

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

**COPING WITH FLOODS:
THE EXPERIENCE OF RURAL WOMEN
IN BANGLADESH**

**A theses presented in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
at Massey University**

Mahbuba Begum

November 1995

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on how rural women in Bangladesh, who live in the poorest sector of one of the poorest countries in the world, cope with floods. It seeks to explain the principal factors structuring their responses. It addresses several related questions: how do women perceive and experience floods? What problems do they face and how do they respond to them? Are they merely the passive victims of floods or do they play an active role in protecting their households? Do all women use the same coping strategies? Are the major parameters of rural society changed as a consequence of the way in which women cope with floods?

In responding to these questions a sociological perspective is adopted but not to the exclusion of other approaches. However, it is the social and sociological aspects of the phenomena being explored which are of most concern to the author.

The occurrence of floods in Bangladesh is as old as its history but over the last 40 years (1954-1995) the problem has become greatly aggravated and is now one of the main concerns of most rural households, life in which is precarious even in non-flood conditions. These problems affect women more severely than men because of the wider range of responsibilities that they have for their households and the fact that those responsibilities keep them tied to

their households more strictly and more effectively than those of male members. Those responsibilities include food processing and cooking, cleaning, collecting water and fuel, bearing and rearing children, looking after livestock and income generation, all of which become much more difficult to perform under flood conditions. Despite this heavy burden, which women bear in extremely difficult circumstances, they demonstrate considerable fortitude and ingenuity in their attempts to maintain the livelihoods of their households.

Explanation of these phenomena is sought in the economic, cultural and political structure of the country. Factors stressed in this study are the male-dominated structures of a predominantly conservative and Muslim society; the dominance of *parda* in the sub-culture of women and the position of women within the socio-economic context of their households.

Jolpur



A typical view across the flood plains of Southern Bangladesh. The group of trees in the centre is West Para, Jolpur. To the right is the edge of a homestead plinth faced with rocks to slow down erosion. The photograph was taken by the author.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my sincere thanks to a number of people who helped me to complete this study. First, I am grateful to my chief supervisor, Dr. Brian A. Ponter, for his untiring guidance, advice, constructive criticism, tolerance and continuous encouragement throughout the period of my study. Despite his busy schedule he gave his time inexhaustibly. I am deeply indebted to him for his persistent efforts to help me during my field work in Bangladesh which made this study possible. I am also grateful to co-supervisor Dr. Mary M. Murray for her guidance, understanding, encouragement, patience and willingness to provide supervision. I thank them both for their stimulation and reading and correcting this manuscript. Completion of this study was to a great extent attributable to their help.

I wish to thank all my study participants, particularly the 101 women of the village. They did more than co-operate with me as researcher: they shared their lives and the struggles of women in a village society and accepted me in a very friendly way which greatly enriched my experience. Without these people, this study would not have been possible.

I would also like to thank the following people for their valuable contributions to the thesis: Professor Graeme S. Fraser for his supervision and guidance for the first year of this study; Professor S.M. Nurul Alam for his guidance, helpful suggestions on my research proposal and questionnaire during the field work. As my local supervisor he gave his time generously which made the field work more fruitful; Dr. Suzanne Hanchett for her valuable comments, references, materials and encouragement to do this study; Professor Bina Agarwal, Dr. Bruce Currey, Md. Khalequzzaman, Mr. Richard Heerdegan, Dr. Monirul Islam and Ms. Hasina Ahmed for the provision of helpful materials related to the study; Professor Srikanta Chatterjee for helping me to understand and explain Bengali culture; Ms. Heather Hodgetts for initial typing; Mrs. P.L. Collins for editorial work and proof reading; Mrs. Karen Puklowski for making available her cartographical skills; Mrs. Fiona Anderson for formatting the thesis; Mr. Edward Drawnick of Massey University Computing Services, Dr. Paul Perry and Mrs. Sandhya Chatterjee of Massey University for helping me

to process the data collected from the field. I am especially indebted to Mr. Nazrul Islam and Mr. Sohrab Hossain who worked almost continuously with me at the Dhaka University Computer Centre during the last three months of my visit to Bangladesh.

