University of Southampton

Faculty of Environmental and Life Sciences

School of Geography and Environmental Science

Impacts of Land Acquisition Across Communities: Exploring the Special Economic Zones in Bangladesh

by

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Thesis for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

May 02, 2024

University of Southampton

Abstract

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Special economic zones (SEZs) are delineated geographical places established with distinct regulations for attracting investment to achieve diverse economic benefits. The emergence of the SEZs has aggravated the contentious issue of land acquisition and development globally with substantial gaps between their anticipated and actual benefits for the land-acquired communities. Bangladesh is establishing 100 new SEZs across the country acquiring rural community lands and proposing numerous benefits, the impacts of which are unknown from the community context. The existing literature highlights the impacts of land acquisition in Bangladesh from the perspective of land loss without considering the development benefits of implemented projects. The resettlement policy and implementation issues are also understudied in the land acquisition literature in the Bangladesh context, which are crucially linked to the impacts.

Conceptualising through the capabilities approach, this study aims to examine the impacts of land acquisition on the capabilities of individuals within communities in the recently developed SEZs. Positioning freedom of choice over wealth and opulence, the capabilities approach provides a wider perspective for capturing nuances of impacts. Based on a qualitative review of policies relating to land acquisition and resettlement, semi-structured interviews with community members as well as experts in government and NGO personnel were conducted. Three SEZs of Bangladesh with distinct geographical features and at different development stages are selected to understand the impacts on economic, social–affective, and personal (physio-psychological) aspects of well-being through the core capabilities of individuals across the livelihoods of locales and occupations.

Findings with novel insights into dispossession reveal that land acquisition with poor implementation of resettlement policies affects the capabilities of the land-losing as well as evicted individuals who are dependent on land and natural resources. Findings also suggest that SEZs with employment and other opportunities advance the capabilities of the individuals from land-losing, without land-losing, and previously landless households. Findings further suggest that despite experiencing capability deprivation in the land-losing context, women were able to enhance their capabilities relating to economic, social–affective, and personal well-being through participation in paid work and other economic activities. This study contributes by filling the knowledge gap in understanding the impacts of SEZs, extending the application of the capabilities approach, and providing new insights into drivers of dispossession. Other implications of this study lie in providing policy recommendations for Bangladesh and beyond—e.g., in countries with similar land–livelihoods relations—as well as opening scopes for further academic research.

Keywords: Land acquisition, special economic zone, displacement, dispossession, resettlement, capabilities, well-being, livelihoods, communities, Bangladesh.

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Research Thesis: Declaration of Authorship

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I declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
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Acknowledgements

I am grateful to all participants of this research from three Special Economic Zone study sites in Bangladesh who provided me with precious time and shared the information I needed for this study. The community participants, the NGO officials, schoolteachers, and the government officials from the Ministry of Land, Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA), and Field Administration were hugely supportive during the situations of COVID-19 restrictions. I am also indebted to the gatekeepers without whose support the fieldwork would not be successful.

I would like to express my special appreciation and thanks to my (former) primary supervisor, Dr Darja Reuschke (currently at University of Birmingham since 1 June 2023), for her dedication and generosity in guiding the whole of my PhD journey. I appreciate the wide prospects she has created for me and the invaluable perspectives she has brought in my PhD. I extend my sincere gratitude to my current supervisor, Professor Craig Hutton, for his guidance and support which have been fundamental in all phases since the beginning of this journey. I also express my cordial thanks to my co-supervisor, Chris Hill, for his immense support and guidance in the way to my PhD. I appreciate my supervisors' commitment, capacity and significant attention to the details in reviewing my work.

I am also grateful to Professor Emma Tompkins and Dr Nick Clarke for reviewing my work at early progression stages and familiarising me with a range of topics. I wish to thank Dr Andrew Power and other faculty and officials from the School of Geography and Environmental Science, the Faculty of Environmental and Life Sciences and the University of Southampton for providing me with necessary training and support to complete my PhD studies in a timely manner. I also convey my thanks to my fellow colleagues and PhD students from the school and research hub who extended their cordial support during my PhD journey. I further express my thanks to Sophie N'Jai for her immense service to proofread my PhD thesis.

