out Process Documenation Activities. The field researchers were graduates in Anthropology.

The Field Researchers were trained during a two-day workshop conducted by Dr Shahaduzzaman of RED. They were trained on qualitative research in general (data collection, data compilation, data analysis and report writing) and PDR in particular. Dr Shahaduzzaman highlighted the importance of observing and documenting the 6 Ws (what, who, when, where, why and how) during each and every stage of the PDR.

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After the training workshop, the field researchers went on an orientation visit to Rangpur for a week. During this visit, the field researchers acquainted themselves with various activities related to the CFPR/TUP programme.

Research Methodology

The field researchers were then sent to four field sites in Durgapur, Jamalpur, Faridpur and Tungipara. The researchers in Jamalpur and Faridpur were switched to Kishorganj and Gopalganj, respectively, due to programmatic reasons. During their stay in these sites, the process documentors observed and commented on the four stages of the targeting process, namely:

- Rapport Building
- The PRA Meeting and Wealth Ranking
- Survey and Preliminary Selection
- Final Selection

In observing and documenting the process, the field researchers used the following field research techniques:

Participant Observation: Most of the data gathered in the process documentation is through participant observation. The field researchers were participant observers in a limited sense - they would jot down notes and information in their notebooks as the process took place. In one case, the researcher was nicknamed *goenda bhai* (detective *bhai*) as he was sitting back and observing everything closely (2-4: 5). Field researchers would, however, become involved in the activities themselves, specially as they were introduced as BRAC employees and, at times, POs requested their assistance.

Conversation: The field researchers relied on conversation and listening as useful techniques for gathering information. Field researchers may have conversations playing caramboard next to a shop, or to people gathered at the tea shop. Group discussions may take place before, during or after process activities.

Interviews: Field Researchers, sometimes, interviewed community members, particularly after process activities.

Events and Activities Covered by the Process Documentation

The process documentation prepared 28 reports covering 108 event and/or activities included in the targeting process. Each week process documentors would sent reports into the head office. Process documentors, generally, completed the reports in the evenings, from their field notes made during the process. After a week, a completed report, covering several stages of the targeting process, was mailed to the head office.

Timeframe

The process documentation covers the aforementioned number of events and activities in various PDR sites from March 19, 2003 to April 30, 2003.

Data Processing and Consolidation

Two data consolidators read and re-read all the field accounts/transcripts thoroughly several times. The consolidators looked for general trends and patterns, as well exceptions to them, in the different stages of the targeting process. This report considers the different stages of the targeting process separately. An area-wise discussion of the targeting process has not been done. The consolidators collected, collated and organized the process documentation data across all the targeting areas covered by the PDR. The consolidators went through 28 reports with108 process documentation on events and/or activities that have been documented from last week of March through the month of April 2003 (19.3.2003).

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CHAPTER 2: THE RAPPORT BUILDING STAGE

The first step of the targeting process for the CFPR/TUP project is Rapport Building. Rapport Building is, generally speaking, the first point of contact between BRAC and potentially targeted communities in the context of the CFPR/TUP project. However, community members may already be familiar with BRAC and its representatives and/or they may have knowledge about the targeting process, especially if it has taken place in a neighbouring area recently.

There are three primary activities during Rapport Building. Through the Rapport Building process, BRAC POs determine the area coverage of the targeting process; i.e., the distribution of *khanas* to be included. They select a venue for the PRA meeting where community members will draw a map of the target area indicating the distribution of *khanas* and rank those *khanas* by wealth. Then, they invite community members to attend the PRA meeting and collect preliminary information about the area.

The following, therefore, constitute the Rapport Building process:

- Pre-Rapport Building Contact
- Determining Target Area
- Selecting a PRA Venue
- Introductory Interactions
- Invitational Interactions

Rapport Building, as has been mentioned, provides the first interaction between BRAC and community members in the context of the CFPR/TUP programme. The community expresses a diverse range of reactions to BRAC during this stage and throughout the targeting process. At the end of this section, we shall discuss the various *Community Reactions* recorded down by the field researchers.

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Pre-Rapport Building Contact

Pre-Rapport Building Contact between BRAC and/or the CFPR/TUP programme and the targeted community may take place if: (1) the BRAC office is near the targeted area, (2) BRAC POs are recognized and familiar with the area and (3) the targeting process has taken place in a neighbouring or nearby area recently.

The first two types of pre-Rapport Building contact (proximity of Area Office and familiarity of POs with the area) can be very useful in determining the coverage of the target area and in selecting a spot for the PRA meeting. In these instances, BRAC is knowledgeable about the target area and can utilize that knowledge to achieve the targets of the Rapport Building process most effectively. In a spot very close to the Area Office in Tungipara, POs had determined the target area and selected a venue for the PRA meeting even before the Rapport Building session based on their close familiarity with the spot. The only activity during this Rapport Building session was to invite people to that PRA meeting. As the PO walked around the community, he spoke to community members with great familiarity and they talked about a variety of things, even outside the PRA meeting. (1-1: 1).

In one instance, the Rapport Building session was conducted the day after the PRA meeting had been held in an adjacent area. Many women residents of this area had attended that PRA meeting and the PO had written down their names. As a result, residents of the area were very aware of the PRA activities and, when the PO was having difficulty in determing the target area because the distribution of *khanas* was confusing, they sat down in a group with him and verbally calculated the number of *khanas* (1-3: 4).

Even limited organizational familiarity with the area can help the Rapport Building process; e.g., a BRAC committee chairperson helped the BRAC POs in the various Rapport Building tasks (1-4: 1). In another instance, the presence of a Kantha Weaving committee provided the BRAC PO with a place to park his cycle and commence Rapport Building. (4-1: 1).

The third type of pre-Rapport Building contact, resulting from a PRA session being held at a nearby community recently, has a mixed impact. Community members might have attended

previous meetings and, because they are more aware of the purposes of the meeting, can help POs in determining the target area or selecting a PRA venue. However, they might also be more aware of BRAC's programmatic thinking. BRAC tries to keep its programmatic purposes secret during targeting so that community wealth ranking is not distorted by raised expectations of assistance.

In another instance, the rapport building session in an area was delayed in order to counter the effects of a PRA session just completed in a neighbouring area. The Process Documentation report, however, did not suggest any possible influences of that PRA suggesting that the delay might have been successful in its purposes. (2-1:1).

Determining the Target Area

The target area usually covers over a hundred *khanas*. The first task of the PO is to determine the boundaries of the target area and the households that should be included within the area. BRAC POs generally use a combination of their own observations and opinions of selected community members in determining the target area. The process takes the following general form: a PO walks into the village and asks somebody, usually from amongst the first community members encountered, about the boundaries of the village and the distribution of households within the village. The POs then walk around the village and question certain community members encountered about the number of *khanas* included within a certain space. An oft-repeated question asked during the Rapport Building session, with variations in specifics, was "how many *khanas* are there from the main road to the end of the mud road?" (4-4: 1).

POs use their own personal observations, from walking around the community, and community opinions, from questioning community members, in determining the boundaries of the target area. Geographical and topographical features are helpful in determining the target area and BRAC POs use village roads, railway lines, canals and bridges to demarcate the boundaries of the area and coverage of the area.

There is considerable variation in the extent to which POs balance community opinions and their own observations. Some POs tend to rely a bit more exclusively on the opinions of one or more community members and do not walk around the community before determining the target area. For example, a PO was asking a community member, "Give us an approximate calculation, where there is no problem if there are over a hundred *khanas*." A *murubbi* (elderly man) walked out of a nearby house and after hearing the PO's purposes, determined the target area for him (1-4: 2). Other POs will walk the length and breadth of the village, knocking on every household's door and trying to develop a clear map of the community in their minds, before deciding the target area.

In certain instances, POs might take assistance from community members with specialized expertise. The PO and the Process Documentor sat with the *Amin* of a community who does land survey work in the area. The *Amin* gave an approximate calculation of the number of *khanas* that possibly fall under the area. He has practically everyone in the area's names in his book. (1-5: 1).

There may be several difficulties that arise while determining the target area. These difficulties are resolved usually through the PO exercising his/her judgment or through the POs asking for advice and help from the community. For example, difficulties arise while determining the target area if the distribution of households in confusing (when village roads twist and wind without any apparent logic), if the number of *khanas* in a community is too high or too low or the community appears to well-off to be worth conducting a PRA session.

Some of the communities visited did not have prominent landmarks to demarcate boundaries, the households were randomly distributed and the village roads twist and wind without any apparent logic. In such cases, POs found it difficult to form effective judgments on the target area and enlisted greater community assistance. In one case, the BRAC PO and process documentor were walking through the twisting roads of the community and were getting increasingly confused. Unable to get a clear map of the community in their minds, the PO and process documentor sat with a group of women and, together, they determined the target area. (1-3: 3).

Difficulties also arise then the target area contains too few or too many *khanas*. In these cases, the BRAC PO has to use physical observations and exercise his/her judgment in demarcating the target area. A particularly small village contained only 60 or 70 *khanas*. The PO included portions of a neighbouring village using a canal as the boundary line for the target area (2-4: 2). A particularly large village contained over 300 *khanas* and the BRAC PO used his own judgment and community opinions in leaving out relatively wealthier portions of the village from the targeted area. (4-2: 3)

Difficulties also arise when a targeted locality appears to contain too few ultra poor, judging by the physical appearance of houses, people, etc. In one instance, BRAC POs decided not to conduct targeting in an area because, at least in appearance, the community members were relatively well off - they owned livestock, had tin roofs, etc (1-4: 1).

An unusually large village had been the scene of 6 PRAs and the BRAC PO was conducting the Rapport Building for the seventh PRA meeting. He had to identify the boundaries of the last area targeted and proceed from there. In order to do so, the PO first found the person who hosted the last PRA meeting that took place in the village and asked him about the last house covered by the previous PRA session. He then wandered around the community, mentally determining a target area and estimating, "over here we will find about 20 TUP, 8 or 10 of them will last till the Final." (4-4: 1).

Selecting a PRA Venue

The BRAC POs have to select a venue for the PRA meeting. There are certain guidelines as to the appropriate venue. The venue should be central to the targeted area, it should be shaded, relatively quiet and peaceful and community members should not have any problems with attending meetings at that venue.

POs have to rely on a blend of personal observations and community opinions in selection a PRA venue, similar to determining a target area. POs, generally, follow in selecting a PRA venue, analogous to the methods that are used to determine a target area:

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- The PO chooses a venue on the basis of the first few interactions with community members
- The PO chooses a venue after walking around the community and collecting a range of opinions and views, and making detailed personal observations.

POs sometimes select the PRA spot on the basis of a single conversation with the first community member encountered. The PO generally asks the first community member encountered for the name of a person who everyone in the village knows and respects. The PO then visits that house immediately and seeks permission to hold a meeting there. The following example typifies this process of venue selection. In Thhakurbari, Durgapur, the PO asked the first community member encountered about the households in the village and wanted to know if there was a person who everyone in the village knows and respects. The community member suggested Hasen Ali's house. The PO visited Hasen Ali's place first and spoke to him about BRAC's purposes. Hasen Ali assured the BRAC POs of complete assistance (3-1: 2). In another instance, the first person the PO spoke to insisted that his house be used as the PRA venue and, further, said he would offer someone to walk around the village with the PO and Process Documentor. The PO immediately selected that house as the PRA venue. (2-4: 1).

Relying on a single source of information without collecting opinions from several community members, however, can result in difficult situations. In one instance, the PO noticed that some villagers were taciturn about the PRA invitations while others were enthusiastic. Further investigation revealed that the village was marked by enmity between two factions and the PRA venue had been selected at the residence of a certain faction on the advice of one person belonging to that faction. As a result, the PRA venue had to be changed (2-2: 1) (See Box on Family Vendettas and Selecting a PRA Venue: A Case from Majhbari (Maddhya), Kotalipara).

Alternatively, a PO may walk the length and breadth of the target area in selecting a suitable PRA venue or they may consult, collectively, with a group of community members who have congregated around the PO. These approaches ensure a more consensual selection of the

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PRA venue and, hence, increase the likelihood that a larger cross-section of the community attends the PRA meeting. The benefit of walking through the target area first is that the PO can ensure that the location is central to the target area and that everyone is, more or less, satisfied with the venue selected.