The profound thanks are due to New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee for granting me a Commonwealth Scholarship. I offer my thanks also to Winrock International, Dhaka, for providing a field trip allowance which made the field work easier. I am most grateful to the University of Dhaka for granting me study leave and to colleagues in the Sociology Department there for their encouragement.

My appreciation is also extended to the field investigators, Zohora Khatun, Homaira Beauty and Selina Khondokar, whose hard work and enthusiasm facilitated the collection of data in spite of many constraints.

My adjustment to life in New Zealand was assisted by support and help from a number of people. My sincere gratitude is extended to: Mrs. Elizabeth Ponter, Professor Gregor McLennan, Mr. Charles Chua, Mrs. S. Chatterjee, Mrs. Nazneen Ara Khanam, Mrs. Margaret Gilbert, Mrs. Ngaire Ormsby, Mrs. Catherine King, Mrs. Tania Sadlier, Mr. and Mrs. Samir Dasgupta, Dr. Izabela Islam, Mrs. Nelofar Mahbub, Mr. Moyeen Kabir, Mrs. Jenny Webber and Mr. Tony Banks. I thank them for the special times that will not be forgotten. I also thank my fellow post-graduate students for their support and encouragement throughout. I thank all Bangladeshi friends in New Zealand and neighbours at Atawhai Village who in one way or another extended their help to me in times of need.

I feel very privileged to have a supportive and loving family and special friends. My love and appreciation goes to: my parents, who encouraged me to study for a higher degree, helped me in selecting the village, accompanied me at the initial stage of my field work and provided the support I needed to make my field work comfortable. They, along with my sisters, brothers, father-in-law, sisters and brothers-in-law, nieces, nephews, aunts and cousins regularly sent me messages of love and encouragement throughout the period of my stay in New Zealand. Special thanks are due to my brother-in-law Kh. Moazzem Hossain for his support.

Last but not the least, I am grateful to my husband Kh. Mokaddem Hossain for his continuous encouragement and support throughout the period of study. To all these and many more besides, I owe a great debt of gratitude.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	iii
JOLPUR	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	ix
LIST OF TABLES	xv
LIST OF FIGURES	xvii
LIST OF MAPS	xix
GLOSSARY OF BENGALI WORDS	xxi
ABBREVIATIONS	xxxii
BENGALI CALENDAR	xxxiii
PART I BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	1
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	3
Purpose	4
Rationale	5
Disaster research on rural women	7
Approaches to the study of disasters	9
Organization of study	14
Summary	16

CHAPTER TWO: THE FLOODS	17
History of floods	17
Kinds of floods	19
Causes of floods	19
Dimension of 1987 and 1988 floods	23
Floods and their affects on human lives	25
Measures to control flooding	26
Summary and conclusion	34
CHAPTER THREE: RURAL WOMEN IN BANGLADESH	
Life of rural women	36
Rural women and lack of control over the land	39
Rural women and <i>parda</i>	41
Household composition, family and women	43
Gender division of labour	46
Women in agriculture	48
Rural women and employment	51
Food allocation within households	54
Summary and conclusion	56
PART II THE VILLAGE OF JOLPUR	57
CHAPTER FOUR: THE VILLAGE OF JOLPUR AND ITS SURROUNDINGS	59
Sources of data and methodology	59
General ecology of the region	69

	Page
Land	73
The village and its environment	74
Floods	79
Summary and conclusion	82
CHAPTER FIVE: SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN JOLPUR	83
<i>Samaj</i>	83
<i>Goshthi</i>	85
<i>Para</i>	85
Social networks	86
Categorization of the households	90
Economy.	103
Land and cropping patterns	105
Sharecropping	110
Cattle	110
Education	111
Occupations	112
Summary and conclusion	118
CHAPTER SIX: GENDER RELATIONS IN JOLPUR	120
Maintenance of <i>parda</i>	120
Religion	122
Dress	123
Health	124
Political parties	125
Household composition, family and women	125
Household decision making	128