I am indebted to the Government of Bangladesh and the Prime Minister Fellowship, Governance Innovation Unit (GIU), Prime Minister's Office, Dhaka, Bangladesh for the financial sponsorship to carry out this study. I extend my gratitude to all officials from the GIU, Prime Minister's Office for their cordial support and guidance during the PhD journey. I also appreciate the support that the Ministry of Public Administration, the Government of Bangladesh as well as officials from Moulvibazar District Administration provided me to process and complete my studies.

I am thankful to the local people and officials who supported me during my fieldwork, travel and stay in the field study sites. I am extremely indebted to Md Minhazur Rahman and Mr Amirul Islam for arranging safe accommodation, transportation, and providing other cordial

supports during my stay at the Coastal Mirsharai area and agrarian SREZ area respectively in the COVID-19 situations.

Finally, my heartfelt thanks go to my dear wife Nigar Sultana Rubi, who has provided unconditional love and support in my life, during this study and, especially in the unprecedented COVID-19 times. Thank you for your constant sacrifice, incessant patience, and remarkable support. My uncountable love and affections go to my lovely daughter Tazrian Zaman who has been the warm-hearted companion of my life in the UK during my PhD journey. My solemn prayers are for my late father Afiz Uddin Ahmed and late mother Momena Khatun without whose love, care, and sacrifice I would not be what I am today. I also express countless thanks to my siblings, family, close relatives, and colleagues from Bangladesh whose inspirations, support, and guidance was fundamental to every success in my life.

Definitions and Abbreviations

ADB..... Asian Development Bank.

ARIPA..... Acquisition and Requisition of Immovable Property Act 2017 is a national legislation for land acquisition and compensation in Bangladesh.

ARIPO ..... Acquisition and Requisition of Immovable Property Ordinance 1982 was a national legislation for land acquisition and compensation in Bangladesh which was repealed and replaced by the Acquisition and Requisition of Immovable Property Act 2017.

BDT..... Bangladeshi Taka, commonly used as Taka, the currency of Bangladesh.

BEZA ..... Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority. The Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority was formed by the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority Act, 2010. This body is authorised to established as many Special Economic Zones as needed in the country.

BSMSN..... Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Shilpa Nagar, the largest special economic zone in Bangladesh comprising over 33,000 acres of land. This zone is spread along the coastlines of Mirsharai, Sitakunda Sub-districts of Chattogram district and Sonagazi Sub-district of Feni district. Most of the land area including the headquarters of the special economic zone is located in Mirsharai Sub-district of Chattogram District which is a reason why the zone is known as the Mirsharai Economic Zone.

COVID-19..... Coronavirus Disease. A virus-caused disease the outbreak of which was first recognised in late 2019.

EPZ..... Export Processing Zone.

ERGO ..... Ethics and Research Governance Online is a system of the University of Southampton for regulating research ethics.

GBP..... Great Britain Pound, the currency of the United Kingdom, also commonly known as Pound Sterling.

GDP ..... Gross Domestic Product.

GPS.....Global Positioning System. A satellite-based radio navigation system owned by the United States Government.

IMF..... International Monetary Fund

IRR..... Impoverishment Risks of Resettlement.

JICA ..... Japan International Cooperation Agency.

MEZ..... Mirsharai Economic Zone, a special economic zone which is also known as Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Shilpa Nagar, the largest economic zone in Bangladesh. As the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Shilpa Nagar has started land acquisition and infrastructural development from the Mirsharai sub-district of Chattogram where the key installations are established including the headquarters of the Zone, this is popularly known as the Mirsharai Economic Zone.

MIEZ..... Meghna Industrial Economic Zone. This is located in the Sub-district of Sonargaon in the district of Narayanganj. This is a privately owned special economic zone.