**Family Vendettas and Selecting a PRA Venue:
A Case from Maddhya Majhbari, Kotalipara**

In Maddhya Majhbari, Kotalipara, the PO selected Akkas Sheikh's house as the PRA venue on the basis of a conversation with the first community member encountered. However, as the PO and Process Documentor walked around the village, inviting community members to the PRA venue, they noticed that some community members looked very happy while others made dark faces (*mukh kalo korey*) and said, "Okay, maybe I will go" and tried to avoid the PO and Documentor.

The Process Documentor separated himself from the PO and spent about forty minutes investigating the reasons for these very different responses to the invitations. The Documentor found that the village was dominated by three *gotros* (clans). These are the *Daria gotro*, *Karigor gotro* and *Sheikh gotro*. The *Daria* and *Karigor gotros* are opposed to the *Sheikh gotro*. Enmity between these *gotros* go back several generations and two-generation old court cases are still being fought out. In addition, there are numerous quarrels, fights, cases, etc. between them. In the last UP elections, a member of the *Daria gotro* defeated a member of the *Sheikh gotro* to become UP Chairman.

Members of the *Daria* and *Karigor gotro* were opposed to attending the meeting at Akkas Sheikh's house as he belongs to the *Sheikh gotro*. The PO tried to find a more suitable venue but found it very difficult, because whoever he spoke to nominated a venue suitable to his/her own *gotro*. Ultimately, a shop was chosen as the PRA venue. However, problems continued to persist because the shop was located in an *Sheikh gotro* dominated area of the village.

An interesting case arose where the PO decided to ignore community recommendations in selecting a PRA venue. In a Hindu-dominant community, the Durga temple was proposed as a suitable meeting venue. The PO was informed that there would be no problems with Muslims attending and that the Durga temple was the location of most community meetings. However, the PO did not select the temple as a venue but chose a tailor's shop instead (1-2: 3).

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Introductory Interactions

The Rapport Building session is, generally, the first point of contact between BRAC and the targeted community in the context of the CFPR/TUP project. BRAC POs must, therefore, introduce themselves and their objectives during these initial interactions. The first interaction with a community member is a crucial component of the Rapport Building process.

The first introductory interaction is usually with a community member encountered on the village roads. The community member usually inquires about what the BRAC PO and Process Documentor are doing in the community. The PO generally introduces BRAC's objectives as information collection. They say, that they are here to conduct a *jorip* (survey) and collect information on the schools, madrassas, mosques, temples, roads in the village; how the community members are doing; what they are doing; who is rich, who is poor, etc.

The PO also gathers necessary information through this first introductory interaction - such as locating the boundaries of the village, gaining a sense of the distribution of *khanas*, collecting names of influential and respectable villagers and/or collecting opinions on a suitable PRA venue.

The introductory interaction with a respected and influential community members is even more crucial, as the community elite can play an important role in ensuring the success of the PRA meeting. In these meetings, BRAC POs are usually careful to introduce themselves and their objectives properly and respectfully.

However, in one instance, the PO failed to introduce himself properly to a Ward Member and was subsequently admonished by him. The member, upon seeing the BRAC PO enter, cried out, "you have finished us with *Palli Biddyut* (rural electricity)". In response, the PO asked him about the occupation of most of the people in the area. The member introduced himself and asked the PO to introduce himself too. Only then did the PO state that he has

come from BRAC and intends to do a *jorip* of the community. At this point the Member admonished the PO, "first you have to introduce yourself." (4-1: 2).

POs occasionally encounter community members who are not willing to talk openly with them. POs try to soften these community members by showing them respect as elders and drawing parallels between them and their own family members. An elderly lady was unwilling to talk with the PO. The PO said to her, "I am like your son. If I was really your son, you would sit next to me, talk to me. You should do the same with me." After this, the woman spoke to the PO freely and openly (1-3: 2).

Although the POs describe the objectives of the PRA to the community members, they try and keep the programmatic objectives of the CFPR/TUP project secret. Community members repeatedly ask, "Will there be any assistance?"

BRAC POs use several strategies to evade this question. Some POs describe the *jorip* as a government task being carried out by BRAC. Other POs emphasize that they do not know about programmatic purposes but higher officials at BRAC will decide what to do with the information gathered through the *jorip*. In general, POs repeatedly emphasize, in an attempt to suppress expectations, that they are not there to provide any assistance but merely to gather information.

There is, however, an issue with the lack of a standardized explanation for the PRA. Some POs would offer several explanations of the PRA purposes, in response to different community questions, within the same target area.

Invitational Interactions

It is important that the POs, through the Rapport Building process, encourage a large cross-section of the targeted community to attend the PRA meeting. A crucial component of the Rapport Building process is inviting various community members to attend the PRA session. There are certain community members who are less likely to attend the meeting and POs have to apply a certain amount of pressure to get them to attend the meeting. The POs also

use certain terms that have a considerable impact on the effectiveness of the invitations. We shall, therefore, also look at the vocabulary and phrasing of invitations.

BRAC POs emphasize invitations to respected people in the community, male community members, and to very poor households (judged by the appearance of their house and surroundings). It is interesting to note that "respected" community members are often unable to attend the PRA meeting though they announce their full support and cooperation to the PO.

Male community members are generally unable to attend PRA meetings because of the timing. The PRA meetings are held in the morning and, generally, male community members are out working at these times. POs, therefore, try to emphasize the importance that men attend. One particular PO emphasized the importance for men to attend saying "women will not be able to give correct information regarding everyone in the village and they don't know, correctly, where various things in the village are located. It is, therefore, extremely important for the men to be present" (1-1:3).

The emphasised invitation to men, however, can be very negative as it implicitly discourages women from attending. Women, in response to the POs comments, said "if they men go, we do not need to attend." In other instances, though, women reacted to POs' emphases on men stating that "the men do not really know what is happening at the various village households, we women know much better" (1-1: 3).

Very poor households are also less likely to attend PRA meetings because "*amader keu thhengai na*" (no one pays any attention to us). The PO usually spends more time at very poor households, writing down their names, asking about their income, microfinance membership etc. The long conversation and the ritual of entering their names into the BRAC diary, accompanied by an emphasized invitation - "you must attend, we will need at you at tomorrow's meeting" - results in an added pressure on representatives of ultra poor households to attend the PRA meeting.

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BRAC POs also emphasize an egalitarian approach. When a very poor woman asked what benefit is there to the rich if I attend, the PO responded: "A mother loves all her children equally. The value of the blind child and the healthy child is the same. In the same way, I think that the rich and the poor are the same. I will invite everyone in the same way" (1-2: 4).

Occasionally, however, POs must carefully balance between raising and suppressing expectations in order to make their invitation more appealing. For example, when explaining the objectives of the PRA, the PO might emphasize that there will be no loss but there is a possibility of some gain from attending the meeting. The community response to this was, "if there is gain, I can go." (1-1: 1). In another instance, in order to encourage an idealistic college-going youth to attend the meeting, the PO offered an explanation closely approximating the programmatic purposes behind the targeting (see Box on A PO Reveals Intentions Behind Targeting.

A PO Reveals Intentions Behind Targeting

The PO was insisting that a college-going student, Habibur Rahman, attend the PRA meeting. Habib agreed, but asked "what will be the *last benefit* of this?"

The PO replied, "There has been a lot of survey work in your region. But Member/Chairman gives VGD cards to their own people, but people who are truly deprived don't get anything. We will do a wealth ranking which will be absolutely true, because we will go to everyone's house. In this case, if any assistance does come, we will make sure the most deprived person gets it." (4-4: 2)

BRAC POs generally phrase the invitation as a *dawat* to a *jorip*. Interestingly, these two terms appear to have opposite effects on a community member's desire to attend the PRA meeting. The term *dawat* brings in a religious connotation; one of the process documentors compared the round of *dawats* to the PRA to invitations to a *milad*. A PO phrased his invitation like this, "As Muslims it is your duty to honour this *dawat* and attend tomorrow's meeting."

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The term *jorip*, however, produces a negative effect on the community. One of the process documentors commented community members show a distinct lack of enthusiasm when the PRA is described as a *jorip*. On the other hand, when the session is described as a meeting where community members can discuss certain issues, there is much more enthusiasm and excitement. The invitation might be more effective if phrased as a *dawat* to a *meeting* rather than to a *jorip*.

Community Reactions to BRAC

Rapport Building is the first stage of contact between BRAC representatives and local communities in the context of the CFPR/TUP programme. The community expresses a diverse range of reactions to BRAC's entrance into their communities. These reactions are expresses throughout the targeting process, by various community members and in various forms.

The process documentation shows three major categories of community reactions to BRAC. These categories have been titled:

- Confusions
- Expectations
- Suspicions

In this section, we shall discuss these diverse local reactions to BRAC's entrance into a community. During subsequent stages of the targeting process, these community reactions change and evolve, as BRAC representatives repeatedly visit the community over the period of four days. In our discussions, we shall look ahead to stages of the targeting process that have not yet been discussed in detail.

Confusions

Community members often confuse BRAC representatives for representatives of government or other organizations. Community members most frequently confuse BRAC

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representatives for government officials, usually government surveyors carrying out a *bhumi jorip* (land survey) and, less often, representatives of *Palli Biddyut* (rural electricity). These confusions, most probably, arises because POs use the term *jorip* to describe the PRA activities and/or try to pass of these activities as "shorkari" (government).

This confusion leads, most frequently, to a hostile reaction. For example, a Ward Member upon seeing the BRAC PO, exclaimed "you are finishing us with *Palli Biddyut*." (1-1: 1). Also, most community members have unpleasant memories of previous *bhumi jorips*, specifically of losing portions of their land and/or paying large bribes to have their lands recorded. For example, a woman exclaimed during Rapport Building, "To record one *kantha* of land takes 500 takas."

In another instance, during the PRA Meeting, a woman walked onto the PRA meeting and cried out, "I did *Ekstation jorip* (land survey) once and became *fakir* (destitute). What more *jorip?*" A woman joined the meeting and asked what is happening and responding when she was informed its a *jorip*. The PO later found out that she had to sell half her lands for bribes to keep the rest of her land (2-1:6).

Community members have also associated BRAC with the ruling party. This may also be linked to POs trying to pass off targeting activities as a government task forced upon them. During Rapport Building, a community member commented, "We usually vote for Boat in this region. The new government is going to give us some relief so that we vote for Sheaf of Paddy next time." (2-2: 3). In another instance, during the PRA meeting, some community members playing "caramboard" commented that the map was being made so that the BNP can find the poor, help them and win some votes (4-4: 7).

There have been other and varied community confusions and misconceptions of BRAC. For example, community members had asked if BRAC and the PRA activities were "*adam baparir babsha*" (manpower business). These communities have probably had previous experiences with labour contractors and manpower traders.

Expectations

The most frequently expressed reactions to BRAC's entrance into a community were vaguely-expressed expectations of assistance. These expectations grow as BRAC representatives repeatedly visit a community over a period of four days. Expectations climax with the Final Selection stage and the arrival of the AC or RSS (*"boro sir"*) by motorcycle into the community.

Community members are convinced that BRAC is going to offer assistance: "They are writing down names. They will give 'relief'" (3-2: 3). However, they are not equally certain about the content of the assistance. They usually take the form: BRAC will do "something".

Due to this uncertainty, community members usually phrase their expectations as questions. For example, "You must be giving something?" or "Can't BRAC do something for *rari-ghuri* (widows)?" In their responses, POs have to keep the true programmatic intentions behind the targeting secret.

Community members do, however, try to guess at the content of the assistance that will be provided. The most frequently expressed expectation is of *gomer card* (VGD cards). As POs walk through a community during Rapport Building, comments can be heard from various corners, *"card dibain?"* (will you give cards?). Other expectations include, *shomitis* (microfinance committees), *goru-chhagol* (cows-goats, i.e., livestock assets), tin for houses and, in a few instances, BRAC schools.

Expectations are expressed differently separate each stage of the targeting process. During Rapport Building, POs try and emphasize that they are here to merely collect information, they are not here to provide direct assistance.

Expectations, however, persist and are expressed even before the start of the PRA meeting. For example, while the PRA participants are gathering one of the participants asked the field researcher, *"Apa,* I have heard, through the air (*uru uru bhabey*) that you will help, you will

give a lot of things. I think you will give something but you are not telling. I understand. They have told you at the office not to tell us" (1-3:6).