	Page
Participation of women and men in agriculture	129
Socio-economic background of the respondents	132
Summary and conclusion	153
 PART III THE NON-FLOOD PERIOD	 155
 CHAPTER SEVEN: EVERYDAY LIFE IN JOLPUR DURING THE NON-FLOOD PERIOD	 157
Women's assets	157
Gender division of labour	169
Maintenance of <i>parda</i>	177
Women and water collection	182
Women and preparation of food	186
Food allocation within the household	194
Women and common village resources	198
Women and social network	201
Summary and conclusion	203
 PART IV THE FLOOD PERIOD	 205
 CHAPTER EIGHT: EVERYDAY LIFE IN JOLPUR DURING THE FLOOD PERIOD	 207
Women's perception of disaster (<i>durjog</i>)	207
Problems experienced by women	213
Loss of women's household assets	222
Loss of women's personal assets	224
Gender division of labour	230
Women and water collection	260

	Page
Maintenance of <i>parda</i>	266
Women and welfare relief	273
Summary and conclusion	281
CHAPTER NINE: COPING STRATEGIES	283
Sale of women's assets	283
Women and preparation of food	289
Food allocation within the household	300
Women and common village resources	305
Women and health care	312
Women and social networks	325
Summary and conclusion	332
CHAPTER TEN: CASE STUDIES OF WOMEN	333
Summary and conclusion	360
CHAPTER ELEVEN: CONCLUSION	361
REFERENCES	371
APPENDICES.	401

LIST OF TABLES

		Page
Table 2:	Comparison of the impacts of the 1987 and 1988 floods in Bangladesh	24
Table 5:	Cropping calendar in Jolpur	106
Table 6.1:	Marital status of women respondents by age	133
Table 6.2:	Educational level of women respondents by household category	135
Table 6.3:	Educational level of women respondents by age	136
Table 6.4:	Family type by household category	136
Table 7.1:	Assets belonging to women by sources and household category	161
Table 7.2:	Activities performed by women and men by household category	170
Table 7.3:	Carriers of drinking water during flood-free time by household category	185
Table 7.4:	Frequency of types of food served by women during flood-free times by household category	192
Table 7.5:	Frequency of food consumption by women and men during flood-free time by household category	196
Table 8.1:	Women's definition of <i>borsha</i> and <i>bonna</i> by household category	208
Table 8.2:	Problems faced by women in flood shelters by household category	215

	Page
Table 8.3: Activities performed by women and men by household category before floods	232
Table 8.4: Activities performed by women and men by household category during floods	244
Table 8.5: Activities performed by women and men by household category after floods	255
Table 8.6: Carriers of drinking water during floods by household category	261
Table 8.7: Drinking water problems experienced by women during floods by household category	262
Table 8.8: Explanation of women why they did not practice <i>parda</i> during floods by household category	268
Table 8.9: Percentage of women receiving particular relief goods during floods by household category	274
Table 8.10: Explanation given by women as to why they did not expect relief during floods by household category . . .	276
Table 9.1: Frequency of types of food served by women during floods by household category	293
Table 9.2: Frequency of food consumption by women and men during floods by household category	301
Table 9.3: Problems faced by women because of households members sickness during floods by household category	313
Table 9.4: Measures taken by women and men to cure sick household members during floods by household category	315
Table 9.5: Women receiving help from relatives during floods by household category	327
Table 9.6: Women receiving help other than from relatives during floods by household category	328

