



shiree

QUARTERLY REPORT

April - June 2011



UKaid
from the Department for
International Development



Scope of the Report

This report covers the period from 1st April to 30th June 2011, the second quarter of Year Four of the implementation phase of the Economic Empowerment of the Poorest - Challenge Fund (EEP)/shiree. After an introductory commentary by the shiree Senior Management Team, progress against each of the four programme outputs is reported, followed by updates in three further sections; Management Information Systems, Management and Finance.

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i. Commentary from Senior Management Team

The second quarter of 2011 saw further expansion and consolidation of shiree activities across all 4 outputs – sustaining and building on the momentum established over recent quarters. Scale Fund Round 1 and Innovation Fund Rounds 1&2 projects are rapidly reaching maturity with consideration switching to issues of sustainability, replicating proven models by expanding outwards (for Scale Fund Phase 2) and capturing lessons and learning – across the portfolio. Meanwhile Innovation Fund Round 3 projects are facing the selection and verification challenges previously addressed by the initial set of partners – benefiting from their experience but with a much more diverse beneficiary profile.

Much time and effort was put in during the quarter to supporting the Independent Assessment Panel (IAP) process for Innovation Fund Round 4 and Scale Fund Round 2 with the selection being successfully steered, at the second attempt, through the National Steering Committee (NSC). Hence the programme has now established a pipeline of development and implementation activities with projects at most stages (except closedown) in the cycle. There were 25 live contracts during the quarter. With the new IAP selection this will grow to 36 later in the year.

The quarter was not only one of intense activity for the Management Agency but also for partner NGOs. In addition to project implementation they had to prepare significant proposals for shiree, host several review missions and other visits, participate in the emerging research programme and in many advocacy activities. The programme is developing as a genuine partnership with the NGOs with the portfolio of partners, and hence the potential for joint activities such as lesson learning or joint advocacy, ever expanding. Efforts are being made to draw Government of Bangladesh (GoB) increasingly into this partnership, both at national and local levels. There is also significant engagement with the private sector.

On the research front the first round of qualitative research projects undertaken by the scale fund NGOs, with intensive support from consortium partners Bath University, reached conclusion. The research process and the Extreme Poverty Research Group (EPRG) will need further intense support in order to meet its objective – the key principle and distinguishing feature of core shiree research, that it is rooted in the practical implementation experience of the NGOs and feeds back into enhanced programme management, need to be fought for and sustained.

The dynamic advocacy team continued to roll out numbers of events and publications helping to keep extreme poverty on the agenda. A challenge for the rest of the year will be hardening the link between emerging research outputs and advocacy activities. Agreement was reached with Bath during the quarter on the production of a State of Extreme Poverty report for around the time of Extreme Poverty Day (slated for October 25th). This will require an intense effort to both consolidate current outputs and produce new material but will create a rich resource from which to mine a whole range of diverse advocacy outputs.

The shiree Change Monitoring System (CMS) continued to evolve and develop during the quarter. An exciting development was the presentation of real time CMS2 monitoring data via the shiree website – probably the first time that such a quantity of monitoring data has become so readily and easily available. Significant work was done on the CMS5 (S) tracking studies and major outputs are expected next quarter, including the production of shiree Q2 (i.e. quantitative plus qualitative) monitoring reports.

As the programme grows in scale and diversity the Finance and Administration team are responding, admirably, to a massive increase in the amount and complexity of contract and financial management work – with associated transaction costs. For both Finance and Operations teams, minimising the costs of complexity and maintaining effective support to NGOs and contract oversight and audit will be a key challenge as the programme grows, but without any expansion in the programme team.

Overall the quarter was a very positive one. The programme continues to work in a context that is vulnerable to shocks and disruptions, especially with a political or climatic cause. For example; there were 5 hartal (general strike) days during the quarter, a DFID Ministerial visit was cancelled at the last moment after intensive preparation with two possible NGO hosts (due to weather related issues) and the NSC process was far from smooth. Thus the programme faces many challenges that are unforeseen or beyond its control. The core strength in the team is the ability to respond to these challenges with a degree of creativity, flexibility and simply hard work that has allowed the programme to continue to make rapid progress regardless. This, it is hoped, draws on and parallels the attitude of many thousands of beneficiary households who are determined to seize the opportunity provided by shiree to lift themselves from extreme poverty despite the many constraints and challenges that they continue to face in the harsh local context.

1. Progress against Outputs

1.1. Output 1 – Proven approaches to improving the livelihoods of the extreme poor taken to scale by large NGOs

Overview

The six Scale Fund NGOs have now **selected 99% of their target beneficiaries** – 81,623 out of a target of 82,850 – and have begun activities with the vast majority of those selected.

During the quarter, NGOs under the Scale Fund continued with a diverse range of economic empowerment activities both direct (e.g. asset transfer) and indirect (e.g. training). An indication of the numbers of beneficiary households (BHHs) involved **during this quarter only** is provided by the following table:

Scale Fund NGO	HH selected and verified	HH received cash/asset for IGA	HH received training/IGA support
CARE	-	460	600
DSK	-	174	3,360
NETZ	1,500	3,171	1,536
PAB	-	2,928	2,928
SCF-UK	264	3,529	3,173
UTTARAN	-	1,799	968
Total	1,764	12,061	12,565

Highlights during this quarter across the Scale Fund included:

CARE

- Capacity building training for all SETU Staff was organized to develop a strategy to better include challenged demographics (elderly, physically disabled, widowed, and chronically ill) in project activities.
- A total of 777 communities (77.6% of 1,001 working CARE communities) declared themselves as 'open defecation free' (ODF).
- Participatory pre-budget discussion meetings were organised at Ward & Union level to strengthen the responsiveness of Union Parishad's to the needs of the extreme poor.
- The social enterprise (NCVI) participated in the International Symposium and Exhibition on Natural Dyeing (ISEND 2011) at La Rochelle, France. The NCVI documentary film, 'Living Blue' was officially nominated to be screened during the symposium.

DSK

- Two joint enterprises formed by 18 CBOs (1 in Karail and another in Kamrangirchar) have been producing and marketing produce in local and international markets; including the export of rugs to Malaysia through a local buyer.
- Between 3rd and 5th May, DSK organized the 4th Shiree Scale Fund Lesson Learning Workshop: a three-day advocacy and lesson learning event to build awareness and explore opportunities to create livelihoods for the urban poor.
- DSK was due to receive a DFID Ministerial visitor from the UK during June, which required extensive reconnaissance in liaison with a DFID-Bangladesh team. Unfortunately the visit did not take place. DSK team have also supported various field visits to Korail in this quarter, including from GIZ, Shiree, DFID, BRAC University and a Phase 2 evolution/appraisal team.