The two primary PRA activities are mapmaking and wealth ranking. During both of these stages there are *jhogras* (quarrels) springing from expectations of assistance. During mapmaking, community members believe that if they get their name written on the cards for separate *khanas* they might receive assistance. For example, participants quarrel to have their or their neighbours' names placed as separate *khanas* and passers-by check to see if their names have been included.

There are also expectations surrounding the coloured cards on which names of *khana* heads are written. These expectations are linked to expectations of VGD cards. For example, in one meeting, a participant asked, "Are you going to give us these cards? We did not get wheat cards this time" (1-2: 10).

During Wealth Ranking, community members believe that if they are ranked in the bottom wealth categories they might receive assistance. As a result there are frequent *jhogras* around attempts to place one's *khana* in a bottom category.

Expectations of assistance are not necessarily linked with a demand for assistance. The community might expect assistance from BRAC, but not welcome that assistance. For example, during Rapport Building, a community member commented, "I think they are going to give money, goats, cows to some people. BRAC does not have the right to give. Allah has the right to give." (2-4: 3).

The PRA meeting heightens expectations of assistance amongst community members, that are expressed during the Survey and Preliminary Selection stage. To provide one example among many, a community member asked the BRAC PO, "you spent all day yesterday yapping (*bhot bhot korlen*), will you give us anything?" (2-1: 9).

During the survey, POs visit *khanas* ranked in the bottom one or two wealth categories. As a result, surveyed *khanas* have heightened expectations of assistance and *khanas* excluded from

the surveyed express resentment and disappointment. The PO is frequently questioned during Rapport Building, "why haven't you come to our house?"

Expectations climax with the entry of the AC or RSS into the community, on his motorcycle, during Final Selection. The community immediately identifies the AC or RSS as *boro sir* (big sir). As the AC or RSS walk around the community, visiting preliminarily selected *khanas*, groups of people tend to form and neighbours tend to congregate at preliminarily selected *khanas*.

Although expectations of assistance most often lead to community members trying to prove their poverty, in some cases community members try and emphasize their self-respect and self-worth. For example, in response to a question regarding *kisti* during the Survey and Preliminary Selection, a woman said, "I never took a loan in my life. Nobody gives us anything and we don't ask for anything." She told the PO that she has to spend her time looking after her children and she makes fishing nets for some additional income (1-2: 13).

In another instance, also during the Survey and Preliminary Selection, a woman requested the PO repeatedly to give her a job. She emphasized that she does not want just assistance or money. She also expressed her desire to come to BRAC to seek legal assistance as she has some problems with land at her mother's residence (1-2: 14).

Suspicions

Along with expectations of assistance, the community most frequently expresses deep suspicions of BRAC and its motives. These suspicions are generally along the lines of BRAC being an anti-Islam, Christianzing and pro-Bush and pro-America organisation. These suspicions peaked during the Iraq Invasion, resulting in several ugly situations involving BRAC representatives and community members (see Box on BRAC as an Anti-Islam Organisation: A Case from Chorkhuli, Kotalipara).

These community perceptions of BRAC have been reported from all PDR sites and were expressed in all stages of targeting. Community suspicions were expressed in a variety of

ways and throughout the targeting process. Direct accusations were leveled against BRAC, including BRAC's intention to convert people to Christianity, giving the PRA Map to Bush so that he could bomb the community like Iraq, BRAC is distributing Bush's money and the somewhat vaguer accusation that BRAC says anti-Islamic things.

BRAC as an Anti-Islam Organization: A Case from Chorkhuli, Kotalipara.

The PRA meeting at Chorkhuli, Kotalipara, provides an extreme example of community perceptions of BRAC as an anti-Islam organization with links to America, Bush and Christianity. The process documentor states, "If I had not seen it with my own eyes, I would never have believed that such views and situations can exist in a village only 4 km (by paved road) away from the *Thana sadar*" (2-7: 3).

There were, in the process documentors estimation, almost a thousand people present at the venue. There was a "festive air" and many kids had put on new clothes. However, the meeting turned very aggressive and there were points when the POs and the researched felt threatened. There were numerous incidents of *jhogras*, that were bordering on *hatahatis* (hand fights).

The community members were convinced the map will be used by America to bomb Chorkhuli like they bombed Iraq and that the POs and researcher are Christian and they are here to convert community members. The POs and the researched spent five and a half hours trying to convince community members that they are Muslim, they say their *namaaz*, their fathers are *hajis*, they are not Christian and so on.

Further difficulties arose from attempts to pass it off as a government *jorip* being conducted by BRAC. Community members said, "We understand Khaleda's work, she is going to give this map to America" (3) and wanted to know "Why Khaleda Zia is giving away our gas to America?" (4).

Ironically, even while the BRAC POs and Process Documentor had to defend themselves and their organization from community member's allegations, various community members would come up to them and, rather more quietly, "lobby" to have their names included.

Chorkhuli provides an extreme example of anti-Western views shared by many villagers in many of the target areas. A few *murubbis* in the village were preparing to go to Iraq to join the war against the USA. A car had come to distribute Wheel detergent powder free; however, the villagers did not take it because they thought Bush had placed bombs in those packets.

The POs left the meeting with fear in their hearts. They were scared to come back to the village the next day for the survey.

A somewhat paradoxical situation exists in the targeted communities: community members expect assistance while, simultaneously, holding deep suspicions regarding BRAC's activities. The following three incidents have been presented to highlight the complexities in community reactions to BRAC, intermingling Suspicions, Expectations and Confusions.

A *huzoor* had warned community members against attending the PRA meeting after POs had completed Rapport Building. He told villagers that BRAC converts people to Christianity. Women drive cycles over there and that they will take your land (1-1:6). A woman participant at the PRA meeting informed the researcher of the *huzoor's* warning. The woman went on to tell the researcher, "a lot of people did not come out of fear. I sneaked away to the meeting, quietly. Besides, I don't have any land, I don't have any fear. Actually, nothing happened at the meeting that was frightening. And I am thinking, if the poor get some help, then it will be very good. So I came to the meeting." (1-1: 6)

At another meeting, participants expressed their disagreement with what "people in the village" (*koyek beda*) are saying "This is Bush's help. Bush is helping with money to make people Christian". The participants said, "we, of course, did not believe this, because you are Muslim. Even if you don't have faith in religion, how are we to have faith? Maybe you won't be stopped today, but on the Day of Judgment (*hashorer din*) you will be stopped." (1-3: 6) At the end of the meeting, someone commented, "*Apa*, I have heard that this is Christian's help? It is being given to make us Christian. I say, that as long as we get help it does not matter whose help. The important thing is living decently." (1-3: 10)

PRA participants, sometimes, defended BRAC's activities to people who would walk on to the PRA meeting and criticize BRAC activities. In one instance, a villager walked on to the mapmaking process and asked, "Are you placing houses down to bomb us?" Everyone laughed. A woman participant said, "It will be good if they bomb us, we will die together." He kept coming back and forth between the meeting and his work in the field. Next time, he said, "They are taking down the addresses of our homes and lands and they are going to give it to Bush." Everyone replied, "if we had land, they could give it [addresses]." A young man addressed the man, "*Chacha*, you are quite greedy. You are not working your land properly, and coming over here again and again. Who asked you to come here?" The man

got very angry and said, "All of you have left all your work and are sitting here. Are they going to give you money? There is no money for you here." (1-4: 6).

During the mapmaking process of another PRA session, an elderly man came to the PRA venue and commented, "We know these conspiracies. Nobody give them your names. None of us have any relations to *shomitis* over here. I have seen politics, don't want to see anymore. BRAC says anti-Islam things." He went on talking in a loud voice. At one stage, when everyone fell silent, one of the participants said, "Okay, don't include his name." The PO tried to explain to the elderly man that he was merely collecting information and, when the man refused to le the PO talk, he said, "You stop. Listen to me. Why do you get angry without listening to me. Let me speak." The man left after a while, not having accepted anyone's explanations. (4-3: 11)

As these examples suggest, community reactions to BRAC are varied and somewhat conflicting. Suspicions and expectations are almost always expressed vaguely, in a somewhat confused fashion, reflecting the fact that the community can only guess at BRAC's "real" intentions. Further, the same community member may hold deep suspicions of BRAC's motives and activities but still have expectations of assistance and lobby for assistance. Confusions, expectations and suspicions intertwine with each other reflecting deeply ambivalent community reactions and attitudes towards BRAC throughout the various stages of the targeting process.

CHAPTER 3: THE PRA MEETING

Rapport Building sets the stage for the PRA meeting. Through Rapport Building, BRAC POs designated the area coverage, chose a venue for the meeting and invited community members to the meeting at a designated time. BRAC representatives commonly refer to the PRA meeting as a *jorip*, or survey. The primary purposes of this *jorip* are to get community members, in a participatory fashion, (1) draw a map of the village that shows the number and distribution of *khanas* and (2) to rank those *khanas* by wealth.

The process documentors, generally, arrive at the PRA venue half-an-hour to an hour before the scheduled start of the meeting. They follow the process all the way through to its final conclusion and stay in the community after the POs have left in order to collect community responses and opinions. In this report, we shall describe the following aspects of the PRA process:

- Build up to the PRA meeting
- The Mapmaking Process
- The Wealth Ranking Process

It is worth noting that these are chronological stages to the PRA meeting – participants and BRAC POs arrive to the spot, set up the PRA meeting, participants draw a map of the village indicating the distribution of *khanas*, the *khanas* are ranked by wealth and the meeting ends.

The PRA meeting is crucial to the targeting process as it is through this process that community knowledges on poverty are incorporated with other knowledge streams in identifying the ultra poor. The composition of the meeting and the level of participation in the meeting is, therefore, crucial to understanding the specific community knowledge stream the targeting process is drawing upon.

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An observation of the process documentation has been the exclusion of women from participating in the targeting process throughout the targeting stages, not just at the PRA meeting. After we discuss procedural stages to the PRA Meeting, we shall, therefore, discuss the issue of *Gender Imbalances*.

Build up to the PRA Meeting

The process documentors, generally, arrive at the PRA venue half an hour to an hour before the scheduled start of the meeting, usually 8 or 9 am. In general, they find the venue prepared to host the meeting: *patis* and *madurs* have been spread out and stools and chairs have been placed. There have, however, been a few instances where POs have asked participants and community members to bring out *patis* or *madurs*.

In two instances, the meeting was not held the day after the Rapport Building session. One occasion was due to a government holiday on March 26. In another case, the meeting was delayed by a day because of the Bengali New Year (April 14). However, the meeting did not take place on April 15th, the scheduled day. When the POs came to the pre-selected PRA venue on April 16, the host said, "Everyone was waiting on the fifteenth." In response the POs said, "Our boss suddenly came from Dhaka, that is why we could not hold the meeting." The community, however, prepared for the meeting and a girl spread out a *chot* and swept the yard and, soon, a crowd had grown around the venue (4-4: 4)

In majority of the cases, the process documentor is the first to arrive at the venue. Community members state they are waiting for the POs to arrive before joining the meeting. Some people start coming to the venue, seeing that the process documentor has arrived.

There have been a few instances where most of the community did not remember the meeting. One such instance might be explained by a one-day delay between Rapport Building and PRA sessions due to the government holiday on March 26 (2-2: 5). The weather might have an adverse impact on attendance. In a PRA meeting in Kishoreganj, the attendance was quite low because there was a lot of rain (4-5: 22).

In another instance, the community in general and women in particular were ignorant of the planned meeting. The process documentor offered the following explanation for their ignorance: the invitations to the meeting were given to households along the boundaries of the village and the invitations were specifically to male community members (2-2: 3).

