

## IMPROVING NUTRITIONAL FOOD HABIT OF THE JAMUNA'S CHAR PEOPLES IN SIRAJGONJ DISTRICT

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### ABSTRACT

Poor health and nutritional status of mother and children in the Jamuna's Char area in Sirajganj is the crucial problems for health and nutrition. Mother and children cannot afford adequate nutritious food and adequate food intake due to low income and limited access to livelihood opportunities. An experiment was conducted at Meshrar Char of Sirajganj Sadar upzilla in Sirajganj district during July 2018 to June 2019 for improving nutritional family food habit through training, awareness buildup and homestead gardening. Cooking demonstrations were widely used to illustrate positive food preparation practices, such as washing vegetables before cutting, using oil to cook leafy vegetables, and including more fruits, milk, and eggs in dishes. Regular monitoring has demonstrated that the program successfully increased the production and consumption of vitamin and mineral rich foods in the target households.

**Key words:** Char area, homestead garden, nutritional status

### Introduction

In Food security definition, it has four pillars such as: Food availability, food accessibility, food stability and food utilization. Most of the people of our country do not know how to utilize their food. So, though they intake/consume food but do not get proper nutrition from their food. Most of them have wrong perception about Food and Nutrition. They are not capable for using their homestead area, from where they can produce different nutritious fruits and Vegetables (Taher *et al.*, 2004, Bushamuka *et al.*, 2005). Homestead food production programs has the potentiality to improve dietary intake and nutritional status of women and young children and likely improves household's food security and nutritional status of all house hold members including improving of socio-economic status. As most of the char people engage with agricultural works and fishing, they normally goes to work in the morning and back home at twilight, so in their family cooking habits practice is just 1 times to two times and many people prepare their rice without starch. In Char area this type of problem are acute (BBS, 2011; Helen Keller International, Bangladesh 2008). So primarily BIRTAN of Sirajganj has taken an initiative to be improved the nutria food habits of the Char people in Sirajgonj district.

### Materials and Methods

**Approaches:** Bangladesh Institute of Research and Training on Applied Nutrition (BIRTAN) was implemented the work at Jamuna's char area of Sirajgonj district. Two situations considered viz; agro-based food and nutrition security at proposed area. The beneficiaries selected on the basis of intensively FGDs in studyt areas. The participants selected from farm and farmers household census. Primary data and information collected from beneficiaries by household survey (HHS). A number of FGDs was overseen to cross-check the primary information. The study implemented from July 2018 to June 2019.

**Selection of beneficiaries:** In total 100 farmers was selected randomly from Sadar upazilla in Sirajganj district of Jamuna's Char area for this study and finalized 50 desired beneficiaries out of them.

**Sampling Design:** The Multistage and simple random sampling technique were adopted for selecting the reasonable numbers of beneficiaries involved in Food and Nutrition Security.

**Data and Information:** The collected data were scrutinized, classified, cleaned and coded after entering into computer for developing a reliable and realistic database. The increased food and nutrition security were assessed through profitability and risks analysis.

