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Food security in an innovative way

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Determinants of security

At the macro-level, FS could be constrained due to: increased farming for use in biofuels, oil price hike, population growth, climate change, loss of agricultural land, etc. At household levels, the deterring factors are, for example, lack of natural and physical capital, sickness of the earning member, lower yield of crops, large household size, etc. Food insecurity could gripe a household temporarily or permanently. For example, a sudden Sidr, flood or drought could damage crops and thus forfeit FS of a household for a certain period of time. Permanent insecurity emanates from disability/death of the household head, landlessness, divorce etc.

In the prevailing discourse on FS, we often forget that women are crucial in turning products of a vibrant agricultural sector into food and nutritional security. They have less access to productive factors; yet, for agricultural growth to fulfil their potential, gender disparities must be addressed and effectively reduced and active participation of women at all levels of decision making is necessary.

Food insecure Bangladesh

By any stretch of imagination, Bangladesh is one of the most food insecure countries in the world. As many as 10 million people do not have access to three satisfactory meals a day;

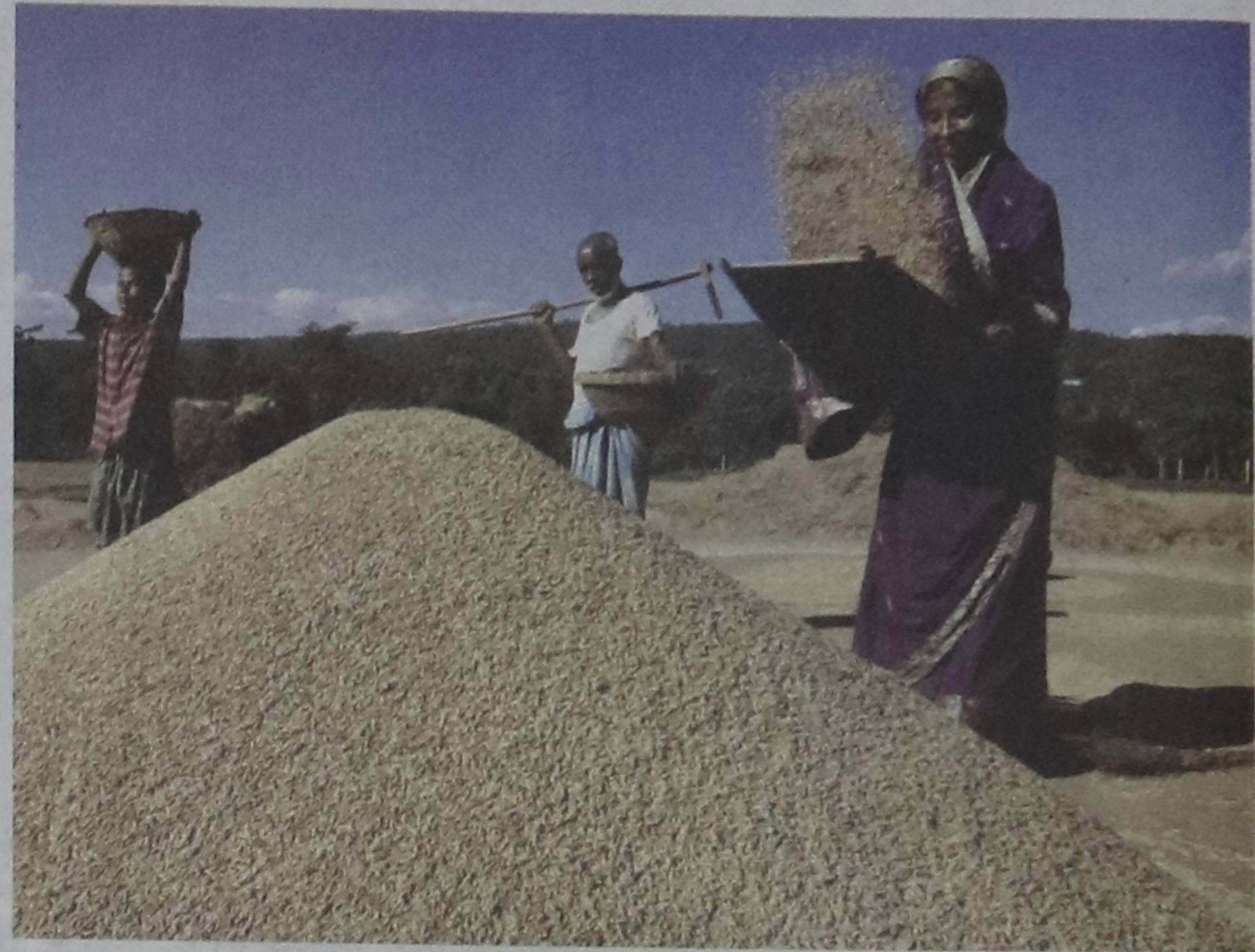
more than half of the people's calorie intake a day is less than 2200 calories. Gender and regional disparity in this regard is very wide. Unfavourable and ecologically backward zones are relatively more prone to FS than favourable zones and non-farm households are worse off than farm households. That means, if farm activities could be geared up with active participation of women, the FS status could be improved significantly. Empowerment of women and making the resource poor farms more productive would emerge as key policy variables.

Innovative initiative

To this effect, I shall draw upon some recent initiatives taken in the field to ensure FS of resource poor farms. My intention is to show that small attempts could bring in significant impacts on FS.

Food Security for Sustainable Household Livelihoods (FoSHoL): An EC/IRRI initiative

FoSHoL starts with the basic premise that agriculture in particular (and rural development in general) is the fountainhead of FS for households. The targets are resource poor households (mostly small and marginal). They are poor but are endowed with some natural capital i.e. their own land up to 100 decimals. However, the average of a large number of them is less than 50 decimals of land and, thus falling outside the 'favour' of NGOs. More impor-




tantly, they reside mostly in backward regions. How could we ensure FS for them in a sustainable fashion? Quite rightly FoSHoL aims to improve livelihoods, by increasing availability and access to food as well as utilisation of food by target households. That requires technology adoption to

increase food production, capacity building to cope with creeping crisis, linking with extension and markets, etc. The project works in 14 districts administered by three partners (Actionaid, Care, Practical action) and their local NGOs.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 59

**আনন্দের আরো বড় কারণ
ইন্সট্যান্ট ক্যাশ ব্যাক**

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১০ টাকা	৩ টাকা
২০ টাকা	৬ টাকা
৩০ টাকা	১১ টাকা

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