NETZ

- NETZ organized an annual planning and review workshop with its three partner NGOs (PNGOs) in May. There was also an exposure visit of year 2 PNGOs to year 1 PNGOs to gather knowledge and enhance understanding on the implementation of the project interventions.
- NETZ Lessons learning and Advocacy unit conducted a study titled 'Extreme poor adivasis and the problem of accessing social safety net' to explore the causes of poor access to safety nets of adivasis. The study covers 8 case studies, 9 in-depth interviews and 3 focus group discussions (FGDs).

Practical Action (PAB)

- 38 physically challenged beneficiaries received medical and therapeutic support.
- News on pumpkin production in sandbars was published in several dailies including The New Nation and The Bangladesh Today.
- The project had several visitors including the Project Director of Shiree and Director of IMED, Assistant Director of UNDP, seven professors of BAU and Jahangir Nagar University. Also the Deputy Director of Agriculture Extension, Rangpur, Nilphamari and Lalmonrihat visited project activities.

Uttaran

- A number of village level primary organizations were developed to work with LGI and local level public service providers to ensure access of BHHs to social security program as well as other basic services.
- The project has facilitated access to over 600 acres of *khas* land and water bodies for the extreme poor in this quarter.
- A district-level advocacy meeting was held in April at Khulna circuit house to enhance transfer of *khas* land and water bodies to project beneficiaries. Project Director of Shiree attended in the meeting as chief

guest, District Commissioner, Khulna, district and upazila level officers, and selected representatives of upazila also participated in the advocacy meeting.

Save the Children, UK (SCF-UK)

- A day-long training for staff was organized on a guideline and plan for Monimix distribution. Upazila project staff were also present in the training session.
- A 5-day training on SPSS software was organized by Khulna University, where the M&E staff of lead and PNGOs participated. In addition, a total of 14 project staff received orientation on CMS2 piloting in Khulna.
- SC-UK was due to receive a DFID Ministerial visitor from the UK during June, which required extensive reconnaissance and preparation in liaison with a DFID-Bangladesh team. Unfortunately, due to weather conditions and flooding at the selected location, the visit did not take place.

As the activities of shiree's partners' move through the project implementation cycle and reach maturity, so do the associated activities of the Management Agency. As such, the shiree Operations Team has begun to focus NGOs towards mechanisms to protect the gains made by beneficiaries in the project so far as well as the phasing out of intensive project support of beneficiaries. The Communications Team has also been focused on capturing lessons emerging from the implementation of established projects and the sharing of these lessons throughout the shiree portfolio, to the wider NGO community and to other key stakeholders including the Government of Bangladesh (GoB). The core work of the Operations team of implementation support, problem resolution and working with NGOs to continually monitor and enhance project impact has continued throughout the quarter.

Scale Fund Round 2

This quarter also saw the completion of the selection process for the second round of shiree's Scale Fund (launched simultaneously with Innovation Fund Round 4 described below). Shiree supported the work of the Independent Assessment Panel (IAP) who invited 16 NGOs (from a total of 56 Expressions of Interest) to submit full project proposals including summary budgets. On the basis of these proposals, eight NGOs were chosen for field visits by the IAP, with six being finally recommended. Of these six, three were current Scale Fund partners and as such the IAP recommended that, to achieve economies of scale and minimise management-related costs, these proposals should be combined with a potential Phase 2 of Scale Fund Round 1 activities.

shiree sought and received endorsement of the IAP recommendations from its National Steering Committee and has begun the process of bringing the three new recommended NGOs to contracting as well as developing plans of action for expanding operations of the existing three partners. To this end, shiree Operations and Finance teams have begun supporting the writing of full Project

Memorandum's and budgets, with a view to contract signings and project commencements in August.

GoB Visits

During this quarter three teams comprised of senior members from various departments of the Government of Bangladesh visited shiree-supported projects across the country to oversee progress across the portfolio. Members from the Rural Development and Cooperatives Division (RDCCD), the Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED) and the Ministry of Planning, supported by the shiree Operations Team visited a number of Scale and Innovation Fund partners in the Northwest, Hoars and Hill Tracts regions during the last week of June. A report is being prepared for submission to the shiree Senior Management Team with observations and recommendations on visited NGOs as well as broader shiree-wide strategic concerns. In general, the teams reported that shiree beneficiaries were appropriately targeted (as extreme poor) and, that since involvement with shiree-supported projects, are seeing improvements in their livelihoods, with some reasonable gains in income levels. However the teams noted that shiree partner NGOs should further strengthen linkages with government line agencies and social protection programmes as well as utilise individual and group savings schemes in order to maximise gains and ensure sustainability of impact, especially for economically inactive households. Finally the teams recommended that shiree partner NGOs should try and further reduce overhead costs, transferring these project savings into larger asset transfers to beneficiaries.

IGA guidance note

Members from the shiree operations and Decision Support Unit developed a guidance document to provide support to partner NGOs on assessing and selecting different income-generating activities (including cost-benefit analysis) with beneficiary households. This document has been shared with all shiree partners and has already been used by new Innovation Fund Round 3 partners in assessing possible IGA options with their target households.

1.2. Output 2 – Innovative approaches to improve the livelihoods of the extreme poor tested, evaluated, and successes ready for scaling up

Overview

The 19 implementing Innovation Fund (IF) NGOs (Rounds 1, 2, and 3) have **selected 58% of their target beneficiaries** – 11,237 out of a target of 19,220 – and apart from the new Round 3 NGOs, have begun activities with the vast majority of those selected.

At present, contracts with four out of six IF2 NGOs are due to end in August 2011, while the remaining two expire in September 2011 and January 2012 respectively. However, after longer-than-expected inception periods – a result of re-focussing NGO activities towards shiree’s target demographic of the extreme poor – ensuring graduation of beneficiaries from extreme poverty within the initial two-year contract looked difficult. Therefore, in this quarter shiree commissioned a two-member review team comprising an external consultant and a shiree team-member to review the programmes and progress of IF2 NGOs activities with a view to possible extensions of these projects. The draft report has been submitted to shiree, recommending the one-year extension of all projects as well other possible improvements to project activities in the extension period.