**Results and Discussion**

In char area, people produce vegetables but they incorporate a little amount of vegetables in their regular meal. But after getting the related training, they are taking more vegetables remarkably (Fig. 1). Their generally vegetables consumption was 3-5 days a week but after intervention their vegetables consumption rate is high (World Bank 2007). Indicates char people were indifferent to fruits consumption like vegetables consumption. After intervention they are interested to take fruits because they have come to be understood the importance of fruits consumption and now they try to take 6-7 days fruits in a week (Fig. 2), where the previous rate was 3-5 days (FAO, 2010). Though many people of char area, rear cow and goat in their household, they do not regular keep or consume milk from their animals. Most of them sale and take only 1-2 days or not (Fig. 3) but after awareness growing they are able to realize the importance for drinking of milk and now they drink milk every day in a week with average 3-5 days (Ruel 2001). Poor people in char area, rear poultry birds, and get eggs but put some egg for themselves in rare cases. They like to sale and are not interested to take egg regularly. The egg consumption rate has also increased 3-5 days (Fig. 4) in a week after proper interventions of awareness program. Still non-targeted people are not interested to be changed their egg consumption (Helen Keller International, 2008). As most of the char people engage with agricultural works and fishing, they normally goes to work in the morning and back home at twilight, so in their family cooking practice was just 1 times to two times (Fig. 5), which has been increased among the targeted families. Though there are some families who have no fix time of cooking as they have extended family (Helen Keller International, Bangladesh, 2008). In char area, many people adopt good practice in rice preparation. The study observed that before training 25% people prepared their rice without starch and 75% people prepare rice with starch and after intervention rice with starch preparation has increased (Fig 6). Vegetables washing is essential to make vegetables safe and hygienic, but to make it safe we loss huge amount nutrient from vegetables while it is washing after cutting, indeed this is the very common practice over country. The study observed that 45% people wash the vegetables after cutting and after training this practice decreased to 20% (Fig. 6) though there are some people who are not adopted with nutritional approach (Taher *et al.*, 2004). People in char area cut their vegetables as their requirements large size or small size but after growing awareness among them, 62% targeted peoples are habited to cut in small size (Fig. 7). The observation is supported by (BBS, 2011). Fig. 8 indicated that more than 50% mother try feed their breast milk just after birth and after awareness the rate has been increased and reached to 72%. The rest of the mothers are physically disabled but did not try to feed their breast milk to their baby (Helen Keller International, Bangladesh, 2008).