MOL ..... Ministry of Land, a government ministry of Bangladesh regulating land management, land acquisition and resettlement with all policy matters relating to this.

NGO ..... Non-government Organisation.

RPF ..... Resettlement Policy Framework is a policy framework formulated by Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority in 2020 providing guidelines for carrying out resettlement activities in the Special Economic Zones.

SEZ ..... Special Economic Zone.

SLF..... Sustainable Livelihoods Framework.

SREZ ..... Srihatta Economic Zone.

TV..... Television.

UK ..... United Kingdom.

UNCTAD ..... United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

USD ..... United States Dollar, the currency of the United States of America.

Impacts of Land Acquisition Across Communities: Exploring the Special Economic Zones in Bangladesh

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background and statement of the problem

The implementation of development projects through land acquisition involves high magnitude of displacement; for example, 45 million people were displaced in the second half of the twentieth century in China and 40 million people were displaced by the establishment of dams up to the year 2000 in India (Jaysawal and Saha, 2016; Neef and Singer, 2015). It is suggested that land appropriation occurs in places where corrupt or indebted governments fail to regulate the transactions or provide protection to the poorest rural communities (Borras *et al.*, 2011). About 15 million people are being displaced by development every year globally whose interests are rarely protected by the policies (Terminski, 2015). Development through resource acquisition often mediated by national governments has been critiqued in the development discussion as it leads to severe livelihood consequences in resource-losing communities (Escobar, 2006a; Harvey, 2004).

In this context, the emergence of a new zone-based development initiative—namely, the special economic zones (SEZs henceforth)—has drawn both policy and scholastic attention to its development promises with an elevated level of anticipation (Cross, 2014). The SEZs are delineated places with distinct regulatory frameworks providing diverse incentives to attract investment, enhance exports, and create employment and other direct and indirect social–economic benefits (Bartlett *et al.*, 2019; Frick *et al.*, 2018). Although the land acquisition for the establishment of SEZs is presented as a break from past incidents of land acquisition with numerous economic and social benefits expected from these, the recent literature suggests that land acquisition for the zones has affected the communities adversely (Cross, 2014; Levien, 2012; 2017; 2018). However, opportunities brought by SEZs open up liberatory prospects for some social groups by demolishing their age-old social subjugation (Cross, 2014). Moreover, waged employment positively impacts women with regards to uplifting their socio-economic conditions, often protecting them from marginalisation and violence and ensuring the dignity of life (Dutta, 2019; Pham Thi *et al.*, 2019). Therefore, the complexity arising from the contradictory results suggested in the literature necessitates a holistic understanding of the impacts of land acquisition and development in SEZs.

Impacts of the land acquisition on individuals and communities have been looked at through two broad perspectives; first, the resettlement perspective where the policies do not adequately address community needs (Cernea and Maldonado, 2018; Terminski, 2015) and second, adverse and differential impacts which have been narrowly viewed from the perspective of reduction in resources without considering the development benefits (Gardner, 2018; Huang *et*

al., 2018; Jaysawal and Saha, 2016; Rao, 2019). The resettlement approaches and models suggested in the literature are focused on the social, economic, and cultural damage caused by land acquisition and identify huge policy gaps in addressing these issues globally (Cernea, 1997; 2003; Cernea and Maldonado, 2018; Stanley, 2004). Although it has long been suggested that development projects should regard resettlement as a development activity featuring social safety nets, employment or income-generating mechanisms, and benefit-sharing initiatives for development in the affected communities (Cernea, 2003; Robinson, 2003; Zaman and Khatun, 2017), it has not been adequately considered for empirical assessment (Rao, 2019).

In the development conundrum, attention is drawn to capitalist accumulation, which, although persistent over time, does not positively correlate with the growth of GDP per capita or economic growth (Easterly and Levine, 2001). The doctrines of development in the rural context are suggested to be freed from the capitalist development originating from the 'urban bias' which is opposed to the agrarian doctrine or intentional development (Cowen and Shenton, 2008). The core conception of the agrarian doctrine is centred on subsidising the rural agricultural sector rather than transferring the surplus from agriculture to industry or from the rural sector to the urban sector. The agrarian doctrine of development advocates policy interventions for rural-based development embracing the concepts of effective participation in the policy process based on rational choice, knowledge, and capacity (Cowen and Shenton, 2008,p.55).