During the quarter, NGOs under the Innovation Fund have continued with a diverse range of innovative economic empowerment activities both direct (e.g. asset and cash transfer) and indirect (e.g. training). An indication of the numbers of beneficiary households (BHHs) involved in project activities in the different Innovation Fund Rounds during this quarter only are provided below:

Round 1 (second quarter 2011 only)

Innovation Fund NGO	HH selected and verified	HH received cash/asset for IGA	HH received training/IGA support
Aid Comilla	0	276	541
CNRS	0	764	1,252
Green Hill	0	1,000	1,200
HKI	2	450	450
IC (Sunamganj)	15	1,000	1,000
SHUSHILAN	0	884	792
Total	0	276	5,235

Highlights during this quarter across the Innovation Fund Round One included:

Aid Comilla

- Gender training, heifer and calf management refresher training, and training in vegetable, fodder and compost preparation were all run in this quarter.
- Visitors from IMED and RDCD have visited the project in this quarter.

CNRS

- CNRS assisted over 508 BHHs to receive khas land during this period (200 permanent, and 308 temporary leases). A total of 609 BHHs have now received 252.5 acre of khas land, with a current market value of around GBP 3 million.

Green Hill

- The project completed the first conditional cash transfer to second year BHHs along with conducting initial sessions on health, WatSan, homestead space planning, education, and skill development. Follow up support was also extended to all 1,200 project BHHs on IGA investment, inputs collection, pest management, latrine installment, immunization, school going & school enrolment etc.
- Technical partner IDE-Bangladesh conducted three value chain studies on ginger, turmeric and cucumber and planning meetings were held with two seed supply company (ACI seeds Ltd & Lal Teer seed Ltd) resulting in an MOU being signed.
- Representatives from new IF4 and SF2 shiree partner NGOs to operate in the Hill Tracts region (CARITAS, TARANGO & Eco Development) visited the ongoing Green Hill activities to learn about beneficiary selection, implementation procedures to avoid overlap and other issues.

HKI

- Various asset transfer and training activities continued this quarter, around contour farming, vegetable cultivation, poultry farming and post-harvest food processing. Also, 160 BHHs have now received health cards from UNDP-CHTF health program.

IC-Sunamgonj

- A significant quantity of vegetable & fish produced by BHHs has been supplied to district and regional market in this quarter, with BHHs earning more than 5 million BDT and reinvesting it for other asset generation purposes.

Shushilan

- The project conducted various trainings and inputs for IGAs, including floating gardens, crab fattening and worm reproduction using vermi-compost technology. Some BHHs also began using dykes of re-excavated canal for vegetable gardening in this quarter.

Round 2 (second quarter 2011 only)

Innovation Fund NGO	HH selected and verified	HH received cash/asset for IGA	HH received training/IGA support
ActionAid	-	876	686
IC (Rangpur)	-	452	412
MJSKS	-	0	514
NDP	-	546	712
PUAMDO	-	400	357
SKS	-	654	625
Total	-	2,928	3,306

Highlights during this quarter across the Innovation Fund Round Two included:

AAB

- Project beneficiaries produced around 188 metric tonnes of summer crops in 352 bio-diversity centres, with 124 metric tonnes being sold at market and the remaining consumed by beneficiary households.
- The project held a day-long formal training on summer crop production planning and management techniques as well as collection and preservation processes.

IC – Rangpur

- Close to 100 heifer and bull calves were distributed among beneficiaries for rearing and fattening. Community meetings (including masons) were also organised to establish bio-gas plants, with construction of bio-gas plant already initiated.

MJSKS

- Artificial insemination activities continued with BHH cattle, with new pregnancies and calves born.

NDP

- Mothers and children received direct nutritional support including nutrient sprinkles and de-worming treatment. Participating households reported that their health has improved, enabling them to work for longer hours.

- Staff visited Pathikrit, Khulna to share learning and experience on vegetables production and marketing.
- Project staff participated in a Technology Fair organized by Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock department between 5th and 7th April, 2011. Honourable MP Mr. Habibur Rahman, Upazila Chairman, UNO and all local governments official visited the project stall. NDP received a token prize from UNO of Dhunat for actively participating in the fair.

PUAMDO

- First year beneficiaries invested profits in new IGAs in the second year, while second year BHHs received assets, training and technical inputs for cattle/goat/chicken-rearing.

SKS

- Over 80 metric tonnes of different vegetables were produced with around half sold at markets and half consumed in the home. The project also conducted training on Fruit Tree Plantation & Management and Group Management & Leadership Development.
- 85 beneficiaries' houses were damaged by a hailstorm in April. They were given support by the project to reconstruct/repair their houses in response.

Round 3

Five of seven IF3 NGOs have now completed their inception phase in June. The inception reports have been submitted by GUK and SCUS, while other NGOs are expecting to submit report by mid-July. A total of 7,160 households will be selected for project beneficiaries through seven partners of IF3. All the NGOs finalized the beneficiary selection criteria. BHHs selection status as follows:

Innovation Fund NGO	Total target BHHs	BHH selected and verified
ADD	700	0
BOSS	400	131
Concern	700	0
GUK	1,160	128
Plan Bangladesh	2,500	0
SCF-USA	900	0
SSS	800	0
Total	7,160	259

Various initial activities in Round 3 have included:

- Collection of Household Profile (CMS1) questionnaires by six of seven NGOs has been finalized, with data collection by GUK and BOSS completed.
- Project inception workshops of BOSS and SSS were conducted in this quarter.
- A number of staff development and training events were conducted with new IF3 teams during this quarter including sessions on field facilitation skills, progress review meetings, sharing meetings on beneficiary verification findings, project orientation and community-led total sanitation (CLTS).
- Several meetings were held between IF3 NGOs (GUK and Concern) and private sector actors including Apex, Pizza Hut, Golden Harvest, and Cooper's to promote various project activities.
- A round-table discussion with Daily Star was organized by ADD on GoB budget allocations for mainstreaming people with disabilities.
- The Project Launching Workshop of PLAN International's BEES project was held on 29th June at The Engineer's Institute in Dhaka. Mr. Ranjit Biswas, Secretary, Ministry of Social Welfare was present as the Chief Guest. Mr. Bimal Chandra Das, Zonal Executive Officer, DCC; Head of Advocacy and Communications EEP/shiree; and Program Support Manager (Strategy) of Plan Bangladesh were also present as Special Guests.



Picture from CNRS



Picture from Intercooperation

The other major activity was the completion of the selection process for the fourth round of shiree's Innovation Fund (launched simultaneously with the Scale Found Round 2). Shiree supported the work of the Independent Assessment Panel (IAP) who invited 40 NGOs (from total of 165 Expressions of Interest) to submit full project proposals including summary budgets. On the basis of these proposals, 16 NGOs were chosen for field visits by the IAP, with eight being finally recommended.