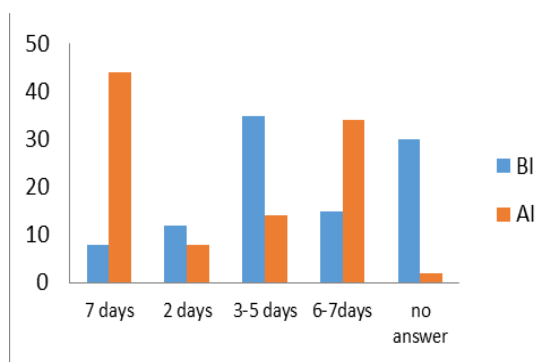


Fig. 1. Weekly vegetables consumption

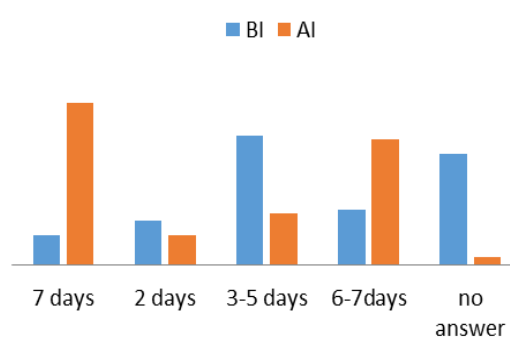


Fig. 2. Weekly fruits consumption

BI=Condition of before intervention, AI= after intervention

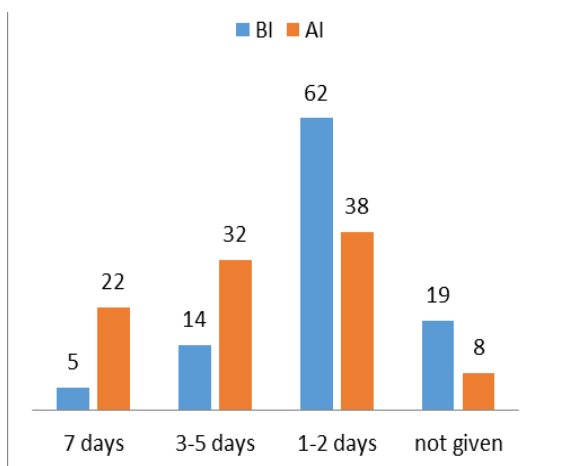


Fig. 3. Weekly milk drinking

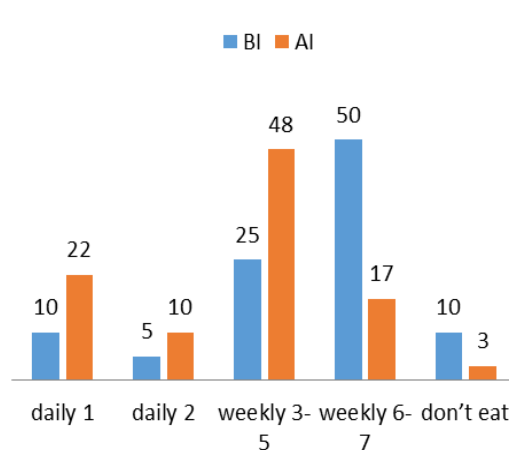


Fig. 4. Weekly egg consumption

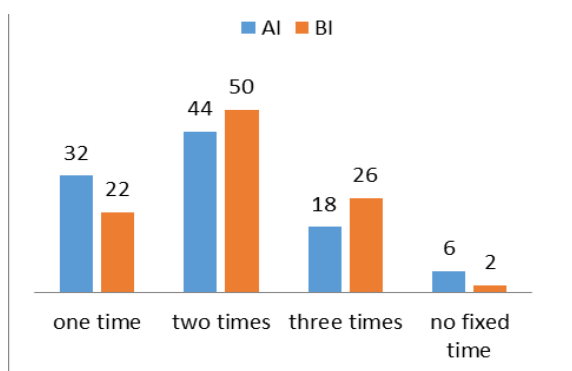


Fig. 5. Cooking time

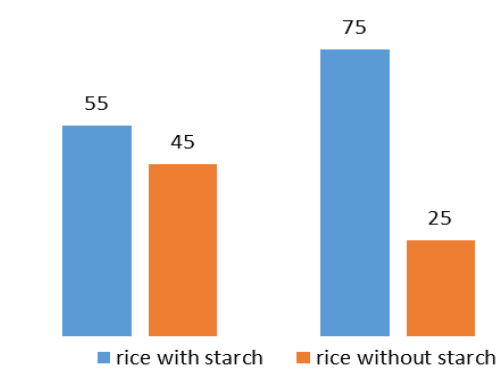


Fig. 6. Rice preparation

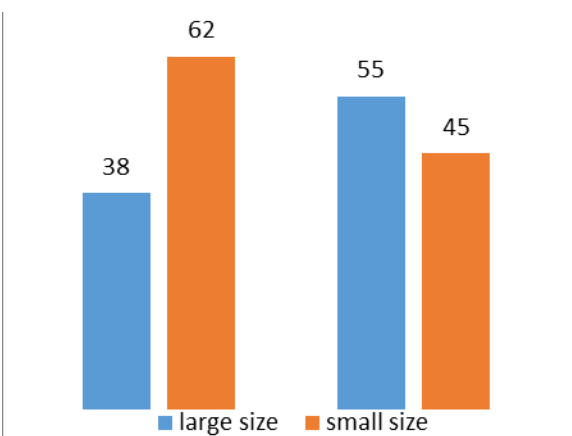


Fig. 7. Vegetable cutting

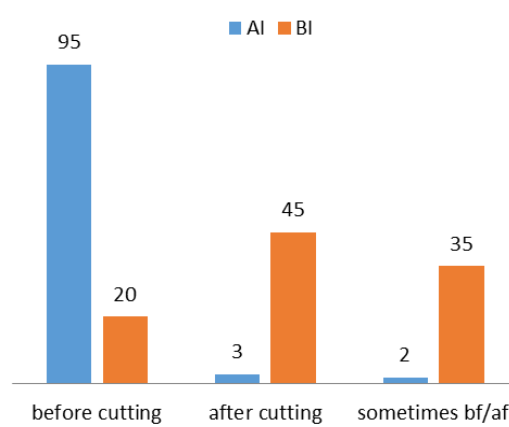


Fig. 8. Vegetables washing

BI=Condition of before intervention, AI= after intervention

### Conclusion

In char area, people produce vegetables and fruits, milk, birds, eggs, but they fewer took those nutritional meal; after training, awareness buildup and intervention, their generally family food habit positively improved and many people have been adopted with good practice in rice preparation, vegetables cutting, washing and nutritional knowledge based cooking system.

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