However, in the changing dynamic of rural livelihoods and the inability of natural resources to meet the survival needs of the community members, diversification of rural livelihoods through off-farm employment is suggested (Ellis, 2000; Ellis and Allison, 2004; Pingali *et al.*, 2019). In the context of depleting natural resources and an underdeveloped off-farm waged sector, poverty situations in some communities remain unchanged and even aggravated (Adams *et al.*, 2018). Impact assessment in the context of land acquisition, thus, necessitates the adoption of a combined approach considering both resource loss with resettlement measures and the actual necessity of the alternative opportunities arriving through development projects. Most importantly, this should be understood from the perspective of the impacted community members.

Bangladesh, with a very high population density and over three-fifths of the population employed in agriculture, is identified as a unique case for land dispossession (Feldman and Geisler, 2012,p.973). With a rapid reduction rate, the country is likely to lose half of its cultivable lands in the next 25 years (Gardner, 2018; Gardner and Gerharz, 2016; Hossain, 2015). This decreasing trend has resulted in a sharp rise in the land price and, consequently, holding land has become a significant source of household wealth, prestige, and power (Gardner, 2018; Hossain, 2015). A decrease in land puts strain on the livelihoods of the growing functional landless people which currently amounts to almost half of the population (Gardner, 2018; Mahmud *et al.*, 2020;

Zaman and Khatun, 2017). The poverty rates are higher in the rural areas than in the urban areas (Salam, 2020) and "poverty alleviation within rural societies [in] Bangladesh delta are unlikely to lie solely within the realms of ecosystem services" (Adams *et al.*, 2018,p. 42). In the context of the rapid reduction of per capita agricultural lands and a growing number of landless rural people, and the employment prospects experienced in the earlier export processing zones (EPZs) (Naeem *et al.*, 2020,p.5) the SEZs with off-farm employment and other spill-over impacts can bring in alternative opportunities to diversify livelihoods (Ahmed *et al.*, 2015) for enhancing the quality of lives of individuals in the rural communities. This can also have huge implications for women with or without land loss who, in Bangladesh, lack effective access to land, property, and outdoor economic activities (Heintz *et al.*, 2017; Mansoor, 1999; Nazneen, 2017; Sultana, 2010).

The emergence of the new SEZ policy in Bangladesh is driven by these realities "with a view to encouraging rapid economic development through increase and diversification of industry, employment, production and export" (GoB, 2010, in the preamble). This new policy initiative is very broad and extended from the earlier small-scale Export Processing Zones (EPZs) which were established solely for processing export oriented products (Bhattacharya, 1998). A report of the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA), the responsible body for implementing the SEZs, suggests that a number of 97 SEZs are approved some of which are already operational, while the others are in the land acquisition and development phases (BEZA, 2019; 2021). The rhetoric as well as the intentions of the SEZs with high prospects fits in the changing dynamics of rural livelihoods and employment and development necessity in Bangladesh. Promises of 10 million direct and indirect jobs to be created (BEZA, 2018) acquiring an estimated 75,000 acres of rural lands for the SEZs (Raihan *et al.*, 2020,p.24) create both optimism and apprehension from the community perspective. Despite being crucial, what they mean to the lives and capabilities of the community members experiencing land, property, and other losses is not adequately known.