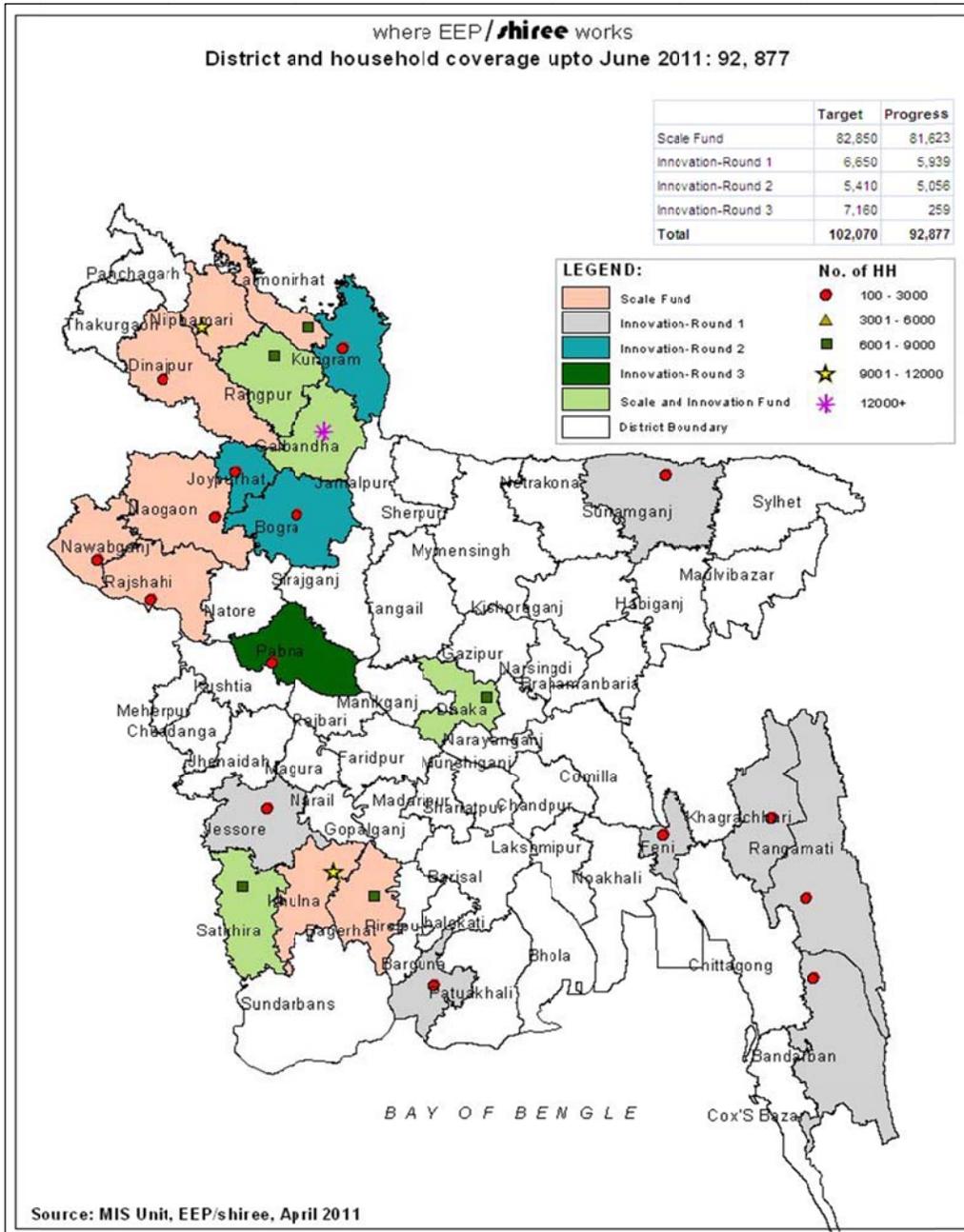
shiree sought and received endorsement of the IAP recommendations from its National Steering Committee and has begun the process of bringing these new NGOs to contracting. To this end, shiree has begun supporting the development of full Project Memorandum's and budgets, with a view to contract signings and project commencements in August.

Innovation Fund Round 4

The other major activity was the completion of the selection process for the fourth round of shiree's Innovation Fund (launched simultaneously with the Scale Found Round 2). Shiree supported the work of the Independent Assessment Panel (IAP) who invited 40 NGOs (from total of 165 Expressions of Interest) to submit full project proposals including summary budgets. On the basis of these proposals, 16 NGOs were chosen for field visits by the IAP, with eight being finally recommended.

shiree sought and received endorsement of the IAP recommendations from its National Steering Committee and has begun the process of bringing these new NGOs to contracting. To this end, shiree has begun supporting the development of full Project Memorandum's and budgets, with a view to contract signings and project commencements in August.

Figure 1: Beneficiary Household Coverage from Scale and Innovation Funds (up to June 2011)



1.3 Output 3 – Increasing consistency in the understanding, sharing and application of approaches to addressing extreme poverty

EPRG

There was a full meeting of the EPRG on 3 May in which all six Scale Fund Research Officers (ROs) made presentations of their research into the theme of *“Protecting the Gains”*. The presentations were an important point in the development of the working papers which have now been drafted. During the same EPRG, Dr Zulfiqar Ali (BIDS) presented findings from his ongoing research into poverty thresholds; while two shiree Young Professionals made a presentation on *“Emerging Findings from Change Monitoring System and Self-Review Workshops”* focussed on the Innovation Fund. During the EPRG, time was also given to discuss future research and advocacy opportunities and Joe Devine gave a presentation on research ethics drawing on the shiree data policy and research ethics protocol.

Supporting research

The last quarter has been an intensive data collection period which has been interspersed with various moments dedicated to supporting the Scale Fund ROs. These included a methodology workshop and writing workshop – both in April, a presentation skills workshop in May, and a life history and intervention tracking study training (CMS5) workshop in June. The main aim of these different inputs was to improve the research capacity of the ROs, and contribute to the quality of the research outputs. The EPRG organised the different trainings and workshops, and support from shiree – normally with presentations from Bath – was offered.

There have also been a number of forward-planning sessions where new research themes and advocacy opportunities were identified. The main event here was the mini EPRG held on 1-2 June, and as ROS began to write their working papers, shiree has continued to offer supervisory support.