In most cases, participants and community members do not express any dissatisfactions over the PRA venue. Two exceptions, however, stand out: a community member complained that she would not go to the venue because the host "cannot get along with people (*doshjon nie choley na*). She is very selfish. A few days ago the BRAC *bhais* had brought *jelapi*. Three kg. She didnt give us any" (2-1: 4).
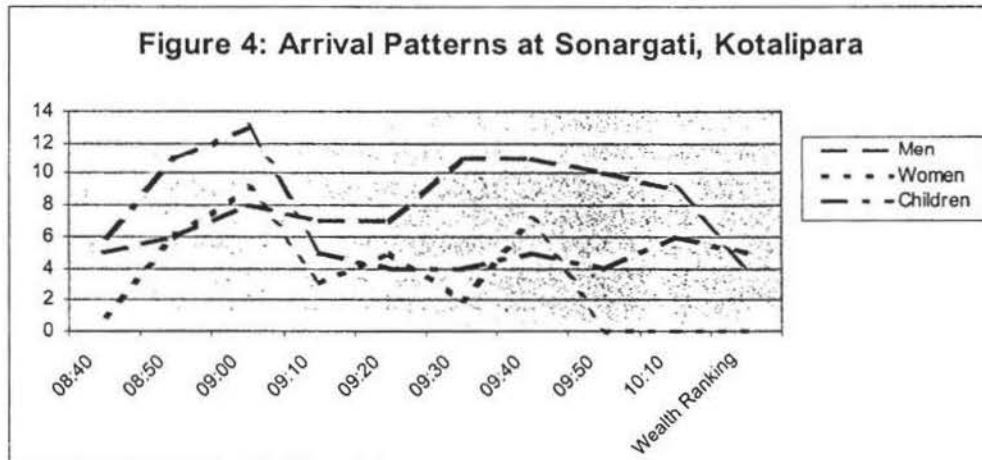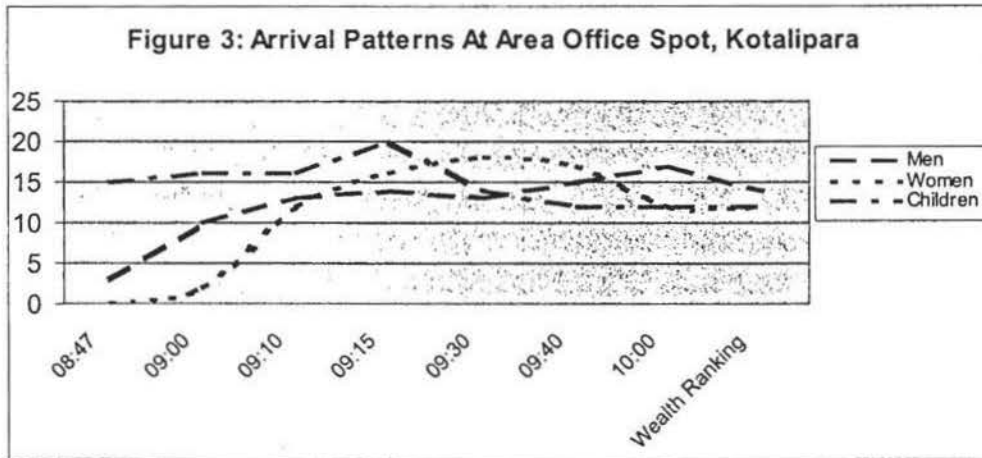
In another instance, the process documentor went to a portion of the target area that had expressed dissatisfaction over the part of the village in which the PRA was being held. People in that area did not show any interest in attending the PRA meeting. The process documentor found that community members in that region did not express much interest in attending the meeting (2-4: 4).

Even when there are community criticisms, the PRA venue is rarely changed. It was changed in only one case, where it was found that the meeting was hidden from view by too many trees. The venue was relocated to a nearby house so that passers-by could see the meeting and participate if they so chose.

Three POs arrive at the PRA venue just about in time for the scheduled start of the meeting 8 or 9 am. In one instance, POs were delayed because they could not find the PRA venue. The POs divide up the PRA tasks between them. One of the POs will introduce and facilitate the meeting, doing most of the talking. The two remaining POs will arrange the equipment, write down *khana* names on cards during the mapmaking, copy down the map in a registry copy, etc. Once the POs arrive at the venue, participants start joining the meeting in greater numbers.

Participants arrive in groups of two or more and women and men separately. Groups of women often join the meeting with small children on their laps. Throughout the meeting,

participants come and go - joining, leaving and re-joining the meeting several times throughout the PRA meeting. Figure 3 and Figure 4 below illustrate the typical comings and goings of participants from the PRA venue. The figures demonstrate the unsteady level of participation throughout the meeting.

Figure 3: Arrival Patterns At Area Office Spot, Kotalipara

Figure 4: Arrival Patterns at Sonargati, Kotalipara

Participants offer varied excuses for leaving the meeting, even if for short periods of time. Excuses offered by women include, "My husband has come back from abroad", "the rice is on the stove", "I am hungry", "when my husband returns from the fields, he will be angry", "I have a pain in my waist, I can sit for very long", etc. (2-1: 6). Men have to leave because they have left work in the field, or have to go to the bazaar or continue ferrying vegetables, etc.

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The PRA meetings are always delayed, by about half-an-hour to an hour. The most frequent reason for delays is that there are not enough participants present. BRAC POs occasionally go around the community trying to "round up" participants for the meeting. Frequently, meetings are delayed because there are not enough male participants present (for a more detailed discussion see the section on Gender Imbalances on p. 39). Shahanara, the host of a PRA meeting and considered selfish by some community members, took it as a personal insult that there were so few participants at the start of the meeting (2-1: 4).

However, in one instance the BRAC POs started work with a very low attendance – about 10/12 – with the reasoning, "lets start work, once we start lots of people will come". The weather was looking rather ominous, it was very dark and cloudy and the attendance was poor as a result. (4-2:4).

There may be more unusual reasons for delays in the meeting. In one instance, the meeting was delayed because the POs had difficulty in locating the PRA venue. In another case, the meeting was delayed because of a *jhogra* in a house adjacent to the venue. The POs were concerned that the meeting would not take place as a result of the *jhogra*. One of the POs went to a teashop where community members do *adda* and invited more people. The POs also instructed the chairperson of a BRAC microfinance committee to call more people. Very shortly, twenty more people arrived at the PRA venue. Once the *jhogra* ended, even more people joined the meeting (1-4: 4).

The POs start the meeting by laying out the PRA equipment – coloured cards, pins, pens, notebooks, a stick to draw the map with, etc. The POs thank people for attending the meeting. They introduce their activity as a *jorip* and describe, in the same terms as in the Rapport Building stage, the purposes of the *jorip*. The PO in Tungipara emphasizes that the *jorip* is taking place all over the country and in various parts of Tungipara: "just like there is a survey happening here today in your village, surveys have been carried out in other parts of Tungipara. This work has also happened in various parts of Bangladesh." (1-3: 7).

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The Mapmaking Process

The first task of the PRA meeting is to draw a map of the target area indicating the distribution of *khanas* within the area. One of the POs explains the mapmaking task, paying particular attention to explaining the term *khana*. The PO then asks a participant, or asks for a volunteer amongst the participants, to draw an outline of the target area on the ground with a stick, placing major landmarks such as roads, ponds, bridges, canals, etc.

The PO then asks the participants to locate each *khana* on that map. One of the POs writes down the name of the *khana* head, father's name in case of men and husband's name in case of women, and occupation of the *khana* head down on a piece of coloured card. The card is pinned to the *khana's* location on the map. After all the *khanas* have been placed, one of the POs copies the map down on brown paper or in a registry notebook. The cards are collected together, and the POs begin the wealth ranking process.

POs need to introduce and explain the mapmaking process to participants. POs spend considerable time explaining the term *khana*, explaining that for every stove there is a *khana*. Confusions, however, tend to persist. During the mapping process, participants express their confusion: "If they eat *juda*, is it a separate *khana*?" or "If they sell their land and leave for somewhere else, will it be a separate *khana*?" etc. (2-2: 7). After the PO repeatedly explained the term *khana*, stressing that "each *chula* (stove) is a separate *khana*", a woman said, "then we have three *khanas*, we have three *chulas* (*amago chula teenkhan*)." (2-4: 8)

In one instance, a well-dressed male participant got upset at having the term explained to him repeatedly: "Are we uneducated that we do not understand anything. We work for a living, we understand everything." (1-2: 8).

POs also emphasise that they include all *khanas*. One PO instructed the meeting, "If there is a case, where a woman lives with her brother and eats separately, her name must be included as a separate *khana*" (1-3: 7). POs generally emphasise to participants that they must make sure to include those *khanas* that are female headed, women who are working in other's houses or living by themselves next to other people's houses.

POs generally spend sometime introducing the terms and explaining the process to those present. There was, however, one PRA session where the POs rushed through the introductory and explanatory speech and started the meeting with just a few words along the lines of: "We are doing a *khana jorip*. One stove, one *khana*. We will draw a map on the ground" (2-4: 6).

Once the PO has explained the term *khana* and the mapmaking process, a participant is selected to be the mapmaker. The mapmaker is, without exception, male. Generally, the mapmaker is a young man in his twenties or thirties and moderately educated. In some instances, a respected and influential participant had been asked to draw a map. In one unique situation a boy, 8 or 10 years old, was asked to draw the map.

Most of the mapmakers are young men in their twenties and thirties who are, usually, educated. To give a few examples from many, the mapmaker in Maddhyapara, Kishoreganj was an S.S.C. examinee; in Charkandi, Tungipara, college-going student Delwar drew the map (1-3 and 4-4 respectively); a young man in his thirties drew the map in Taltola, Kishoreganj.

POs are often persuasive in asking respected and influential villagers to draw the map. A schoolteacher wanted to leave the meeting as the meeting had been delayed from 8 am to 9 am and the school day was starting. However, he was persuaded to stay and start the meeting. The POs asked "sir" to draw the map and, after he agreed, they gave him a stick and instructions on the area covered by the map. The schoolteacher took everyone's assistance in completing the map. The mapmaking process, as conducted by the POs and the schoolteacher, finished without any major hiccups (1-2: 7).

In one interesting instance, the POs selected an 8/10 year old boy to draw the map. However, the mapdrawing itself was dominated by a small group of young men and the "main assistant" was a young man called Shahidul Islam. Shahidul Islam was having a hard time remembering a lot of community members' names, their fathers' or husbands' names, etc. as he had been outside the village for a long period of time. The participants found this

funny, and commented amongst themselves, "a boy from the village, but he does not know anything." (2-4: 6).

The mapmaker may be changed, if the participants express dissatisfaction with him/her. A mapmaker was making mistakes and leaving out *khanas*. The participants got angry with him and scolded him. When the PO tried to intervene, a participant yelled at the mapmaker, "Hey boy *(chhera)*, you shut up. You are leaving out this house, that house. Why did you take the stick?" (4-2: 6). The participants chose a new mapmaker. In another instance, the mapmaker suggested changing himself, saying "I cannot say anything about that part of the village." (4-3: 5).

Disagreements, confusions and mistakes are frequent during the mapmaking process. Confusions and disagreements arise, most commonly, over the term *khana* and over whether or not someone should be included in an existing *khana* or qualifies to have his/her own *khana*. Questions of whether or not an individual belongs to somebody else's *khana* might be hotly debated. A woman wanted a relative of hers to be placed in a separate *khana*. Her relative is a widow. While it is true she lives with her father and they eat from the same *khana*, there are frequent *jhogras* between them. The father has told the widow, in no uncertain terms, that from next month he will not continue to feed her. The POs did not place her in a separate *khana*, though they expressed regret over their decision a few days later when they found out the desperate conditions under which the widow lives (2-6: 8). There are also more unusual confusions, such as whether or not the village *pagla* (madman) qualifies to have his own *khana*.

The continuous comings and goings of people through the PRA venue cause difficulties and disruptions. In one instance, the mapmaking was disrupted by participants and community members stepping on to the map and destroying the cards and the pins (2-4: 6). This coming and going can, however, be advantageous. People would discover, as they walk into the meeting, that their *khana* has been left out (See Box on a Mapmaking Plagued by Mistakes).

There are also difficulties in remembering father's or husband's names, specially when they have been deceased for a while. POs and participants would ask for assistance from

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POs can also encourage the participants to correct the mapmaker by saying things like, "Mistakes can, of course, happen. All of you must correct them. This is why we are having the meeting with all of you, and we haven't sat with just one person" (4-2: 5). POs might also calm people down, if they participate too vocally or loudly. In one instance, the PO asked participants who were yelling rather loudly while reminding the mapmaker of *khana* names, "*Chachi*, don't talk so much. If you are left out, remind the mapmaker." (4-3: 5).