This study, on the understudied SEZs in Bangladesh, primarily intends to fill this knowledge gap in the literature that either takes an isolated view of the impacts of land acquisition from that of the development projects or reports the development benefits of the implemented projects inadequately (Gardner, 2018; Mahmud *et al.*, 2020; Nuremowla, 2016). As land is important for the landowners and individuals dependent on land-related means of living, so also the natural assets are for the landed and landless individuals and households in rural communities. However, considering the depletion of natural resources, off-farm means of living can be crucial for those without operational farmland in rural social–ecological systems (Adams *et al.*, 2018) which is not adequately assessed in the land acquisition literature. This study, thus, attempts to address the knowledge gaps and methodological gaps prevalent in the literature assessing impacts of land acquisition through the capabilities approach, where the relationship of

land loss with its impacts is narrowly viewed from an ownership perspective only without considering others related to the acquired land beyond ownership (Rao, 2018a; 2019). The capabilities approach in many respects provides wider conceptual bases considering development as enhancing freedom which can be useful to capture the nuances of impacts in terms of real achievement of individuals (Nussbaum, 2003; Sen, 1985; 1986; 1988; 1999). Land acquisition for implementing development projects is reconceptualised through the capabilities approach and Impoverishment Risks of Resettlement (IRR) model (Cernea, 1997) after the representation of the capabilities approach of Robeyns (2005a). This study, in this respect, makes explicit empirical, theoretical, and methodological contributions. Considering impoverishment or 'capability deprivation' as an inherent consequence of development projects implemented by land acquisition, the Bangladesh case contributes to the understanding of how already identified inadequate resettlement programmes (Zaman and Khatun, 2017) together with the development potentials of the SEZs eradicate the capabilities deprivation factors and create capabilities. In doing so, this study also provides insights into the resettlement policy framework in Bangladesh and contributes to the conceptualisation of resettlement from the development or capabilities enhancement perspectives.

The conceptual framework of this study is drawn on the key aspects of the Capability Approach by Sen (1988; 1999) to consider land acquisition and development as a single phenomenon impacting the capabilities of individuals across communities. The Impoverishment Risks of Resettlement (IRR) model (Cernea, 1997) identifying impoverishment risks associated with displacement was useful in understanding aspects capability deprivation in the context of resource loss (Sen, 1999). Land acquisition also involves infrastructural development which is conventionally understood as dams, railways, and roads etc. (Levien, 2013; Sathe, 2017). In this study this refers to the infrastructure created inside and outside the SEZs e.g., factories, road communication, electricity etc.) which creates opportunities for paid employment and other income and occupational means with enhanced ability to receive services. It is also relevant that the livelihoods of occupations and locales as suggested in Scoones (2009), were taken in consideration to identify and differentiate communities in order to understand the nuances of the impacts of land acquisition and development on diverse contexts. The conceptual framework for this study considers the changes in the means (occupational means, services) which are mediated by conversion factors (geographical location, social norms, skills) and human diversity (differences and differential needs among individuals) bringing in capability sets for the individuals to achieve their capabilities. To explore achievements, an analytical framework was constructed to identify the core capabilities derived from the Central Human Capabilities of Nussbaum (2003) aligned with humans' basic needs (Maslow, 1943). This combination of capabilities with needs is not only stressed as a necessity (Alkire, 2017) but also provides a credible understanding of the

achievements of three aspects of well-being; namely, economic well-being, social–affective well-being, and personal (physio-psychological) well-being.