Research outputs

The six ROs have each written a draft working paper on various topics around the broad theme of *‘Protecting the Gains’*. These will go on to the shiree website in the next quarter.

12 life histories (CMS5) – providing an in-depth and probing qualitative baseline for shiree activities – have now been standardized and edited by shiree, while

the remaining 24 will be finalised in the next quarter. All 36 life histories will be published on the shiree website in the next quarter.

A paper written by two shiree Young Professionals based on the Green Hill Conditional Cash Transfer project (Innovation Fund Round 1) and its impact on households' abilities to meet their primary needs as well as to invest in the future has been accepted to a DSA-EADI Conference in York. The conference is in September 2011 and the paper will be published soon through the conference and shiree websites.

Harriet Beaver, an undergraduate student at Bath University, completed her dissertation on "Poverty: Does it matter how we measure it?" relying entirely on shiree data. It is currently being reviewed and hopefully will appear as a working paper in the next quarter.

Outputs continue to be produced by the various Change Monitoring System (CMS) instruments – including a second compiled report based on qualitative group and individual discussions in the Innovation Fund (CMS4) – and have been published on the shiree website. The first annual survey (March to March) CMS3 data is currently being analysed and a report is expected in the next quarter.

Seasonal socio-economic impact survey: July 2011

Data collection for the July 2011 seasonal socioeconomic survey will start at the beginning of next quarter, in order to monitor and evaluate socioeconomic, empowerment and nutritional change, on randomly selected households covering all six scale fund NGOs.

Nutrition programme design workshop

On behalf of DFID-B, shiree convened a two-day workshop entitled "*Integrating Direct Nutrition Interventions in DFID-Supported Extreme Poverty Programmes*" from June 15th to 16th 2011, in Rajendrapur, Gazipur. The workshop brought together a total of 34 participants concerned with various facets of programme implementation – including representatives from DFID-B, University of Cambridge, NGOs, development partners (Alive and Thrive and Helen Keller International), the Chars Livelihoods Project (CLP) and the Urban Partnerships for Poverty Reduction (UPPR) – to address these specific objectives:

1. Share good practice and learning from some current or previous direct nutrition interventions
2. Achieve consensus on the need for a combination of direct and indirect interventions
3. Develop a first draft of a logframe for an intervention – incorporating activities by extreme poverty portfolio programmes

4. Determine implementation modalities
5. Outline a monitoring framework
6. Agree management and oversight arrangements

The assembled stakeholders were able to review, discuss and forge a consensus on the proposed nutritional component, focusing on the programme approach, institutional and management arrangements, prospective programme financing and DFID-B logframe.

NDP-shiree 'Nutrition Impact Study'

A midline survey of NDP-shiree 'Nutrition Impact Study' was completed between 19 May and 17 June. This included the training of field staff and data collection on anthropometry (of mothers and their under-5 children), blood haemoglobin level, morbidity status, food intake and food security.

The study involves two randomised groups of mothers and their under-5 children, with an intervention group receiving de-worming treatment at six-monthly intervals, daily micronutrients (using new micronutrient sprinkles with 15 ingredients) and flip flops; and a control group receiving no intervention until the end of the trial, when they also receive de-worming treatment, flip flops and micronutrients for three months. This study is a 24-week cluster-randomized trial aiming to determine:

- a) Household annual change in nutritional status as a result of the NDP-shiree programme;
- b) Intra-individual (mothers and under-5 children) bi-annual change in nutritional status as a result of the micronutrient supplements, de-worming and use of flip-flops, and;
- c) Differences in nutritional status between control group and intervention group at the end of the study, through a baseline and end-line survey. Data of this survey are being processed.

The quantitative analysis will be supplemented by the output of in-depth qualitative interviews at household level conducted by Lucia Da Corta from Bath with Programme manager Abdus Salam.

1.4 Output 4 – Policy and practice at local and national levels shows increasing recognition of the needs of the extreme poor

Advocacy workshops

To foster collaboration and sharing of challenges and ways forward among partner NGOs, two advocacy workshops were conducted (one with IF2 partners in April, one with IF3 partners in May.) These workshops helped identify lessons learnt as well as areas where shiree may advocate for changes on behalf of the extreme poor. Based on these discussions, the core advocacy themes and 'Policies for the Poorest' document were composed. A third workshop was held, with NGO research staff, to develop the advocacy messages arising from their first research package.

The Daily Star/shiree policy dialogue on 'sustainable impacts of poverty reduction initiatives'

To promote dialogue and expand the understanding of sustainability – the theme for the last round of NGO selection – shiree facilitated a round table discussion among experts, in partnership with the leading English-language daily newspaper. Participants included MPs, President of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers Export Association (BGMEA), NGO partners, the Joint Secretary of LGRD, and academics. The discussion was inspiring and follow-up Op-Ed's will be sought out.

Media

Shiree has engaged with a wide range of media of this quarter to improve its advocacy presence; including:

- The Communications Manager led a media sensitisation trip – of 6 journalists – to shiree projects in the Northwest;
- A BBC correspondent visited Kamrangachar to document innovative practices among the poorest;
- The Daily Star Op-Ed campaign continued, with two articles out this quarter. A translation team was set up in shiree so these articles may be shared through Prothom Alo with a wider (Bangla reading) audience.
- Bangladesh Today conducted an interview of shiree staff to learn more about extreme poverty.
- A media monitoring mechanism was established at shiree: collecting stories covered by the leading newspapers, on extreme poor issues. This document will be shared quarterly with the wider group of portfolio partners so we may all stay informed on the national movements around our areas of advocacy.

National-level advocacy

In partnership with the All Party Parliamentary Group on Extreme Poverty, shiree organised a pre-budget dialogue for 20 MPs. shiree, BRAC and CPD presented an analysis of the proposed budget in relation to the needs of the 'extreme poor'. A beneficiary from the CARE project spoke about how she bravely met with the Union Parishad leader in her community to secure a deep tube-well for

her community. She along with her community members actively participated in the pre-budget discussion/workshop of Union Parishad at Ward level and had some requests met. The overall outcome was positive, with several MPs expressing keen interest in linking with shiree to help the poorest. This was also the first partnership between BRAC advocacy and shiree advocacy – a relationship that will be strengthened going forward, in hopes of achieving more for the extreme poor.

shiree's Head of Advocacy, Shazia Shah and Professor Geof Wood also met with Rehman Sobhan, director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) – a leading national think tank – and Ipshita Basu, IGS, to encourage them to keep the interests of the extreme poor in their agenda.