Participants try to make the entire PRA process a fun event by making a variety of humourous and witty comments. For example, PO would ask, "Is he a day labourer?" The participants would reply, "No. He is a night labourer." They would ask, "What does he eat the days he does no work?" The participants would reply, "He eats leaves." (2:1 8).

The humour and wit are, often, associated with a disinterest with PRA activities. For example, three BRAC schoolteachers were amongst the participants at a meeting. A few of the men present would be witty and humorous to attract the attention of BRAC school teachers and to make them laugh. The schoolteachers themselves were not participating in the PRA activities. The process documentor noted that they appeared to be present out of a sense of obligation towards BRAC rather than in a genuinely participatory spirit. At the end of the meeting, they spoke to the POs and said, "*Assalamalikum* Sir, won't you go to our house?" and left quickly. (2-6: 5). In another case, the process documentor commented on the presence of three 15-17 year old girls who were more interested in the male POs then in the PRA activities (2-1: 6).

Towards the end of the mapmaking process, boredom sets in amongst the participants. Several participants start complaining that they have been sitting here [at the meeting] for so long and that they have wasted their time. They start leaving or making excuses to leave the meeting. The POs attempt to persuade them to stay on, saying that there is still very important work left. Some of them, however, leave. Referring back to Figures 1 and 2, a dip in the number of participants can be noticed just before the start of the wealth ranking process.

Once all the *khanas* have been placed on the map, one of the POs copies the map down on brown paper. Another PO collects and piles up all the cards that contain names, father's/husband's name and occupation of *khana* heads. The third PO explains and introduces the wealth ranking process.

The Wealth Ranking Process

POs commence the mapmaking process after having collected all the cards, representing the various *khanas*, in the village together. An example of a more or less typical introduction to the wealth ranking process has been reproduced. In this instance, the PO began by asking, "Does everyone in the village maintain a similar lifestyle?" When the participants answer "No," the PO continues, "A few people are doing well, they have money and they can do alright. Other people are poor, a few people might have nothing. Now, you will make four divisions. Those who do well, you will place in category number 1, those who are a little worse off in category 2, worse than that into category 3 and those who have nothing, you will place in category 4." After explaining the process and the issue very well, the wealth ranking process began. (1-3: 8).

The POs use various terms to characterize these categories. One of the POs uses the terms "first class," "second class," "third class" and "fourth class" to distinguish between the various categories (2-2: 7). For the first category, other terms include, "*boro loke*", "*shochhol*", "*obostha bhalo*," etc. For the fourth and, if it exists, fifth categories, i.e., the poorest, the following terms are used: "*khudro garib*", "*nishho*", "*oshohai*", "*mora garib*", "*bhikkhuk*", etc.

The POs begin the wealth ranking process by asking participants to divide the *khanas* into four or five categories initially. The POs then ask participants to divide the last *khana* into two further categories (*unish bish kora*), where one is slightly better off than the other is. In one unusual instance, the POs had the participants *unish bish* both category 4 and category 5. At the end of the wealth ranking process, the *khanas* are ranked into 5 or 6 wealth categories. The last category, or the last two categories are preliminarily selected for the CFPR/TUP project.

There is often a considerable amount of disagreement generated over which category a particular *khana* should fall under and the issue may be very hotly debated amongst participants. These conflicts may be quite motivated, with participants eager to have their own names placed in the poorer categories. This is motivated by the firm belief that those placed in the poorest category will receive some form of aid. These conflicts can become quite serious and ugly (see Box on Wealth Ranking *Jhogras*).

Jhogras during Wealth Ranking

The *jhogras* can become quite ugly. In certain cases, participants threaten to leave unless their position in the wealth ranking is changed. One man, furious at having been placed in category three, erupted at a woman, "Do you know my *dhon*?" He took the card with his name and, in fury, tried to place it in the wealthiest category.

One woman became angry and enraged and said, "I don't have a house or anything, how do you place me in the second category?" Participants tried to explain to her that the "Kuddus" being spoken of is not her husband, he is another "Kuddus." She did not pay any attention to any explanations but kept screaming. Participants started commenting, "women's (*bedi's*) only work is arguing (*kaijja*)", "*bedi*, shut up", etc. An elderly man commented, "*bedi* does not belong to the human race. The PO commented "*bedi* is *khandan*" (4-2: 7)

In another incident, the process documentor noticed a rather violent *jhogra* a little further away from the PRA venue and after the end of the meeting. Two women were almost at the stage of tugging each other's hair. One of them accuses the other, "If you can give your brother's name (who lives in Gopalganj), you could have given my brother's name (lives in Dhaka). Even if it's in a year, he will be back." (2-7: 4).

These *jhogras* are not always motivated by selfish purposes. More unusual cases, however, arise when individuals wish to place others in a poorer category. Sharifa was arguing that a particular *khana* should be placed under category 3, not category 2. A man commented on Sharifa's insistence: "you have a lot of pity for people." Sharifa responded, "Whats wrong with crying for other people?" (1-3: 9). This particular meeting was characterized by a lot of disagreements and *jhogras*. The PO was repeatedly saying, "why are you fighting so much? Nothing is going to be given over here." The participants replied, "whether or not you give us anything, we have to tell you the truth. Whats the point of making false calculations?" (1-3: 9).

Disagreements over which category a particular household belongs to are somtimes resolved by the arrival of a respected and influential community member, whose judgment is trusted by the participants. Kamrual bhai, one such respected community member, was late in attending the PRA meeting. Participants were of the opinion that Kamrul bhai will be able to rank the one or two problematic *khanas*. When Kamrul bhai arrived, he ranked the *khanas* with no objections from the participants. (1-1: 5).

As the above examples demonstrate, *jhogras* or dominance by a respected and influential community member does not necessarily compromise the participatory process - the end results might still be consensual. An unusually participatory Wealth Ranking was observed in Kakoibunia, Tungipara. The participants ranked the *khanas* by consensus, expressing a form of disinterest (*tachhillota*) when discussing wealthier families ("He has a job. They do well.") as contrasted with a sense of unity and emotion when discussing poorer families. For example, when a name is mentioned, "*Iiiish!* Its so difficult with two daughters" or "So much pain and hardship with so many children." (1-2: 8). The unity of the participants, both in their distance and disinterest from the wealthy and their sense of oneness with the poor, ensured a smooth, participatory Wealth Ranking, uninterrupted by *jhogras*.

The PO facilitates the meeting by questioning the reasoning behind the categorization and stepping in to resolve conflicts. The POs facilitation style varies according to the context and the personality of the PO. POs, generally, question participants as to why a particular *khana* should be placed in a particular wealth ranking and, thereby, tries to ensure that the wealth ranking is more or less consistent.

The POs must take a more direct role, however, when conflicts and disputes arise. Some POs assume an authoritarian tone and "scold" participants. For example, the PO in Charkandi, Tungipara, stopped *jhogras* with a *dhomok* (scolding), "If you talk so much, is it possible to do work?" The same PO also scolded a participant for responding to the question, "what is your occupation?" by saying "I do not do anything." The PO said, in the tone of a *dhomok*, "not doing anything is not an occupation." (1-3: 8). The PO also scolded the participants for confusions over the wealth ranking of a household: "What people?

Bengalis don't understand anything. Once they say second category, then they say four. A person from your area, you should know how he is doing." (4-2: 7).

Once the PRA session is completed, and the *khanas* ranked by wealth, the POs choose the last category, or the last two categories for a questionnaire survey. This questionnaire survey yields the preliminarily selected CFPR/TUP clients.

The wealth ranking itself is most commonly carried out on the basis of the following criteria: people who own a fair amount of land, have a salaried job, have a tin or *pukka* house, own cows, goats or other livestock or own power tiller, rice mill, etc. are considered wealthy. On the other hand, landless people or people who own nothing outside their homestead; work as day labourers, small traders or beg; do not own any livestock or assets and live in straw houses are considered to be poor. The above criteria for ranking the *khanas* repeat, more or less exactly, across wealth rankings in all six districts for which we have process documentation. Other criteria might also include, school going children, TV, tape recorder, radio, tubewell, NGO membership, etc.

After the wealth ranking has been completed, one of the POs thanks the participants while another PO takes the information down in a notebook. The participants mill around for a while, asking general questions regarding the "real" purposes of the PRA. The POs generally respond negatively, arguing once more that their purpose is information-collection rather than assistance, that the *jorip* has been conducted all over the country, etc. However, expectations persist and community members are convinced that BRAC is planning some form of assistance for those whose names were recorded, particularly those who were identified as the poorest.

Gender Imbalances

One of the observations from the process documentation has been the exclusion of women from participating in the targeting process. The exclusion of women is visually apparent at the occasional PRA meeting without any female participants (see Figure 4 and Table 1). The

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exclusion of women, however, works in more subtle ways and at every level of the targeting process.

Table 1. Arrival Patterns at Majhbari, Gopalganj: A PRA session without Women Participants.		
Time	Men	Women
8:00 AM	7	0
8:20 AM	10	0
8:40 AM	9	0
8:55 AM	8	0
9:20 AM	6	0
9:50 AM	5	0
10:30 AM	6	0

An even more disturbing observation has been that BRAC POs, as well as male community members, participate in excluding women. POs have expressed the opinion that women do not contribute to the targeting process; they provide incorrect or misleading information and they quarrel too much (2-2: 5).

POs act to exclude women in all stages of the targeting process. During Rapport Building, POs emphasize invitations towards men and, often, actively discourage women from attending the meeting, phrasing their invitations thus: "[To the husband] It is very important you attend the meeting. [To the wife] You can come, if you want".

POs have delayed meetings because there are not enough men present. During these delays, the women present at the meeting would become impatient and frustrated. They were repeatedly saying, "Why do we need men? We can give all the information." The PO responded that men work outside the home and women stay inside the home and, as a result, do not know a lot of things. The women replied, "Because we stay at home, we know about everyone's homes much better. How will men know these things?" During the delay, two women got up and left. Several other women threatened to leave and not return: "If we leave this place now, we are not coming back." The meeting started after one of the POs returned with three men participants. (1-1: 3).

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POs, however, did not delay the PRA meeting when there were no women present, as has happened at several meetings. Researchers commented that at some of these meetings, the "atmosphere" was not women-friendly. They suggested that simple things, like spreading two *patis* or *madurs* separately for the men and the women can encourage female participation.

There were no instances of a female mapmaker in any of the PRA meetings that have been process documented, although in one instance an 8 or 10 year old boy was chosen to draw the map. It is worth noting that POs, generally, choose a mapmaker from amongst the participants.

During the Mapmaking and the Wealth Ranking, the community and/or the PO acted to exclude women's opinions. In these meetings, women participants would either sit silently or would occupy themselves in their own conversations, without meaningfully contributing to the meeting. Occasionally, when a woman tried to voice an opinion, she would be ``silenced by comments such as: "if the daal rises higher than the rice, it is a problem" (2-5: 6). (See Box on Discouraging Women from Attending: A Case from Charkandi, Tungipara)

Discouraging Women from Attending: A Case from Charkandi, Tungipara

At the PRA session in Charkandi, Tungipara, women were not joining the meeting. They were standing on the edges, looking at proceedings from behind the fences in their house and not sitting at the *pati*. The POs and the female process documentor tried to urge women to participate, saying "We are all brothers and sisters. Come join the meeting, the men can sit on one side and the women on another." Two school-going girls were sitting, whose father was attending the PRA session. The father, with an eye gesture, indicated that the girls should leave. He also got up and took his wife, who was watching the meeting from behind their house's fence, inside the house. Another man, also got up and asked his wife to go inside the house.

Gender imbalances continue on to the Survey, Preliminary Selection and Final Selection of the targeting process. POs have to question the female in a household, as she will be the

beneficiary of the CFPR/TUP programme. Occasionally, their husbands object to the PO speaking to their wives.

POs come up with innovative means of getting around their husbands' objections. For example, a *huzoor* was unwilling to let the PO question his wife. The PO put his arm around the man's shoulder and asked, "Do you do *Imamoti?* (leading a prayer in a mosque) My father was also an Imam. You are like my father. You know it is my job to fill up this questionnaire." The *huzoor* relented and permitted him to question his wife (1-1: 8).