The literature assessing the impact of land acquisition reveals methodological gaps as Rao (2019) considers landowners as the only population without considering other land-dependent individuals in the community. Literature without the land acquisition context examines well-being of the home-based female waged workers (Naz and Bögenhold, 2018) which can also be seen in a wider aspect with those being impacted outside waged work. Apart from filling this population gap, through a qualitative approach, this study combines methods relating to policy, implementation, and actual community impacts in order to generate a holistic understanding. Capturing the core capabilities in relation to different aspects of human needs (Maslow, 1943) in the communities involves a qualitative understanding of lived experiences based on the perceptions of the community members. Through a qualitative inquiry, the semi-structured interview (Corbin and Strauss, 2015) method was applied. In-depth interviews were conducted with both the community participants and the experts (Dexter, 2012); e.g., the policy personnel, NGOs, and local educational personnel. The expert interview data are supplemented by a qualitative content analysis (Coffey, 2014) of the relevant policies for a better understanding of the policy context relating to resettlement activities that affect the capabilities of individuals in the land-acquired communities. The theoretical consideration of the capabilities approach for the study is also congruous and relevant to the qualitative approach. Three SEZs—the Mirsharai Economic Zone in the coastal Chattogram district; the Srihatta Economic Zone in the agrarian Moulvibazar district; and the Meghna Industrial Economic Zone in the transitioning Narayanganj district in Bangladesh—were selected systematically from different geographical settings and at different stages of development following the case classification of Brenner (2020). The case selection assisted in understanding: a) development of resettlement policy and implementation issues relating to individual capabilities in the qualitative terms; b) impacts across the livelihoods of the locales (coastal, agrarian, and transitioning communities) and occupations (farming, fishing, off-farm and mixed) brought about by land acquisition; and c) the transition taking place at different stages of development in the communities to predict the likely impacts on communities that were not impacted much initially.

1.2 Research aim and objectives

This study aims to understand the impacts of land acquisition in the SEZs in Bangladesh in three SEZ communities. Despite the adverse impacts of land acquisition on the community members, which is widely reported in the literature, the inadequate resettlement measures fail to reverse the deprivations. Moreover, the under-reporting of the benefits brought by the implemented development projects in the impacted communities demands a holistic

understanding of the impacts from the perspectives of both natural resource loss and development opportunities. To contribute to the existing knowledge gaps and methodological gaps, this study intends to understand the impacts by addressing the following three objectives.

The first objective of this research is to understand the geographical, social, and policy contexts of land acquisition in the SEZ communities in Bangladesh. The focus is given on examining the social–geographical features, policy arrangements, livelihood patterns, and dynamics to understand the contexts in which individuals and households operate their activities. The recent development of the policies with implementation practices are not adequately addressed in the literature. This study, therefore, explores such policy development in the newly established SEZs in Bangladesh to achieve this objective.

The second objective is to examine the impacts of resource change on the capabilities of the community members in the SEZs within the dynamics of rural livelihoods. This seeks to contribute by filling the gap arising from the isolated view of land acquisition from that of development. This examines how land acquisition along with the implemented SEZs impacts individuals from land-losing and evicted household and individuals from households without land loss including individuals from households that were previously landless. Although the immediate impacts of land acquisition are captured, this also includes how the SEZs contribute to the transition of livelihoods in the context of depleting natural resources.

The third objective is to assess the development effects of SEZs on women in respect of aspirations and capabilities across communities and livelihoods. This objective intends to contribute to the identification of how the arrival of paid employment and other opportunities on their doorsteps induces aspirations of women and helps transcend the geographical and social–cultural barriers suggested in the literature to accomplish their achievements. In so doing, this also explores the social development coming through women's integration to the benefits of the SEZs.

With this aim and specific objectives, this pioneering study in the SEZs in Bangladesh has both academic and practical policy implications. The academic implications of the study are that this fills the knowledge gap by providing an empirical understanding of the combined impacts of land acquisition and development projects and extending the application of the capabilities approach beyond the functionings of land from the ownership perspective (Rao, 2018a; b; 2019). This research also unpacks the drivers of dispossession operating to advance the existing explanations regarding land dispossession (Levien, 2012). The non-academic or practical implications of the study lie within its assessment of policy aspects, identification of implementation challenges, and presentation of a resettlement and development framework for policy-based decision makers in Bangladesh and beyond.

1.3 Outline of the thesis structure

This thesis consists of eight chapters. This introductory chapter states the background, the research problem, and the aim and objectives of the study. In line with the aim and objectives of this study, the second chapter reviews the literature to understand the land dispossession and displacement issues concerning the implementation of development projects in rural communities with a view to positioning this study in the broader academic arena. This review explores the nature, drivers and policy issues of land acquisition, development necessities in rural communities and the impacts of land acquisition and development on livelihoods. This also reviews the theoretical conceptions to understand the conceptual issues and formulate a conceptual framework for qualitatively inquiring into the impacts of land acquisition and development in rural communities. The third chapter explains the research design where a qualitative research approach is considered; the two methods adopted are, document-review and interview methods. Introducing the case study areas, this chapter provides the rationale and significance of selecting the case studies from three different locations and livelihood types. A description of the sample is also attached and the process of data analysis is discussed in the methodology chapter.

