



RESEARCH
AND IMPACT
BRIEF

BANGLADESH

RAPID ASSESSTMENT

Quick Impact Facility under
the Smallholder Agricultural
Competitiveness Project
for small farmers' resilience
to the COVID-19 crisis

IFAD'S COVID-19 RESPONSE

RURAL POOR STIMULUS FACILITY (RPSF)

FACILITY'S PILLARS



Inputs
& basic assets



Targeted
funds



Access
to markets



Digital
services



Investing in rural people

RURAL
POOR
STIMULUS
FACILITY **RPSF**

Quick Impact Facility under the Smallholder Agricultural Competitiveness Project for small farmers' resilience to the COVID-19 crisis (Bangladesh) ¹

Launched in April 2020, the Rural Poor Stimulus Facility (RPSF) is IFAD's multi-donor response to COVID-19. With the overall objective of providing agile support to poor rural producers affected by key immediate challenges posed due to COVID-19, it seeks to improve the resilience of rural livelihoods in the context of the crisis by ensuring timely access to inputs, information, markets and liquidity. The Quick Impact Facility under the Smallholder Agricultural Competitiveness Project for small farmers' resilience to the COVID-19 Crisis in Bangladesh is part of the 20% of the projects chosen to undergo a rapid assessment to report against Tier 1 'development result' indicators in the RPSF Results Measurement Framework.

Project activities

The project was implemented under the existing IFAD-financed Smallholder Agricultural Competitiveness Project (SACP), with a total RPSF financing of US\$ 2.0 million.

The overall aim of the project was to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable populations to the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Activities began with the distribution of homestead gardening kits to 26,000 households in coastal Bangladesh. The kit aimed to enable vulnerable rural people to grow winter vegetables primarily for household consumption, and included vegetable seeds, fertilizers, and small utilities. RPSF-II ensured continued inputs supply to the 26,000 households from the first financing round, while also expanding reach to 28,450 additional households with support for post-harvest activities, with a focus on reaching women farmers. Kits included similar inputs, and added clippers, processes materials with training, vermi-compost separators with training and vans for transport.

It targeted the districts of Bagerhat, Barguna, Bhola, Chattogram, Feni, Jhalokathi, Lakshmipur, Noakhali, Patuakhali, Pirojpur, and Satkhira, supporting almost 55,000 people and their households (about 50 per cent classified as women, and nearly half as youth), and impacted about 140,000 people.

¹ This note is prepared by Vibhuti Mendiratta, Gonzalo Nunez-Chaim and Piero Massotti from the Research and Impact Assessment (RIA) division of IFAD.

Rapid assessment methodology

Self-reported information on Tier 1 ‘development results’ indicators was collected from a representative sample of 500 beneficiary households, of which 13 percent are headed by women and 8.4 percent are headed by youth (aged less than 35 years). Details of each indicator were asked with the aim of capturing the potential contribution effect from i) COVID-19 and ii) the RPSF project. Interviews were conducted between the first week of September 2022 and the end of September 2022 using a Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI) survey.

Key results ²

Contribution effect of COVID-19

- Around 5 out of ten households experienced a sharp decline due to COVID-19 in food security (number of meals consumed) and resilience, while a larger share of households was affected on production, sales and total income. Overall, households were less often affected on the number of assets owned.
- Youth headed households were more often affected by COVID-19 with respect to production, market sales and total income, while women headed households were more affected on the number of meals consumed and resilience.

Contribution effect of RPSF

- After the project was implemented, more than 8 out of 10 households reported maintaining or improving on every Tier I indicator considered. The benefits were more often reflected in production and food security (number of meals consumed), and less often on total income and number of assets.
- All women and youth headed households experienced improvements on market sales, resilience and number of meals consumed. Yet, the recovery of total income after RPSF was less pronounced among households headed by youth, compared to those headed by an adult.

Lessons learned

- Based on these findings, future program design should consider i) specific support for youth headed households, to mitigate unequal effects; and ii) the overall income generation structure of households, such that improvements in various dimensions translate into benefits in overall income.

² The rapid assessment does not consider a control group; thus, results are only indicative of potential contribution effects.