During the same survey, however, the PO found it more difficult to overcome similar problems. The PO addressed the woman's husband, "*Chacha,* you and other people work. Similarly, I have to do this job and I will fill this questionnaire in front of you." The man relented, but his wife refused to come out of the house. In the end, she responded to the PO's questions from inside the house (1-1: pp. 8-9).

During Final Selection, two preliminarily selected beneficiaries were excluded for refusing to come out of their houses to talk to the AC. The process documentor noted that their houses were removed from the rest of the village and their husbands were not home. They did not, under those, circumstances feel comfortable coming out to speak to the AC. However, the AC excluded them with the comment, "They are too religious, how are they going to come to training if they do not even come out to talk to me."

As these incidents illustrate, the social exclusion of women occur at a variety of levels - within the community, within the household and within the development encounter of BRAC staff and community members. This is ironic for a programme designed specifically for women and female headed households. In order to ensure that different streams of knowledge are indeed intertwined in the selection of the ultra poor, it is necessary to devise effective strategies that will overcome gender imbalances and ensure meaningful and effective participation of women.

CHAPTER 4: SURVEY AND PRELIMINARY SELECTION

The wealth ranking completed during the PRA meeting produces a target group (the last or last two categories) from which BRAC POs select clients for the CFPR/TUP programme. The last or last two categories in the wealth ranking are the subjects of a questionnaire survey carried out by BRAC, on the basis of which clients are preliminarily selected for the TUP programme.

The day after the wealth ranking session has been completed, two BRAC POs return to the community with a designed questionnaire and a list of *khanas* that were placed in the last two categories. In general, the POs divide up the *khanas* between them and carry out the questionnaire survey separately. In these circumstances, the process documentor can only observe one of the POs for any length of time. However, process documentors did attempt to spend time with both POs by, occasionally, leaving one PO and searching for the other. In several instances, POs took advice from Process Documentors in making their decisions.

The following aspects of the questionnaire survey process will be highlighted in our discussion:

- POs' Approaches
- Respondents' Comments
- Cross-checking with Respondents' Neighbours
- Cross-checking through Physical Observations
- Community Reactions
- Preliminary Selection for CFPR/TUP Programme

The targeting process, as the process documentation has made clear, is not a simple and linear schematic, as might be imagined from theoretical discussions. It is quite a complex task to manage a targeting process as complex and multi-dimensional as the one used by the CFPR/TUP programme. Senior management has to attempt to strike a careful balance between supervision and interference in order to successfully implement the targeting

scheme. Occasionally, the programme fails to find the perfect balance, giving rise to certain *Programmatic Issues*, which we will discuss in greater detail at the end of this section.

POs' Approaches

Although BRAC POs entered the community with a pre-designed questionnaire, they did not ask questions directly from the survey. Rather, the questions were posed conversationally and were often asked indirectly. POs often played the "Devil's Advocate" in order to get honest responses. POs, in general, are of the opinion that community members will lie if they believe that an honest reply will negatively affect their chances of receiving assistance from BRAC.

This style of questioning is most apparent when POs try to find out if a woman is a member of an NGO or a microfinance organisation or whether or not she is a VGD card holder. POs would rarely, if ever, ask whether or not a woman was a member of a microfinance organisation or an NGO. Instead, the PO would ask the woman the following types of questions:

- *Bhabi*, don't you pay *kisti* (installment) on Sunday?
- *Bhai*, on which day is your *kisti* due?
- Is *kisti* due on Saturday or Tuesday?
- Did you pay the loan that you had taken from Prashika back?

These types of questions are more likely to elicit truthful replies. When the PO asked a woman when her *kisti* is due, she asked, "Which *kisti*?" The PO explained, "Grameen Bank is close to your house, so Grameen Bank's *kisti*." The woman replied, "No. It was not Grameen Bank's *kisti*. It was Ansar VDP's *kisti*." The PO then asked to see the "*kisti* book" which was brought to him (1-3: 12). In another instance, when the PO asked if the woman had paid back her loan from Prashika, the respondent replied that she had taken a loan from Palli Bikas to repair her house. However, they had bought cattle with the money instead.

In certain instances, POs adopt false guises. For example, a PO told a respondent, "I have come from Prashika, do you pay your credit back in time?" POs might also repeat the same question over and over to the respondents. Some respondents who attempted to hide their NGO membership buckled under repeated and continual questioning from the POs and revealed their membership.

POs adopted a similar strategy in trying to find out whether or not a particular woman holds a VGD card. The following types of questions were asked quite often:

- How much wheat did you get this time?
- Did they give less wheat this time?
- Have you gotten wheat three times till now?

POs adopted a similar conversational or Devil's Advocate or pressurizing approach in a variety of other issues. They would ask questions like, "I see you have built your house with nice new tin, does your husband have any income?" or "Is your father-in-law a *borolok* (rich/big man)?" (4:2: 12)

POs occasionally find it difficult to talk to the women in a household (see section on Gender Imbalances, particularly, p. 42 of this report) In one instance, the woman's elder brother or grandfather responded angrily, "What happens if the husband responds to these questions?" The PO said that the woman should respond to the questions and if she cannot answer a certain question her husband may fill in. (1-2: pp. 10-11)

In another case, the BRAC AC wanted to talk to the husband and wife of a *khana* together and requested the husband to bring out his wife. The husband got angry and asked why talking to him was not sufficient. The AC tried to convince him to let him talk to both of them. Finally, the wife came out of the house and convinced her husband that they should both to talk to the AC together (1-1: pp. 9-10).

Respondents' Comments

Respondents' would, in general, attempt to highlight their poverty (*durobosthha*) when answering POs' questions. During the wealth ranking process in the PRA meeting, participants demonstrated a similar tendency to try and prove one's poverty. These attempts could be related to expectations of assistance from BRAC - community members believe that the poorer they appear to be the more likely it is that BRAC will offer some type of help.

The indirect questions POs ask in order to find out about microfinance membership or VGD cards occasionally draw annoyed or angry responses, specially if the respondent believes that she has nothing to hide. In their replies, respondents' point to their poverty, the inappropriateness of microfinance in their situation and the unfairness of the VGD card selection process.

In one example, when a PO said to a woman, "It is suspected that they are giving less than 20 kilograms of wheat this time," the woman got angry. She said, "what is the *beta* (young man saying? I am poor but I do not get any wheat. Today's rule is that whoever has the stick is given wheat." When the PO asked the same woman, "*Chachi*, on which day is your *kisti* due," the woman responded, "I do not have any income, so I do not have any *shomiti* (microfinance)." (1-4: 11)

In another instance, a woman angrily replied to a PO, "I have no income, where will I pay *kisti* from?" In addition to this, the woman said that her husband has a very low income and she does not consider her *khana* capable of taking *kisti*. (The term *kisti* is often used to describe the entire microfinance loan) (1-2: 11).

Respondents would keep silent in response to questions that were embarassing and/or humiliating. Neighbours would fill in the responses in these situations. However, the respondents' silences speak of a sense of pride and self-respect. For example, a PO asked a woman, "What does your husband do?" She kept quiet, but a little boy nearby replied, "*shey bhikkha kory*" (he begs) (4-2: 12). In another case, the PO asked a woman if her family had

to go without meals very often. When the woman was keeping quiet, her neighbours replied for her, "yes, they often have to starve." (4-2: 11).

In another case, the PO asked a woman, "*Chachi*, where is *Chacha*?" Other women present while the survey was being completed answered: "*Chacha* is very old, he is close to death." The PO asked the woman again, "*Chachi*, you are *taaja* (young). How come *chacha* is so old." Again, *chachi's* neighbours replied, "It is the universe's rule that *betaara* (husbands) die while *maiyyara* (wives) are still young." (1-4: 11)

Cross-checking with Respondents' Neighbours

The documentation of the Questionnaire Survey process points to several instances where respondents' neighbours give away information that the respondent had attempted to keep secret. During the survey process, a group of people would gather around the PO and the respondent and the PO could gain valuable information and input from the gathered crowd. In one example, a neighbour gave information about the land owned by the woman's *khana*. The respondent became annoyed and commented, "You have come here to be clever. You speak in that case. I don't need to say anything." (4-3: 8)

Conversely, neighbours might attempt to prove the respondent's poverty to the PO. Neighbours make comments like, "They have no income or wealth, they are very poor" or "Poor people, what *shomiti* are they going to do." (4-3: 9)

The PO would cross-check with neighbours, to cross-check information received from the respondent herself. For example, when a woman claimed that her husband was sick, the PO would ask to talk to the husband directly and would also question the woman's neighbours about her husband's health. (4-2: 12)

Cross-checking through Physical Observations

The POs would enter the houses of respondents during and/or after carrying out the survey. They would physically observe the house and try to estimate the socio-economic condition

of *khana* from the condition of the house. They would look at the condition of the house, assets surrounding the house, the construction material of the house and their belongings. The POs observe the residences very closely ("*khutiye khutiye dekhi*").

Many respondents would request the PO to come inside their house and look at their situation. Some respondents would say, "*Babu*, come inside my house and see my situation for yourself. And do something for me." (3-2: 12). On the other hand, several respondents asked POs not to judge their standard of living from the condition of their houses. In one case, the respondent explained to the PO that they keep their houses in decent condition because they have to be able to marry their daughters off (1-3: 13).

POs would look at the following assets in considering whether or not a *khana* is suitable for the CFPR/TUP programme:

- Furniture
- Clothes/Dress
- Utensils & Crockery
- Granary
- Food Habits
- Housing Condition and Materials
- Valuable Trees
- Bamboo Grove
- Banana Grove
- Vegetable Garden
- TV, Radio, Cassette, etc.
- Fishing Net, Boat

In some areas, houses are spaced very close to each other. This spatial arrangement creates excellent opportunities for looking into what is happening in other homes. In one case, the PO found tomatoes in a straw basket by the side of the house. The woman claimed that she had picked them for her children after requesting someone (not mentioned). The PO also

observed and saw that the next *khana* (which had been included in the survey) had an electricity connection, a wall clock, bound photographs, etc (1-2: 13).

There are several cases where physical observations raised wonder that a particularly *khana* was ranked so low in the PRA meeting. In one case, the PO went to a *kabiraj's* house and saw that she owned a large home and a spacious homestead. Her elder daughter and son-in-law live with her *khana*. At the courtyard, there were patients coming and going from the *kabiraj*. There was a person sitting there with a bottle of water on which the *kabiraj* would blow and bless. In another case, the PO found that a *khana* ranked in the poorest category had a brick home. One of their children was currently a BA student. They also owned a large betel nut grove (1-2: 14).

Community Responses and Reactions

The expectations from BRAC expressed during Rapport Building and the PRA meeting continues to be heard during the survey process. Community members frequently asked, "what will BRAC do?" These expectations result in disappointment, when community members discover that POs are not surveying their *khanas*. They would ask the PO, "why haven't you come to our house?" Those who are not surveyed express a great deal of resentment; they believe that they will not receive the aid BRAC will be distributing.

As the PO walks through the community, various community members try to convey their poverty to the POs and ask for assistance through comments like, "We are poor, please write our name" (4-3: 7). They may even ask for assistance for a poor kin, "My mother is poor, her name was not written." (4-3: 7). Many community members ask if a new *somiti* (microfinance committee) will be formed. Some persons ask if they are going to give assets - goats, chickens-ducks, cattle, etc. (4-3: 8).

The PRA meeting had raised expectations of assistance amongst the community and the arrival of the POs the next day plays on those expectations. To provide one example amongst many, a community member asked the BRAC PO, "you spent all day yesterday yapping (*bhot bhot korlen*), will you give us anything?" (2-1: 9).

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Community members belonging to *khanas* that are not surveyed express a great deal of dissatisfaction with the PRA meeting during the survey process. Community members generally express dissatisfaction over their own ranking. The process documentor observed a *jhogra* between two women, because one of the women ranked the other as middle-rich. In another example, a woman also swore at the PRA host, calling her, "*natir ghorer nati*" (daughter of a dancing woman). She alleged that she had given the PRA host money for savings, but the woman had not returned the money and yesterday the host had ranked her *khana* as rich. In another example a woman got very angry with the PO and shouted, "Alright you [the PO] ranked *borolok* and *chhotolok* yesterday. Why did you rank us as middle category? I have taken loans of taka 70,000" (2-1: 9). Community members may also complain about somebody else's ranking, for example, in one instance, a man complained "How can a man like Alamgir Sharif be ranked *mora gorib*?" [Look at Complaints about PRA Meetings: Dissatisfaction at being Excluded].