District-level advocacy

On April 7, Uttaran organised an event in which shiree's Project Director, Joint Secretary Asadul Islam met with the Khulna District Administrator to share the needs and challenges faced by the poorest in the south. The Administrator committed to supporting Uttaran in its efforts, admitting that while that land is very limited for over-populated Bangladesh, *khas* land management has many loopholes. He sought support from Uttaran to overcome the problem. He committed to consider the suggestions given by the workshop and to work for the benefit of landless people.

MATT2 extreme poverty awareness session

On June 16, shiree's CEO, Project Director, and Internal Consultant (YP) travelled to the Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre in Savar to facilitate a session on 'raising awareness of extreme poverty' with current participants of the Managing at the Top (MATT2) project. With the goal of 'creating a critical mass of reform-minded civil servants' this DFID-supported project runs a 6-week training course with Bangladesh's senior civil servants (including Secretaries, Joint and Additional Secretaries). The shiree team gave a short presentation on the dynamics of extreme poverty and programmatic responses to it, drawing upon lessons from shiree-supported interventions and focussing on the potential of the civil service to do more in the fight to eradicate extreme poverty in Bangladesh. A long discussion followed with the shiree team acting as panel for a series of questions and answers. Another session is planned for the next batch of MATT2 participants with the aim of making this a continual engagement between these two UKAid funded projects.

Government services

Discussions with the Director of Field Services from the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) were initiated to explore how to increase recognition of extreme poor needs within the department of agriculture. The discussion was fruitful and further talks are expected.

Private sector engagement

Discussions with herbal medicine company 'Modern Herbal' were initiated. The company is keen to partner with shiree and modalities of partnership will be explored.

Urban advocacy and 4th lesson learning workshop

DSK hosted the 4th shiree partner lesson learning workshop, to share lessons they have learnt with other shiree partners (especially IF3 partners who are new to the urban setting). The three day workshop included a group discussion on urban challenges from which a publication and a set of recommendations were developed, a visit to DSK's site, and a lesson-sharing session. The first day was inaugurated by the Minister of Law and Justice Barrister Shafique Ahmed, and the third day was inaugurated by Mr. Mihir Kanti Majumder, Ph.D., Honourable Secretary, Rural Development and Cooperatives (RDC) division of Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development.

Solutions Exchange (Solex)

Shiree team members also joined Solex's forum for urban poverty, where discussions amongst development practitioner participants are aimed to help generate knowledge about working in urban contexts. Later, the Institute for Governance Studies expressed interest in visiting DSK's site and learning more.

Hill Tracts advocacy

The Communications Manager visited Green Hill, Helen Keller International and Aid Comilla (June 19-24) to discuss advocacy and policy briefs on specific issues.

Intercooperation sharing event

On 20-21 June, a two-person shiree team attended an information sharing event convened by one of its Innovation Fund partners; Intercooperation. The event focussed on sharing experiences of market-based and household-based poverty alleviation approaches. It was a useful event and has generated a number of follow-up meetings between shiree and different development actors aimed at augmenting the approaches of shiree partners to market engagement as well as social protection issues.

2. Management Information Systems (MIS)

MIS database on BHH records

Fund	BHH Target	Beneficiary HH Selection	
		Q1 2011	Cumulative Progress
Scale Fund	82,850	1,764	81,623
Innovation Round I	6,650	17	5,939
Innovation Round II	5,410	0	5,056
Innovation Round III	7,160	259	359
Total	102,070	11,459	92,877

Change Monitoring System

The overall purpose of the Change Monitoring System (CMS) is to deliver the information requirements necessary to manage the shiree programme, to support programme delivery and to gauge success across all 4 outputs contained in the shiree log frame.

CMS2 Pilot Phase II

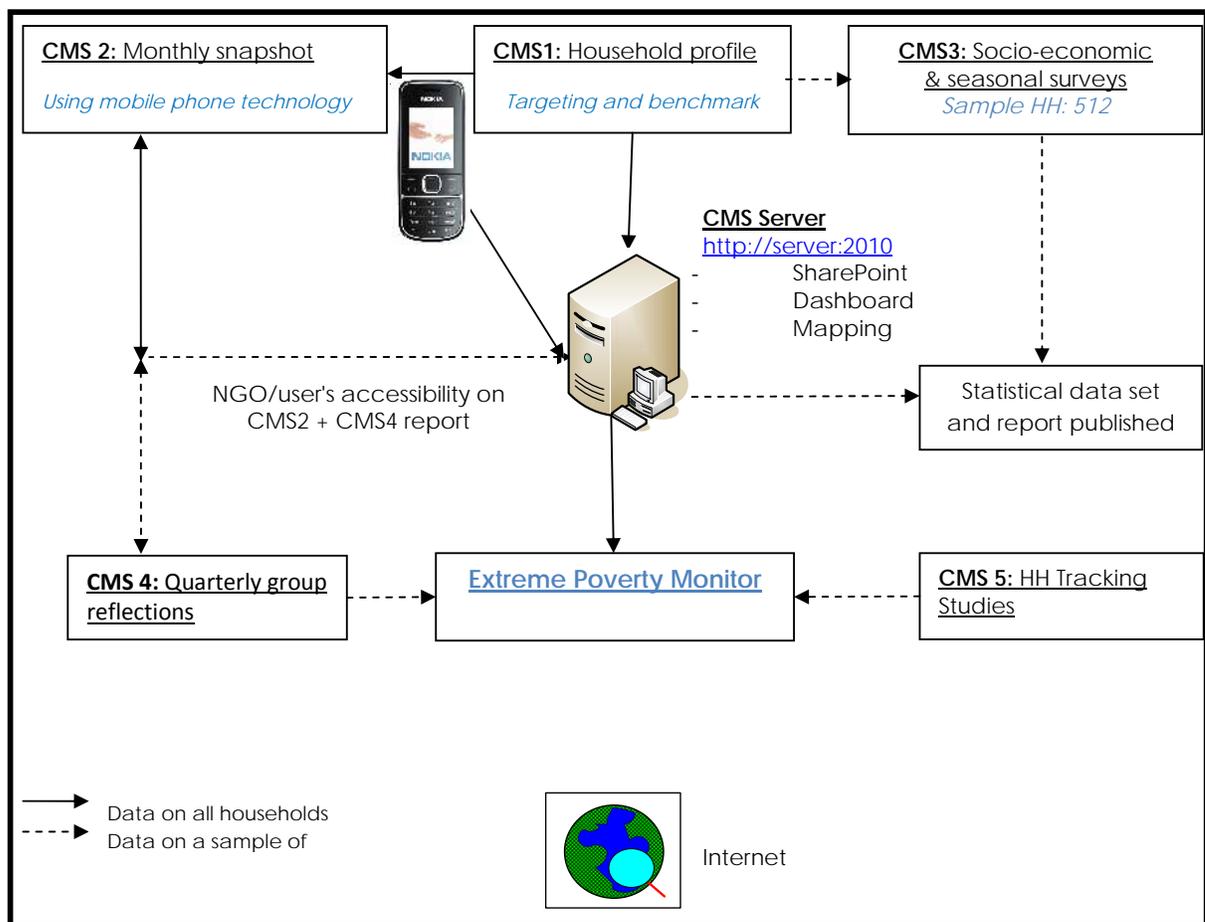
During the reporting period, the MIS team was mostly involved in organizing training for front-line staff and developing the web interface for generating instant outputs of monitoring findings with all grantee NGOs as part of the CMS2 pilot phase II; testing the mobile phone-based data collection system for the purposes of EEP/Shiree.