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 5.1: Categorization of households by landholding	93
Figure 5.2: Principal occupations of heads of households in Jolpur	113
Figure 5.3: Secondary occupations of heads of households in Jolpur	117
Figure 6.1: Types of family in Jolpur	128
Figure 6.2: Marital status of women by household category	133
Figure 6.3: Building materials of women's houses by household category	139
Figure 6.4: Income-earning women by household category.	143
Figure 6.5: Principal occupation of women by household	144
Figure 6.6: Secondary occupation of women by household category	148
Figure 6.7: Nature of women's income by household category	150
Figure 7.1: Degree of <i>parda</i> maintained by women by household category	179
Figure 7.2: Explanation of why women practice <i>parda</i> by household category	181
Figure 8.1: Percentage of women moved to flood shelters by household category	213
Figure 8.2: Women lost assets of their own by household category	225
Figure 8.3: Women who did and did not maintain <i>parda</i> by household category	266

	Page
Figure 8.4: Women faced difficulties because of <i>parda</i> by household category	271
Figure 9.1: Disposal of women's assets during floods by household category	285
Figure 9.2: Women benefitted from village common land and water courses	305

LIST OF MAPS

Map 1:	Area affected during 1988 floods in Bangladesh	71
Map 2:	Location of Bhanga <i>thana</i> in Faridpur district	72
Map 3:	The village of Jolpur	76

Glossary of Bengali words

<i>A am</i>	Mango
<i>A char</i>	Pickles
<i>A lmari</i>	Cupboard
<i>A lna</i>	Clothes-racks mainly made of wood
<i>A m in</i>	Land surveyors
<i>A mon</i>	Rice/paddy harvested in the winter season. There are two kinds of amon rice:broadcast amon, sown in mid-April to mid-May and harvested in mid-August to mid-September, and transplanted amon (one of the best quality crop in Bangladesh), planted in mid-August to mid September and harvested in mid-October to mid-November
<i>A nchol</i>	The trailing end of a sari
<i>A pa</i>	Elder sister
<i>A rhar</i>	A kind of lentil/pulse
<i>A sha</i>	Hope
<i>A shath</i>	A variety of large tree; peepul
<i>A tap</i>	Rice obtained from sun dried paddy
<i>A tar jau</i>	A gruel prepared from flour
<i>A us</i>	Rice/paddy harvested in the rainy season. This paddy planted from mid-March to mid-April and is harvested in July and August
<i>A yurvedic</i>	The Indian system of herbal medicine originating from the <i>A tharvaveda</i>

<i>Azan</i>	Call for prayer
<i>Babla</i>	A thorny tree from which gum is obtained; gum <i>acacia</i>
<i>Badha copi</i>	Cabbage
<i>Badna</i>	Kettle-like water pot
<i>Bandha jhee</i>	Tied/permanent maid
<i>Bari</i>	A complex of households which may or may not share the same courtyard
<i>Beel</i>	Marsh; swamp
<i>Begun</i>	Egg-plant
<i>Beparda</i>	Exposed
<i>Bepari</i>	Grain merchant
<i>Beshi</i>	More
<i>Bet</i>	Cane
<i>Bhabi</i>	Wife of elder brother
<i>Bhai</i>	Brother
<i>Bhalo</i>	Good
<i>Bhat</i>	Rice
<i>Bipoder somoy</i>	Danger period
<i>Bohera</i>	A medicinal fruit; <i>balearica myrobalan</i>
<i>Boitha</i>	Scull; a spoon-bladed oar
<i>Bon kochu</i>	Wild arum
<i>Bonna</i>	Severe/devastating flood
<i>Bora</i>	A kind of samosa fried in oil
<i>Borkha</i>	Veil
<i>Boroi</i>	A common fruit in Faridpur district; <i>zizyplus jujube</i>
<i>Borolok</i>	Rich/wealthy
<i>Borsha</i>	Normal monsoon flood
<i>Bou</i>	Wife
<i>Chachi</i>	Wife of father's brother
<i>Chador</i>	A long cloth covering the head and upper part of a woman's body