**Expressing Dissatisfactions with the PRA Wealth Ranking:
A Case from Kakuibunia, Tungipara**

A man came to the house where the PO was conducting a survey and, very loudly, stated that, "all the *khanas* of the *para* (neighbourhood) are poor. Based on what have you ranked the *khanas* and, now, you are going to some *khanas* and not to other *khanas*. *Eta kemon kothha?* (What is this?)" The PO tried to explain that it was the community that did the wealth ranking, not the PO himself. Women from the area also explained that the names of all the *khanas* had been included and not a single *khana* has been left out. The man appeared satisfied at this.

In the meantime, a "leader-like" person of the area came and said that he knew about the meeting but did not go there because he was busy. He further alleged that the POs had selected such a venue that nobody from this *para* (neighbourhood) would go there. During elections a *jhogra* (quarrel) had erupted between the *paras* and there has been trouble since.

The PO, however, pointed out that there were many women from this *para* at the PRA meeting (a statement backed by the Process Documentor).

The farmer, who had come earlier, shouted his dissatisfaction once more. He said that the *Nomos* (Hindu caste) did not understand the *Malos'* (a different caste) hardships, pains or sufferings. He suggested that the *Nomos* ranked themselves as poorest deliberately. However all the *khanas* in the *Malo para* are poor. (1-2: 12)

Criticisms about the PRA meeting can take on an uglier aspect when combined with community perceptions of BRAC as an anti-Islam and pro-US organisation. For example, a young man who had actively participated in the wealth ranking process approached the PO and told him, "sir, all the villagers scold me because I gave you their names. They took you as people of Bush and they believe that Bush will bomb the area after they send you to India." The PO took the young man to a shop where there were several villagers present and explained to them, once again, BRAC's objectives (4-3: 9).

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In another instance, the PO went to a *khana* and was preparing to start the survey, when the woman's husband arrived and ask the PO to get out and said, in his direction, "They will make Christians. None of us will give names. They work for Christians. They will play on your greed to make you Christian." Although the woman had wanted to give her name, she could not because of her husband yelling and shouting. The PO and the process documentor had to leave. At one stage the PO commented, "Okay. If you don't want to give your name, we have no problems" (4-5: 6).

Preliminary Selection

The POs considered the filled-in questionnaire survey, information gathered from neighbours, and their own physical observations of the *khana* in deciding who to preliminarily select for the CFPR/TUP programme. The following conditions were considered favourable for preliminary selection:

- Having no VGD card
- Is not a member of any microfinance organisation or NGO
- Female-headed Household capable of doing work
- Husband is sick
- Woman living with father
- Widowed or divorced
- Gathering and selling *lakri* (fuel wood) and *koila* (coal)
- Sewing *kantha*
- Works as maidservant
- Makes bamboo products
- Poor housing condition
- Low level of income (if any)
- Does not own any "luxury" items (wall clock, almirah, etc.)

The following factors were crucial in deciding who to exclude from the CFPR/TUP programme:

- Member of an NGO
- Holds a VGD card
- Not capable of doing work
- Comparatively better economic condition
- Repaid loan/credit but still has savings (e.g. 200 takas)
- Disabled husband/wife gets assistance from others
- Husband can earn Taka 80-150 per day
- Too old (e.g. 70 years, 80 years)
- Nice tin-roofed house
- "Luxury" items (e.g. wall clock, almirah, radio, etc.)

Based on the above 'inclusion' and 'exclusion' criteria, POs preliminarily selected *khanas* for the ultra poor programme. The process documentors observed a total of 25 surveys. Of these, there are numerical figures on *khanas* surveyed and selected in 20 surveys. These

figures have been tabulated below. Out of a total of 463 *khanas* surveyed, 93 were preliminarily selected for the CFPR/TUP programme, a selection rate of approximately 20%.

Table 2: *Khanas* Surveyed and Preliminarily Selected (by District)

District	Spots for which figures are available	*Khanas* under survey coverage	*Khanas* surveyed	*Khanas* selected	*Khanas* excluded after Survey
Tungipara	1	41	40	0	40
Faridpur	1	27	27	0	27
Gopalganj	3	73	73	10	90
Durgapur	7	155	155	41	114
Kishoreganj	8	168	168 42(nil in one spot)		126
Total	20	464	463	93	397

Interestingly, there is one less *khana* surveyed than under coverage in the above table. There were, actually, two *khanas* under survey coverage that were not surveyed in Tungipara. In both cases, the *khana* could not be surveyed because there were no women present. In one instance, the wife in the *khana* had run away because the husband was suffering from gangrene and could not provide for the family (1-3: 12). In another instance, a *khana* was not surveyed because the wife had died and there were no other women present (1-2: 14).

Programmatic Issues

There are certain programmatic issues that have been highlighted by the process documentation of the targeting process. The CFPR/TUP programme is a complex, multi-layered and experimental programme in its initial stages. These programmatic issues are being highlighted here to point out the difficulties in managing a process of the complexity and the scale of the CFPR/TUP programme, and the unexpected and unanticipated sources of programmatic pressures.

The following programmatic issues will be highlighted in this section:

- *Visits from the Head Office*
- *Simultaneous Targeting and Asseting*
- *ACs and RSSs Delaying Final Selection*

Visits from the Head Office

BRAC employees at the Area Office are occasionally put under pressure to perform at a higher level to impress Senior Managers visiting from the Head Office. There were two instances of such pressure on the targeting process documented by the researchers.

In one instance, a scheduled PRA meeting, for which invitations were made, was cancelled, without notice, because the POs had to be at the Area Office to receive visitors from the Head Office. The PO returned to the spot the next day to conduct the PRA meeting. The venue host told the PO that there were people waiting the previous day. The PO explained that he had to be at the Area Office, because of visitors from Dhaka. A girl swept the courtyard and spread *patis* and the meeting proceeded as usual.

In another instance, BRAC employees at the Area Office wished to impress a senior management visitor from the Head Office who *might* inspect the PRA meeting the next day. In preparation, two POs went to conduct Rapport Building and find a suitable spot for this PRA meeting. The POs wandered around several villages, unable to find a suitable spot. The PRA meeting took place without any Rapport Building session (we do not have process documentation of this PRA meeting). The POs had worked so hard – trying, although unsuccessfully, to locate a suitable target spot – that one of them came down with a fever.

Simultaneous Targeting and Asseting

POs have to try and keep the purposes behind targeting secret, while conducting the targeting process. However, in many regions, targeting and asseting are taking place quite close to each other. As a result, some community members have heard about BRAC's programme activities.

Sometimes, the information sources are vague and the community members themselves are not sure of BRAC's precise activities. For example, a participant asked the field researcher, during the build-up to the PRA meeting, "*Apa*, I have heard, through the air (*uru uru bhabey*) that you will help, you will give a lot of things" (1-3:6).

There were, however, instances where community members were very familiar with BRAC's programmatic thinking. For example, in Charkandi, Tungipara, the comment was heard: "These are the people who are giving cows and goats" (1-3: 3). In Shonargati, Gopalganj, the process documentor met a man from a different village who knew everything about the programme because the PRA, asset selection and delivery had all been completed in his village. He was talking with the POs and the Process Documentor in an "all-knowing" tone. (2-4: 3)

ACs and RSSs Delaying Final Selection

The RSS or AC, due to their seniority and additional responsibilities do not always prioritize the Final Selection process. The process documentor in Gopalganj spoke of a sense of despair amongst POs because there are many preliminarily selected CFPR/TUP members waiting to be finally confirmed. In one instance, the AC was supposed to visit the other four the next day. However, the process documentor returned from a morning PRA and waited for the AC in the office from 2:00 to 5:00 pm. The AC then informed him that he won't be able to do the final confirmation today. He has to go to the outpost to conduct a Rapport Building tomorrow (2-4: 12).

CHAPTER 5: FINAL SELECTION

After the POs have preliminarily selected *khanas* for the CFPR/TUP programme, the RSS or AC or both go and visit these *khanas*. During their visit, they asked detailed questions on many of the same issues covered by the POs. However, they do not use a designed questionnaire (although POs do not ask questions directly from the questionnaire either) and they can ask questions in closer detail, as they have fewer *khanas* to interview.

The RSS or AC return from the target area and discuss their observations and/or decisions with the POs who conducted the Rapport Building, PRA meeting and survey Finally Select clients for the CFPR/TUP programme.

The following aspects of the Final Selection process will be discussed:

- RSS/AC Attitudes and Approaches
- Community Reactions
- Final Selection

The targeting process, as has been mentioned at various points of the report, seeks to combine diverse streams of knowledges on poverty. The selection criteria that emerge during preliminary and final selection (p. 52 of this report) are, however, not as straightforward, or black and white, as it appears on paper. There are complexities, complications and shades of grey within these criteria and their actual field-level implementation often involves negotiations and debates. We shall conclude our description of Final Selection with a discussion on *Targeting Criteria*.

RSS/AC Attitudes and Approaches

Generally, the approaches and attitudes of the RSSs and ACs as they enter target areas and interview preliminarily selected *khanas* conveyed their seniority within BRAC. In some communities, people were heard commenting *"boro sir* (big sir) has come." (1-3: 15).

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The RSS or AC generally travel to the target area by motor-cycle unlike the previous BRAC representatives who have been visiting the target area repeatedly. The motorcycle itself draws attention to their seniority. Process documentors have commented how community members would maintain a sort of distance from them.

The *boro sir* impression may be strengthened by the RSS or AC's behaviour during the interview. For example, while the AC *bhai* in Tungipara was interviewing Nasima, a preliminarily selected CFPR/TUP client, two women from a neighbouring house came. They recognized the process documentor and started talking to her, while AC *bhai* was talking to Nasima. AC *bhai* asked those two women, "What do you need over here?" They replied, we met *apa* (the process documentor) and we came to talk to her." AC *bhai* said, once you are done talking with her, leave. I am talking to her, it's a problem if there are other people present." Later in the interview, Nasima's uncle-in-law walked into the interview. AC *bhai* asked, "what do you want?" He replied, "Nothing. She is my nephew's wife, so I came." The AC responded, "If there is no need, leave. Can't you see I am talking." (1-3: 16).

The RSS and/or the AC rely on many of the same strategies employed by POs in attempting to extract "true" information from preliminarily selected CFPR/TUP members. They ask indirect questions regarding microfinance and VGD cards, they cross-check with neighbours and physically observe their houses and surroundings.

Community Reactions and Responses

The repeated visits of BRAC officials raise community expectations. The arrival of the *boro sir* on motorcycle, after a series of visits by "lesser" officials, creates a sense that something is about to happen. One of the process documentors commented on the excitement generated in the area every time the AC inquired after a particular *khana*.

The repeated visits can cause resentment amongst neighbours of preliminarily selected CFPR/TUP members. Questions raised during the Questionnaire Survey – "How come you are visiting that house, and not mine?" – are repeated during the Final Selection.

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Interestingly, community members attitudes towards BRAC and BRAC representatives are not always consistent in each of these repeat visits. (see Box on Reba, Reba's Husband and Reba's Bhashur: Changing Attitudes and Building Expectations in Repeated Encounters with BRAC]

Reba, Reba's Husband and Reba's *Bhashur*: Changing Attitudes and Building Expectations in Repeated Encounters with BRAC

AC *bhai* went to interview Reba, a preliminarily selected CFPR/TUP client. Her husband was outside and he said to her, "I want to talk with you and your wife, can you call her?" Reba's husband became angry and shouted, "Why? Can't you just talk to me?" The AC explained, we want to talk to the both of you together.

At this point, Reba came and called her husband inside and the two of them were then interviewed together. The process documentor was surprised at Reba's husband sudden anger. He had been very helpful and participatory during the PRA meeting.

During the interview, Reba's *bhashur* appeared and said, in Reba's direction, "people come to your house over and over. Why? Are you taking loans? Organisation (*shongstha*) people don't come to anybody else's house. For a few days, BRAC people have been coming to your house."