CMS2 is using a new technology to track changes in lives of beneficiary households that reduces data transaction time by sending data directly from beneficiary households to the shiree web server. A new partnership agreement with mPower (formerly Click Diagnostics) was signed to expand the system phase-by-phase with all grantee NGOs from limited to medium scale, testing feasibility to meet the purpose of CMS2 for EEP/shiree. 164 front-line NGO field staff have now been trained to facilitate data collection using the CMS2 questionnaire and data transmission through the mobile phone application.

Summary results of the pilot phase II – a survey of around 11,500 beneficiary households interviewed between June 3rd and July 2nd 2011 – are available on the Extreme Poverty Monitor tab at www.shiree.org. This is the first time anywhere that national monitoring data in such volume has been so instantly available for real-time application.

Based on the results of this and Phase I of the pilot, a comprehensive external review will be conducted in the next quarter to decide if the current system is an effective data collection method and meets the purposes of shiree/EEP's change monitoring system (CMS).

Figure 2: Figure 2: MIS Interface with CMS Components



3. Management

National Steering Committee

The 6th meeting of the EEP/shiree National Steering Committee was held on 23rd May 2011. As with the 5th meeting the opportunity was taken to allow 2 shiree NGO partners to present their project experience to NSC members. In this instance NETZ and ADD made presentations before the commencement of formal proceedings.

The main item on the formal agenda was the endorsement of the IAP selection for Scale Fund Rd 2 and Innovation Round 4. Following extensive discussions the chairman decided to adjourn the meeting. Following a Project Implementation Committee (PIC) held under the chairmanship of the Joint Secretary (Development) in the interim the NSC was reconvened on 9th June 2011. The reconvened meeting endorsed the IAP selection clearing the way for the Management Agency to progress to contracting the selected NGOs. Other significant discussions at the meeting included the process for setting end endorsing selection criteria, a decision by GOB members of the NSC to visit all partners (subsequently undertaken with shiree support) and discussion of the upcoming mid-term review (due October 2011) which should include GoB participation.

During the quarter on of the DFID nominated independent expert members of the NSC resigned due to work and time constraints. A potential replacement has been identified by DFID and provided with a briefing by shiree.

Recruitment

To meet the changing nature and maturity of the shiree programme, interviews took place for the positions of Decision Support Manager and M&E Manager. The quality of applicants for both posts was good and appointments were made. Both appointees will begin in early July.

Senior management has also decided to recruit a Senior Accounts Manager and a Finance & Accounts Young Professional in to deal with the impending expansion of the shiree portfolio and the increase in accounts workload as a response to the signing of new contracts for Scale Fund Round 2 and Innovation Fund Round 4. Recruitment advertisements will circulate soon.

One new member of the shiree support staff also joined in the month of June.

Re-contracting and departures

In this reporting period shiree's Internal Consultant for M&E shifted to a part-time contract while its External Liaison and HR Officer has now been re-contracted as a HR and Accounts Manager. Also after huge contributions to the programme one Internal Consultant and one Accounts Manager left shiree during this period to take up alternative career development opportunities.

In-Week

This period also saw an 'In-Week' at shiree office. During this week no field activities were scheduled, giving shiree staff an opportunity to come together in key sharing and updating sessions. These sessions followed team-related themes including updates on the state of shiree research and advocacy, the potential future addition of a nutrition component to shiree as well as discussions on aims for the upcoming annual shiree retreat to be held in July. It also included a confidential survey to assess the opinion of shiree staff to various issues; such as the monitoring and supervising of each others' roles, room locations, understanding each others' responsibilities as well as internal learning opportunities.

English language training

As a reaction to recommendations from staff in last quarter's 'Staff Development Interviews', shiree senior management initiated staff development training on English language skills under the guidance of the British Council. A diagnostic test was administered by British Council to gauge the English levels of participant, and the training, comprising two classes each week in shiree office will begin shortly.

Volunteer opportunity

shiree continues to welcome volunteers interested in extreme poverty issues and programmatic responses to it. In this regard, a volunteer joined shiree in the month of May 2011 facilitating case studies of various shiree-supported projects.

Human resources operational handbook

A HR operational handbook has been finalized and is awaiting endorsement from senior management. It will reflect the realities of shiree HR practices.

Human resources two-pager updated

The HR two-pager, summarising important parts of the handbook has been updated, reflecting key issues of HR including leave, working hours, salary, overtime and per diem.

4. Finance

Fund disbursement

During this quarter, the finance team disbursed a total of **GBP 2,529,300**. This included **GBP 1,831,306** to six Scale Fund NGOs and **GBP 308,698** to 25 Innovation Fund NGOs. Finally, **GBP 301,693.89** was disbursed as management and lesson learning costs; including **GBP 4,650** disbursed to support the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG).

The monthly accounts of EEP/shiree were checked and prepared by the finance team and the final versions forwarded to Harewelle International Ltd.

The contract with Shidhulai Swanirvar Sangstha (SSS) was reviewed in terms of duration and activity plan. Funds were disbursed to SSS accordingly with the other Innovation Fund NGOs.

Internal audits

During the period, the finance team conducted internal audits for HKI, Green Hill, Aid Comilla, Intercooperation II, ActionAid, MJSKS, SKS and GUK (Innovation Fund Round 1, 2 and 3 NGOs).