<i>Chal bhaja</i>	Crispy rice
<i>Chala</i>	A sack
<i>Char</i>	A sand bar
<i>Chara</i>	Young shoot of a plant or tree
<i>Chash</i>	Ploughing
<i>Chira</i>	Crushed rice which has been boiled and fried
<i>Chirata</i>	A bitter-tasting medicinal herb
<i>Chita</i>	Funeral pyre for the cremation of the dead according to Hindu rites
<i>Choitali</i>	Cereals; green crops (especially varieties of pulses) harvested in the Bengali month of <i>choitra</i>
<i>Choki</i>	A four legged bedstead, made out of average quality wood
<i>Chula</i>	A stove, mainly made out of clay
<i>Chung</i>	Wooden or bamboo platform under the roof of a house
<i>Chuta jhee</i>	A casually employed maid
<i>Coolie</i>	A porter
<i>Crore</i>	Ten millions
<i>Dabi</i>	Demand
<i>Dai</i>	A midwife
<i>Dal</i>	Pulse husk/lentils
<i>Dami</i>	Valuable
<i>Darwan</i>	Gate-keepers
<i>Data</i>	An edible plant
<i>Dayeshodhil takborgal khai- khalashi</i>	Sharecropping arrangement under which landowners leased out their land over a period of time in exchange for cash
<i>De-facto</i>	Women-headed households men of which households live outside village
<i>De-jure</i>	Women-headed households in which there is no men
<i>Debdaru</i>	A medicinal tree
<i>Dhap/shaluk</i>	Ground stalk of water lily

<i>Dhapral chapra</i>	Food of inferior quality usually made of liquid flour but often with pulse husks
<i>Dheki</i>	Foot operated hammer for grinding grain
<i>Dhutura</i>	Thorn-apple
<i>Dingi</i>	A narrow boat usually made of the trunk of palmyra
<i>Doa</i>	Edge of house floor
<i>Dol</i>	Factions
<i>Dowa</i>	Blessing
<i>Doya</i>	Kindness
<i>Durjog</i>	Disaster
<i>Dushsomoy</i>	Crises period/hard time
<i>Eid</i>	Muslim religious festival celebrated twice a year
<i>Ejmali sompotti</i>	Common property which belongs to all people in a village
<i>Fajar</i>	Muslim morning prayer
<i>Fakir</i>	A Muslim ascetic who provides spiritual guidance to his followers
<i>Farakka</i>	A dam built at Farakka (a place near the border of India and Bangladesh) which diverts Ganges water to flow to India in the dry season through an artificial canal and prevents normal flowing of Ganges water to Bangladesh.
<i>Fen</i>	Rice gruel/water strained from boiled rice
<i>Fita</i>	Hair ribbon
<i>Fitciri</i>	Alum
<i>Gamcha</i>	Thin towel
<i>Ghat</i>	Landing place on the bank of a river/canal/lake
<i>Khal/nala</i>	Canal
<i>Ghor</i>	A home; a dwelling
<i>Goalghor</i>	Cow-sheds
<i>Gora</i>	White
<i>Goshthi</i>	Patrilineage which stresses a shared blood relationship with a common male ancestor

<i>Gram</i>	Village
<i>Gurh</i>	Molasses made of sugar cane or date or palm juice
<i>Haat bar</i>	Market day
<i>Haat</i>	Weekly, bi-weekly market
<i>Horitoki</i>	Yellow myrobalan fruit
<i>Imam</i>	Leader of Muslim religious congregation
<i>Irri</i>	High yield varieties of (HYV) rice
<i>Ja</i>	Wife of one's husband's brother
<i>Jajmani</i>	Employer/employee relationships in the undivided Bengal. <i>Jajman</i> was used for all who have the employer relationships and the employee calls his entire clientele his <i>jajmani</i> .
<i>Jamai</i>	Husband of one's daughter; a son-in-law
<i>Jata</i>	Grind-stone; millstone; pair of heavy circular flat stones for grinding <i>robi</i> crops (for example, wheat, pulses.)
<i>Jhinga</i>	Cucurbitaceous fruit
<i>Jhola gurh</i>	Liquid molasses
<i>Jiafot</i>	Invitation to a feast
<i>Jinish</i>	Things
<i>Jollpani</i>	Water
<i>Jumma</i>	Prayer observed by Muslim men at mid-day on Fridays
<i>Kachari ghor</i>	A guest room
<i>Kacher churi</i>	Glass bangles
<i>Kaj</i>	Work
<i>Kalajira</i>	Black cumin seed
<i>Katha</i>	Quilt made from used saris
<i>Kathal</i>	Jack fruit
<i>Khala</i>	Mother's sister
<i>Kharap somoy</i>	Bad time
<i>Khesari</i>	A form of inferior lentils/pulse
<i>Khichuri</i>	A cooked mixture of rice and pulses