AC *bhai* said to him, "if you were at the meeting we had, you would have understood better why we are doing this." He went on to explain how they had done the wealth ranking, and how they were now visiting those who had fallen into the number 4 category over and over to get a better understanding of the information they had collected. The man accepted the POs explanation and apologised.

After he left, Reba's husband said, "He is a *buzoor*, does not like this kind of work."

When the interview was practically over, Reba's husband say, "please, don't think anything." AC *bhai* replied, "Its ok. We work with people like you all the time and we understand why you suddenly lose your temper." (1-1: 9).

Final Selection

After the AC or RSS returns from the target area, they sit together with the POs who conducted the previous stages of the targeting process. The process documentors described the POs waiting expectantly for the RSS to return from the target area. The POs wanted to see who had been left out of their preliminarily selected ultra poor. They express

disappointment when someone they had chosen has been dropped and they ask for the RSS's reasons.

Preliminarily selected CFPR/TUP members are, usually, not finally confirmed if they already own some assets (land, trees, vegetables, etc.), receive significant assistance from kin or neighbours or appear physically unable of taking care of assets.

In one instance, two preliminarily selected members were excluded because they did not want to come out of the house in front of the RSS. Their husbands had gone to work in the fields and there were no men in the house. In addition, their houses are further away from the other houses in the village. They were, therefore, scared to come out of their houses in front of the RSS. The RSS commented, "Those two are *huzoors*. How are you going to train them? They are not going to come to training. They are excluded." (4-5: 8)

There may be some disagreement over a decision that an RSS or AC has taken and these are, usually, discussed and resolved. These debates appear, in general, to be quite participatory and senior BRAC employees seem to be open to disagreement and debate and are even willing to revise their opinions. (see Box on Debates During Final Selection: AC *bhai* Changes his Mind and Box on "What Have We Been Doing All These Days?")

Targeting Criteria

The preliminary and final selection decisions are based on a mix of programme-set criteria and observations of field-level BRAC staff. These decisions represent a blend of BRAC's local knowledge on poverty (accumulated through years of experience at the field) and academic and programmatic knowledges on poverty (represented through the designed targeting criteria).

Table 3 below represents the programme-set inclusion and exclusion criteria used in preliminary and final selection. The exclusion criteria are meant to be applied strictly - if the potential candidate meets *any one* of those criteria, she will definitely be excluded. On the other hand, failure to meet at least three of the five inclusion criteria results in exclusion.

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Table 3: Programme-set Criteria for Preliminary and Final Selections

Exclusion Criteria	Inclusion Criteria
The household is borrowing from a microcredit providing NGO	Female Headed Households and households with divorced/abandoned/widowed women
The household is a current cycle recipient of VGD card	Adult women in the housedhold does labour based work outside the homestead
There are no adult woman in the household physically able to put in labour towards assets transferred	Households where main male income earner is physically not able to do any work
	Households where school going aged children have to labour
	Households having negligible assets beyond the home they live in

The BRAC field observations were those captured through the process documentation, and are quite context specific. We have chosen a few examples from many. These observational criteria are, in many ways, operationalised versions of the programme-set criteria. For example, "too old" is an operationalised version of "adult woman physically able to put in labour towards assets" and "works as maidservant" or "gathering and selling fuel wood" are operationalized versions of "adult woman does labour -based work outside the homestead", etc.

Table 4: BRAC Field Level Staff Observations

Factors Against Inclusion	Factors For Inclusion
Disabled husband/wife gets assistance from others	Poor housing condition
Husband earns Taka 80-150 per day	Gathering and selling lakri (fuel wood) and koila (coal)
Too old (e.g. 70 years, 80 years)	Sewing kantha
Nice tin-roofed house	Works as maidservant
"Luxury" items (e.g. wall clock, almirah, radio, etc.)	Makes bamboo products

The programme-set criteria looks straightforward and black and white on paper; their actual field-level implementation - the contextualization captured in BRAC's field-level observations - often produces complexities and shades of grey. As a result, selection decisions are, frequently, open to debate and negotiation. In this section, we shall discuss complexities that arise with the field-level implementation of three of the targeting criteria used in preliminary and final selection. These criteria:

- Microfinance Engagements
- Physical Ability of Beneficiary to Look After Assets
- Poor Housing Conditions

Microfinance Engagements

Microfinance engagements are, possibly, the single most significant reason for exclusion during targeting. However, there are varying qualities of microfinance participation. Frequently, households are excluded because they have some outstanding loans or a small amount of savings accumulated at a microfinance institution. There are also instances when the household took the loan but did not use it themselves, either make some money through on-lending or as a favour to relatives, friends or patrons.

BRAC's field level staff and the field researchers report that "truly ultra poor households" may also microfinance; hence, microfinance is not a good indicator of the poverty level. However, for various programmatic reasons, the microfinance exclusion criterion is desirable. In spite of this, BRAC's field level staff express considerable regret when a "truly ultra poor" household could not be included because of this criterion (See Box on "What Have We Been Doing All These Years?").

"What Have We Been Doing All These Years?"

The AC came back and sat with everyone and expressed immense regret and repeatedly said, "What have we actually done all these years?"

He had gone to the spot and met Monohar Bishwash, very old and very sick and unable to leave his bed. He has two unmarried daughters. The daughter had gone to work in the fields. The daughter had taken a loan from ASHA, but that was not for herself, it was for the person on whose land they live. The loan is *only* in her name, but she cannot be selected for it.

The PO and the person who conducted the Rapport Building were more skeptical about her suitability for the CFPR/TUP programme. They were concerned that if the daughters got married there would be no one to look after the assets.

Physically Able to Look After Asset

BRAC field-level staff conducting the targeting have to judge, through their observations, whether or not a woman is capable of tending the asset, in order to operationalize this programmatic criterion. BRAC POs generally exclude the very old, very sick or the physically disabled because they will not be able to look after the asset. However, these indicators are not necessarily good proxies for physical ability and selection decisions based on these criteria are often disputed and debated (See Box on Debates During Final Selection: RSS *dada* Changes his Mind)

Debates During Final Selection: RSS *dada* Changes his Mind

RSS *dada* had excluded Hajera because she was too old and would not be able to look after her assets. However, after he returned to the office, the POs inform him that during training they had been told to include people who are very old but have vision and can walk. There would be appropriate assets selected for them. Upon hearing this, RSS *dada* began re-considering his decision.

One of the POs started offering reasons on why to include Hajera. She is famous in the village for her *jhogras* and no one would dare touch her assets. Besides, even though she is old, during *Aman* she works in the fields.

In the end, Hajera was selected as a CFPR/TUP programme client. (2-3: 12)

Poor Housing Condition

During preliminary and final selection, BRAC field-staff closely observe potential participants' houses, trying to judge the level of poverty from the physical appearance of their homestead and belongings. Nice housing, particularly tin roofing, are potentially grounds for exclusion.

However, this particular indicator, the process documentation suggests, may not be a particularly good indicator of poverty. Several respondents asked POs not to judge their standard of living from the condition of their houses. In one case, the respondent explained to the PO that they keep their houses in decent condition because they have to be able to marry their daughters off (1-3: 13). It has also been suggested that tin is a more economical and cheaper building material than alternatives, particularly straw, and it makes economic sense for the ultra poor to live in tin houses.

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CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS

The programme has devised a targeting mechanism that combines local knowledges on poverty with academic and programmatic conceptions of poverty to find and identify the appropriate ultra poor for the CFPR/TUP programme (Matin and Halder, 2002). Figure 1 is an illustration of the targeting schematic as it appears on paper. This schematic, at least on paper, fails to convey the complexities and complications underlying the process. The process documentation has illustrated, in detail, the field-level complexities and variations hidden by the theoretical and linear schematic of Figure 1.

The success of the targeting process (Matin and Halder 2002) is owed to the successful relationship between the community and BRAC field-level staff. The process documentation has provided a rich illustration of this relationship, through which diverse knowledge streams combine in an informed and appropriate selection decision. Figure 5 illustrates the coming together of knowledge streams in the targeting process.

Figure 5: Combining Knowledge Streams in Selecting the Ultra Poor

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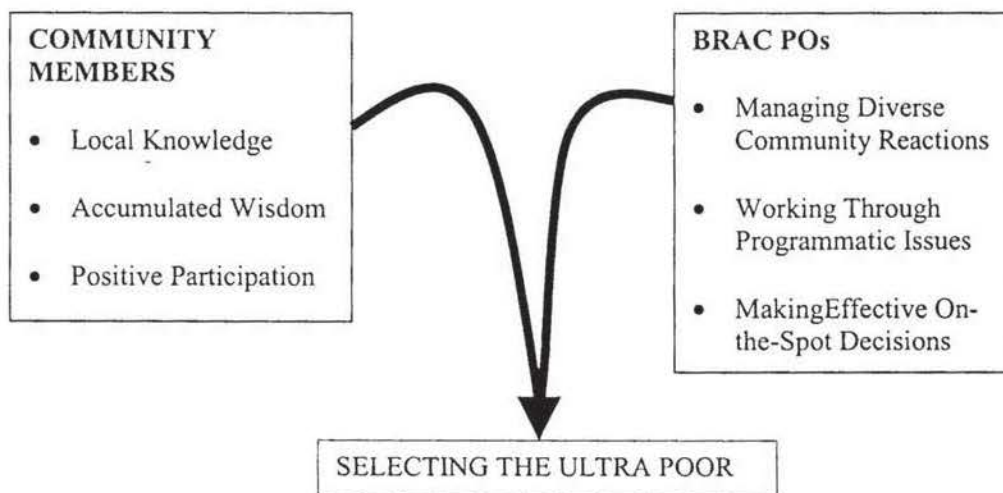
A major issue running through the various stages of the targeting mechanism has been community expectations of assistance from BRAC. Most community members believed that BRAC will be offering some assistance and that is why they are going through so much trouble. These expectations are, in most instances, vaguely expressed, along the lines, BRAC will do "something" or will give "something". Most community members expect VGD cards, *shomitis*, or assets (cows/goats, chickens/ducks, etc.).

These expectations of assistance, often, exist side by side with feelings of suspicion and hostility towards BRAC as a Christianizing, anti-Islam and pro-American organisation. Several community members expressed the opinion that it does not matter whether BRAC is Christian or not as long as they do something in the community. Other community members lobbied for assistance while condemning BRAC as an anti-Islam organization. In other cases, community members refused to participate in targeting activities because they perceived BRAC as such an organisation.

The BRAC POs had to negotiate between these diverse community responses and reactions to BRAC while conducting the targeting activities. In addition, POs had to keep the real purposes behind targeting secret, while encouraging community members to participate in targeting activities. POs would face many difficult and unanticipated situations, confronted by community members with diverse attitudes towards BRAC. In these situations, POs made tough decisions on the spot and used considerable tact and intelligence to successfully conduct targeting activities. It is worth celebrating the POs ability to successfully negotiate diverse, unexpected and unanticipated difficulties in various stages of the targeting process. The POs creativity in dealing with these situations is also worth celebrating. For example, during the Survey, POs phrased their questions cleverly and indirectly in their attempts to extract correct information from the respondents.

POs did, however, encounter difficulties in creating a gender balance at the PRA meetings. Some POs were reluctant to encourage women to participate because, according to them, they quarrel too much and do not provide correct or relevant information. As a result, women's participation at some of the PRA meetings was very low. The failure to include

women's views in the PRA meeting might bias the wealth ranking results, though it is not possible to arrive at such a conclusion based on the process documentation.

One of the strengths of process documentation research has been the wealth of detailed information collected. The significance and importance of certain terminology and vocabulary used during field-implementations are highlighted by the process documentation. The POs use the term *dawat* while inviting community members to the PRA meeting. The term *dawat* creates a sense of social obligation in community members to attend. On the other hand, the term *jorip* used to describe PRA activities create a sense of disinterest amongst community members. BRAC POs also had considerable difficulties in explaining the term *khana* to community members, leading to considerable confusion and difficulties.

The targeting mechanism was designed to draw and bring together diverse streams of knowledge on poverty in identifying the appropriate ultra poor for the CFPR/TUP programme. The process documentation illustrate the wealth and diversity of knowledge that intermingles in targeting the ultra poor and the complex and difficult situations that arise at the interfaces between knowledges.