Figure 1: Percentage of households that experienced a loss in each Tier I indicator due to COVID

Figure 2: Percentage of households that were able to maintain or improve each Tier I indicator after RPSF

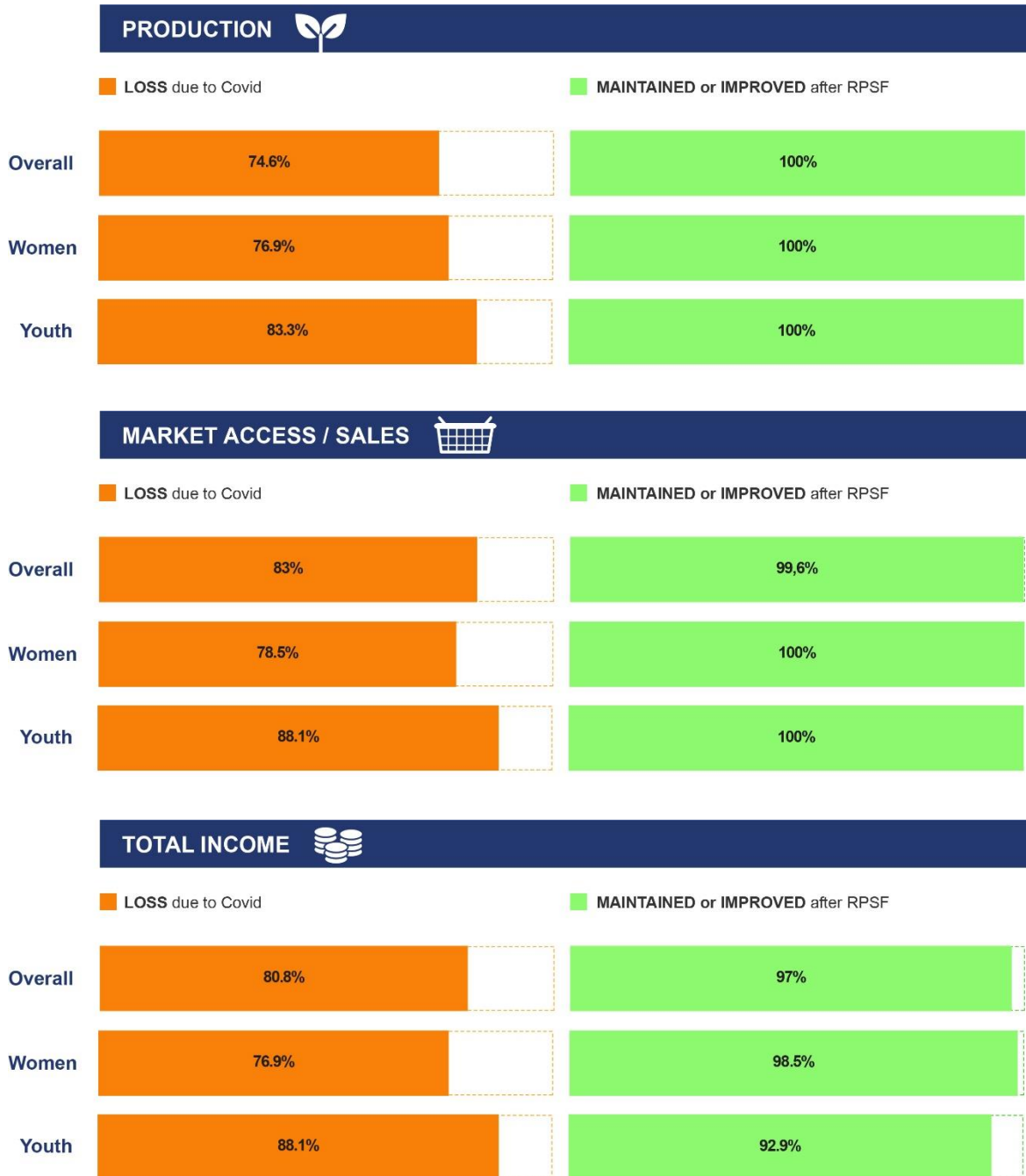
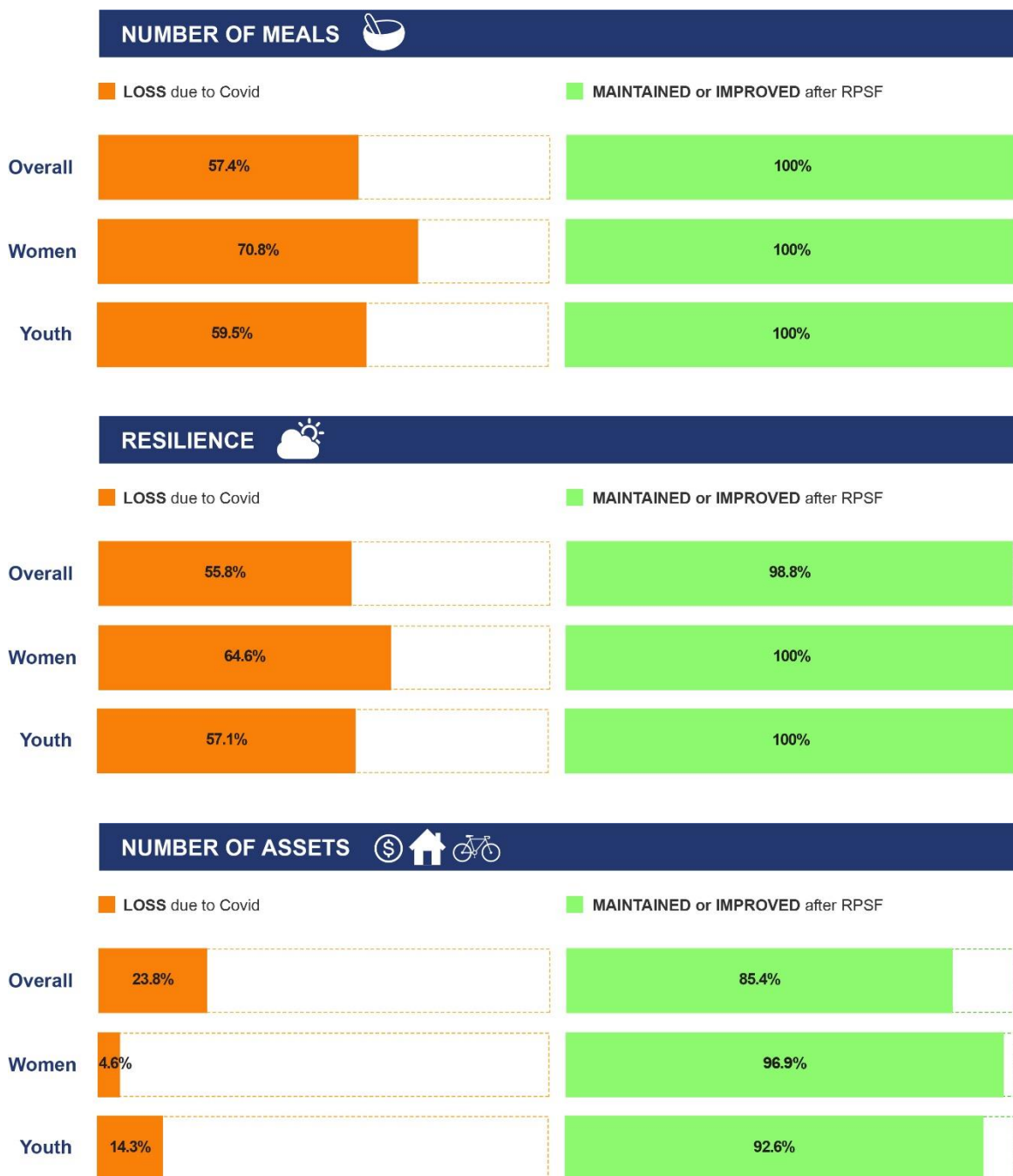


Figure 1: Percentage of households that experienced a loss in each Tier I indicator due to COVID

Figure 2: Percentage of households that were able to maintain or improve each Tier I indicator after RPSF



NOTE: RPSF activities were rolled out starting in March 2021.

Two separate questions were asked for each indicator. The first question asked what happened to each Tier 1 indicator between March 2020 and March 2021: i) a total loss; ii) reduced; iii) stayed the same; or iv) increased. The **orange bar** shows the percentage of households that responded i) or ii) to this question, that is, those which experienced a total loss or reduction in the indicator. The second question asked what happened to each Tier 1 indicator since March 2021: i) reduced further; ii) stayed the same; iii) increased but still below the level before COVID-19; iv) returned to level before COVID-19; or v) increased above the level before COVID-19. The **green bar** shows the percentage of households that responded ii), iii) iv) or v) to this question, that is, those which maintained or improved each indicator since the start of RPSF.

Acknowledgements: IFAD's Programme Management Department (PMD), GAIN health and Bangladesh country team.



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