

Role of Mobile Phone Uses in Strengthening Rural Livelihoods in Bogura District



Md. Mohiuddin
Md. Ashrafal Alam
Md. Tanbirul Islam
Jayanto Kumar Roy



Rural Development Academy (RDA), Bogura
Bangladesh

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Rural Development Academy (RDA)
Bogura-5842, Bangladesh
Phone: 88-051-51001, 051-78602, 051-78603
e-mail: info@rda.gov.bd
web: www.rda.gov.bd

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Executive Summary

Majority of the people in Bangladesh live in rural areas. These rural people face different types of problems like chronic poverty, low income, low literacy, lack of healthcare facilities, lower access to formal employment, poor infrastructure, lack of proper field-based knowledge etc. Mobile phone is the smallest and very popular technology in the developing countries. Mobile phone technology can facilitate to elude the constraints by providing need-based and user-centric information and services at an affordable cost. From this perspective, the study was conducted to explore the status of mobile phone uses for strengthening livelihood in the rural area of Bogura district in Bangladesh. A total of 181 rural families were interviewed through structured questionnaire and Focus Group Discussion methods. Both agricultural and non-agricultural information of the mobile phone users from rural areas were collected and the migrant family members were interviewed over mobile phone. They also collect information about business, education, employment, health; economic activities i.e. fund transferred, mobile banking, payment of electric bill, and contracting with their family members in case of emergencies. Apart from that, there are many difficulties in rural areas such as high cost of mobile set, higher call rate, difficulties of mobile phone operation for aged and illiterate rural people, electricity problem, inadequate knowledge about valuable services, poor signal or call drop etc. These difficulties are needed to be solved so that the rural people can explore the entire benefits from the use of mobile phone, increase their abilities to access livelihood assets and attempt to take diverse strategic opportunity.