External audits

The finance team is currently in the process of finalising the external audit report for CARE; a Scale Fund partner. ACNABIN Chartered Accountants completed the 2nd year external audit for DSK, while NUFHAS Chartered Accountants completed the 2nd year external audit for Save the Children UK. The exit meetings for both audits were attended by a finance and programme team from shiree.

2nd year external audits for Uttaran, Practical Action Bangladesh (PAB), and NETZ are also ongoing with the following firms:

- ACNABIN Chartered Accountants;
- NUFHAS Chartered Accountants;
- Hoda Vasi Chowdhury & Co, Chartered Accountants.

External audit of EEP/shiree

Consortium partner PMTC, Bangladesh appointed the external auditor for EEP/shiree in consultation with DFID and Harewelle International Ltd. Accordingly, S F Ahmed and Co. conducted the external audit of EEP/shiree for the period of January – December 2010.

Physical inventory of EEP/shiree

A team of four staff members conducted physical inventory of EEP/shiree by 30 June.

Procurement

In this quarter, the finance team reviewed the procurement manuals of the third round of Innovation Fund NGOs for compliance with the shiree procurement manual; which in turn follows all the terms and condition of DFID, in line with the Accountable Grant Agreement.

Following successful completion of the review, procurement processes based on the requirements for the third round of the Innovation Fund have begun for:

- Gano Unnayan Sangstha (GUK)
- Save the Children (USA)
- Action on Disability and Development (ADD)
- Plan Bangladesh
- Bangladesh Organisation for Social Services (BOSS)
- Concern Worldwide

Budget approvals

A third year budget approval meeting was held with Scale Fund partner NETZ on 20 April 2011, while budget approval was provided to PUAMDO (Innovation Fund Round 2) in May 2011 after submission of a revised budget and implementation strategy, supported by shiree.

Financial assessment and budget review for 2011 bidding round

Financial capacity assessments of short-listed Scale Fund Round 2 and Innovation Fund Round 4 were conducted by the shiree finance team in this quarter. Following final IAP recommendations and subsequent NSC endorsement, a joint finance and programme team reviewed submitted budgets and provided their comments. Based on this initial feedback process, decisions will be made for scheduling Budget Negotiation Meetings with new partners in the month of July.

Review of six Scale Fund NGOs

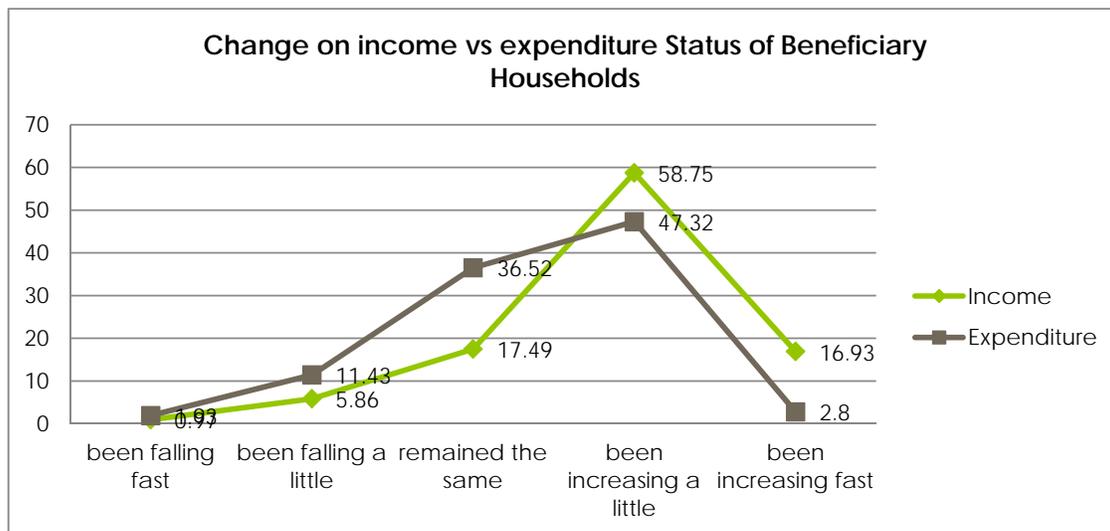
An external review of six scale fund NGOs to assess the potential for further expansion based on Phase II guidelines was started at the end of this quarter. The finance team provided support to analyse current budgetary status based on the requirements of the review team. The findings will be shared with shiree in the next quarter.

Reporting to GoB

Finally during this period, the finance team has communicated with the shiree Project Director to submit the finance reports required by GoB.

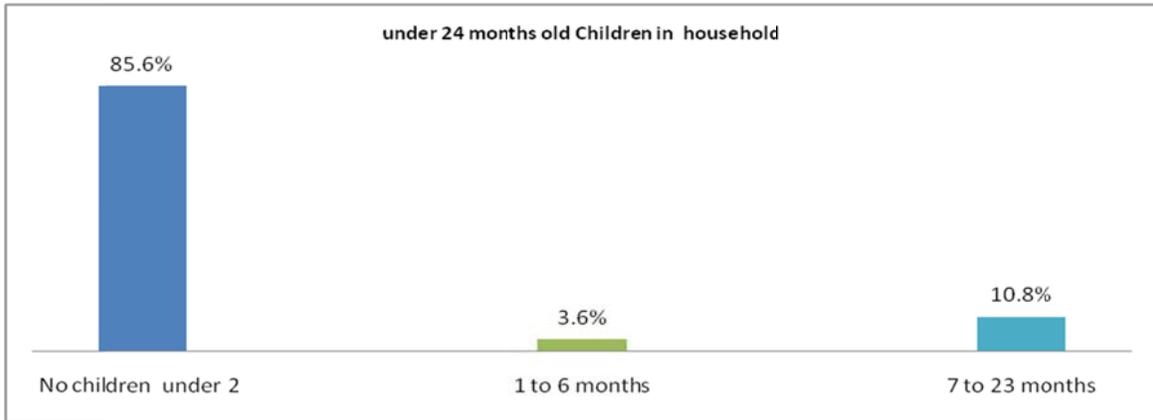
Annex 1: CMS2 pilot phase 2 example findings

Question: Does beneficiary household income and expenditure changed in comparison to last month?



	been falling fast	been falling a little	remained the same	been increasing a little	been increasing fast
BHH with Income change	1.0%	5.9%	17.5%	58.8%	16.9%
BHH with Expenditure change	1.9%	11.4%	36.5%	47.3%	2.8%

Question: Are there children under 24 months old in the household??



Age group	No children under 2	1 to 6 months	7 to 23 months
Percent	85.6%	3.6%	10.8%
Frequency	9488	393	1198

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