<i>Khop/khupri</i>	Hen coop made mainly from wood or bamboo
<i>Khora</i>	A plate made from clay
<i>Khud</i>	Broken bits of rice
<i>Kobiraj</i>	A traditional physician who follows the <i>Ayurvedic</i> system of treatment
<i>Kolar mocha</i>	Unopen flower of banana
<i>Kolmi shuk</i>	Edible aquatic plant; leaves of this plant cooked and eaten as spinach
<i>Kolshi</i>	Pitcher
<i>Kom</i>	Less
<i>Kothin somoy</i>	Hard time
<i>Krishan-kamla</i>	Hired agricultural labourer
<i>Krishi</i>	Agriculture
<i>Kula</i>	Winnowing platter/fan made out of split bamboo for separating grain from husk
<i>Kumra</i>	Pumpkin
<i>Kupi/bati</i>	Oil lamp
<i>Kura</i>	The red powdery coating of rice under the husk
<i>Latapata</i>	Creepers and herbs
<i>Latapatavoji</i>	A person who depends on creepers and herbs
<i>Lau</i>	Gourds
<i>Lozza/shorom</i>	Modesty
<i>Lungi</i>	Traditional dress worn by men in the lower part of body
<i>Ma</i>	Mother
<i>Macha</i>	Platform, made from bamboo or wood
<i>Madar</i>	Coral tree
<i>Madrasah</i>	Religious institution for Muslim boys
<i>Mainnal kheura</i>	Paddy used as animal, especially cattle, food
<i>Maryam</i>	Name of a flower
<i>Mashkalai</i>	A form of inferior lentil

<i>Masur</i>	A kind of lentil/pulse
<i>Maund</i>	Traditional measure of agricultural produce equivalent to 37.5 kilograms.
<i>Meye</i>	Daughter
<i>Morich</i>	Chilli
<i>Moshari</i>	Mosquito net
<i>Motki</i>	A large earthen-ware pot
<i>Motor</i>	Pea
<i>Mourabba</i>	A dry sweet made mainly from green mango
<i>Muazzin</i>	One who calls Muslims to prayer
<i>Mukh</i>	Face
<i>Mula</i>	Radish
<i>Mun/izzot</i>	Honour
<i>Mung</i>	A variety of lentils/pulse
<i>Munsif</i>	A lesser judge
<i>Muri</i>	Puffed rice
<i>Mushthichaal</i>	Handful of rice
<i>Naior</i>	A married daughter's visit to her parent's home
<i>Nakful</i>	Nose-pin
<i>Namaj</i>	Prayer as prescribed by Islam
<i>Nani</i>	Mother's mother
<i>Niribili</i>	Solitary
<i>Orna</i>	Long scarf worn by girls with <i>salwar-kamij</i>
<i>Paat shuk</i>	Leaves of the jute plant
<i>Paka</i>	Concrete
<i>Pakha</i>	Hand fan usually made from palm leaves
<i>Pani pora</i>	Water over which Quranic verses had been cited
<i>Panjabi</i>	Traditional loose-fitting trousers worn by men
<i>Panta bhat</i>	Stale, boiled rice put in fresh water and preserved for a future meal
<i>Para</i>	Neighbourhood within a village