The fourth chapter contains an analysis of the social–geographical and policy contexts of the case studies related to land acquisition and resettlement in the SEZs in Bangladesh. This explores the progression of the SEZs in the communities with the policy development and implementation issues affecting the lives of the individuals in the communities. The fifth chapter outlines the findings regarding the impacts of land acquisition with resettlement support and infrastructural development on the core capabilities of land-losing and evicted individuals across communities. The sixth chapter explores the impacts of the opportunities brought about by the SEZs on the core capabilities of individuals who did not lose land and were previously landless. The seventh chapter draws on the context of multiple social–geographical barriers of female work in the communities and explores the impacts of the SEZs on the aspirations and capabilities of women, encompassing economic well-being, social–affective well-being, and personal (physio-psychological) well-being of their lives. In so doing, this explores how enhanced participation in economic activities contributes to social development. The eighth chapter discusses the findings, states the significance of the findings and contributions to knowledge and draws the conclusions of the study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter intends to explore diverse perspectives of land acquisition with the nature, drivers and scale of dispossession and displacement to identify the impacts on the community members. A significant aim of this chapter is to understand if the infrastructure projects implemented by land acquisition meaningfully integrate the communities affected by land and natural resource loss into their benefits. In relation to this, the current chapter also attempts to look into the land acquisition incidences taking place in the recently developed special economic zones to understand the impacts reported in the literature and to identify potential gaps. Another principal goal of this chapter is to identify the differentiated impacts of land acquisition, dispossession and displacement seen through diverse concepts and perspectives of rural development. In so doing, this intends to conceptualise land acquisition and establishment of the special economic zones with an appropriate lens to understand the combined impacts of the damage to natural resources and the new opportunities created by infrastructural development.

2.2 The theories of rural livelihoods, rural development, communities and special economic zones

As community and rural livelihoods are strongly interlinked (Spicker, 2019) where land acquisition and development projects are implemented with diverse impacts, it is pertinent to understand the community in the contexts of land acquisition and development. A community is defined from diverse perspectives and in diverse ways in academia (Spicker, 2019). A community is defined as a set of networks which is often different from a 'local social system' and is not always local and is not tied to the territorial model (Spicker, 2019, p.75). Understanding community in the territorial model, this study views community roles from the perspective of reducing alienation and isolation which results in building cohesion, resources and social capital (Gilchrist, 2009; Spicker, 2019). As social capital is suggested to be the only capital that gets 'immediate access' to economic capital and cannot be obtained 'instantaneously' (Bourdieu, 1986, p.24), it can be significant in the context of land acquisition and displacement. Along these lines, in this study, a community is understood in the territorial base, like a neighbourhood, where people are "affected by common physical, social and economic environment" (Spicker, 2019, p.80). Considering land acquisition and development, community, in this study, is understood as a rural-based 'development community', or the people within a geographical area who are

impacted by the pros and cons of a specific development initiative namely, the establishment of the SEZs by land acquisition (Saxena, 2020a).

In the development conundrum, the capitalist 'urban bias' of development that seeks to take the surplus from rural agriculture to the off-farm sector is long placed in opposition to the 'agrarian doctrines' that propose sticking to and facilitating the household-based production system of rural communities (Cowen and Shenton, 2008). A policy emphasis on renewing the old modes of the household-focused production system is also the key goal of the intentional agrarian doctrines of development (Cowen and Shenton, 2008). The development ideas, as found in the literature, have evolved from the universal human rights-based approach in the 1940s and 1950s, through political, economic, and social rights-focused approaches in the 1960s to environment-focused development considerations in the 1970s (Gupta *et al.*, 2015). The key idea about rural development in this phase was focused on integrated rural development in the 1970s (Gupta *et al.*, 2015; Scoones, 2009). The Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) led by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) were also guiding in rural development in this phase and afterwards (Abouharb and Cingranelli, 2006; Easterly, 2003).