<i>Parda</i>	Veil
<i>Pata</i>	Stone slab for grinding spices
<i>Paatkhorī</i>	Jute pole
<i>Peer</i>	Saint/holy man/spiritual guide
<i>Pepey</i>	Papaya
<i>Pila</i>	Jaundice
<i>Piri</i>	Flat wooden stool
<i>Pitha</i>	Cake made of husked rice
<i>Polau</i>	Fried rice with ghee
<i>Por-purush</i>	Male stranger
<i>Pora</i>	Burnt
<i>Pora kapali</i>	Unfortunate
<i>Porishod</i>	Council
<i>Pui</i>	Creepers used as a potherb
<i>Pur</i>	House, city or town
<i>Purush</i>	A man
<i>Quack doctor</i>	Those who treat patients with a combination of modern and traditional medicines
<i>Ruti</i>	Bread
<i>Sal</i>	Bark/outer rind of a tree
<i>Sala</i>	Sack
<i>Salgom</i>	Turnip
<i>Salish</i>	Village court before which village disputes are settled by the <i>samaj</i> leaders
<i>Salwar-kamij</i>	Loose-folded trousers and long shirts worn by young girls
<i>Samaj</i>	Community within a village
<i>Sarisha</i>	Mustard
<i>Sata shara</i>	Umbrella repairer
<i>Satu</i>	Flour made from barley or pigeon pea or maize
<i>Shakahari</i>	Vegetarian

<i>Shapla</i>	A variety of water lily
<i>Shekorh</i>	Root of a tree
<i>Shuddha</i>	Standardized
<i>Shuk</i>	Potherb
<i>Sika</i>	Jute-made hanger for household objects
<i>Sim</i>	Beans
<i>Sola</i>	Chick pea
<i>Sompod/ sompotti</i>	Assets
<i>Sona</i>	Gold
<i>Sosha</i>	Cucumber
<i>Tabiz</i>	An amulet containing holy words or a charm against evils, usually worn on the arm or neck
<i>Taka</i>	Monetary unit of Bangladesh; US\$ 1=40.3 <i>taka</i> ; NZ\$ 1=approximately 25 <i>taka</i> (16 March, 1995)
<i>Takta</i>	A plank of wood
<i>Tal</i>	Palm
<i>Thana</i>	Administrative unit
<i>Trak</i>	Lorry
<i>Uchu marjada</i>	High status
<i>Upo-dal</i>	Sub-faction
<i>Upojila</i>	Sub-district
<i>Vela</i>	A raft made from stem of banana plantain

Abbreviations

BADC	Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation
BARC	Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council
BARD	Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BKB	Bangladesh Agricultural Bank (Bangladesh <i>Krishi</i> Bank)
BNP	Bangladesh Nationalist Party
BWDB	Bangladesh Water Development Board
ESCAP	Economic and social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FAP	Flood Action Plan
FCD	Flood Control and Drainage
FCDI	Flood Control, Drainage and Irrigation
FPCO	Flood Plan Co-ordination Organization
HYV	High Yielding Variety (usually refer to paddy/rice)
ILO	International Labour Organization
MP	Member of Parliament
NWP	National Water Plan
SIDA	Swedish Development Corporation
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNO	Sub-district executive officer (<i>Upojila nirbahi</i> officer)
UP	Union Council (<i>Union porishod</i>)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Bengali Calendar	Bengali Calendar	Gregorian Calendar
<i>Boishakh</i>		15 April to 15 May
<i>Joishtha</i>		15 May to 15 June
<i>A sharh</i>		15 June to 15 July
<i>Srabon</i>		15 July to 15 August
<i>Bhadro</i>		15 August to 15 September
<i>A shin</i>		15 September to 15 October
<i>Kartik</i>		15 October to 15 November
<i>A grahayon</i>		15 November to 15 December
<i>Poush</i>		15 December to 15 January
<i>Magh</i>		15 January to 15 February
<i>Falgun</i>		15 February to 15 March
<i>Choitra</i>		15 March to 15 April