Ideas of poverty, inequality, and welfare were integrated into the theories of development with the innovative approach of Amartya Sen (1973; 1976) which became focused on individual capabilities rather than utilitarian measurements of aggregate social welfare. Sen's (1988; 1999) concept of development was further developed and a key focus of development was given on human development and enhancement of freedom. The entitlement and deprivation concepts of Sen (1981) provide new perspectives on rural poverty and development measurement. The influential work of Robert Chambers (1983) on participatory rural development appraisal and, later, a sustainable development approach with social, economic, and environmental considerations in the 1980s became guiding as the development activities were characterised by large-scale appropriation of rural natural resources (Chambers and Conway, 1992; Scoones, 2009). A livelihoods approach by Chambers and Conway (1992) and became widely accepted in the 1990s and is popularly practised in assessing rural development (Gupta *et al.*, 2015; Scoones, 2009).

The livelihoods perspective has its starting point in the understanding of people's way of living in different places or communities (Scoones, 2009). A livelihood, in the simplest of terms, is understood as gaining a living (Chambers and Conway, 1992). Although a cross-disciplinary livelihoods approach has a long history in rural development (Scoones, 2009), the most widely used definition of livelihood is drawn from the works of Chambers and Conway (1992). A livelihood is defined to be comprised of people, their capabilities and assets, including both tangible (resources and stores) and intangible (claims and accesses), and activities required for a means of living (Chambers and Conway, 1992; Quansah *et al.*, 2020).

> A mobile and flexible term, 'livelihoods' can be attached to all sorts of other words to construct whole fields of development enquiry and practice. These relate to locales (rural or urban livelihoods), occupations (farming, pastoral or fishing livelihoods), the social difference (gendered, age-defined livelihoods), directions (livelihood pathways, trajectories), dynamic patterns (sustainable or resilient livelihoods) and many more. (Scoones, 2009, p.172).

The sustainable livelihood framework (SLF) built on Sen's capabilities approach (Smyth and Vanclay, 2017) intends to understand how people manage to get food, income, and other assets both in tangible and intangible terms to maintain their physical and spiritual well-being (Mwenda and Turpin, 2016; Tincani, 2015). A sustainable livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets, and activities (Murambadoro, 2009), and the key components of the SLF are five interchangeable capitals—namely, natural capitals, human capitals, social capitals, financial capitals, and physical capitals—which, combined with livelihood strategies, lead to livelihood outcomes. A sustainable livelihoods approach combines the environmental, social–economic, and human capabilities and entitlement issues together in an attempt to inclusive development and is useful for understanding the livelihood changes in rural settings (Gupta *et al.*, 2015). Considering these, the concept of livelihood, in this study, is relevant in the 'locales' as rural livelihoods and across 'occupations' such as farming, fishing, and pastoral (Scoones, 2009).

Rural livelihoods are increasingly challenged due to the depletion of natural resources and the development approaches are suggested to be failing to protect the marginalized groups from the perspectives of inclusiveness (Gupta *et al.*, 2015; Woodhill *et al.*, 2022). The rights-based approaches are criticized in academia for their contextual obscurity (Nussbaum, 2003). A political economy perspective on development fails to identify the relationship of communities with culture and natural resources (Escobar, 2006a). When considering rural well-being, culture is also identified to be a significant element (Scott *et al.*, 2018). Therefore, a political ecology framework is proposed which highlights the conflicts of resource acquisition from the social-environmental perspectives (Escobar, 2006a; b). However, there is a strong necessity that the rural development frameworks consider the failures of rural communities to maintain livelihood sustainability due to eroding natural resources.

Alongside the limitations of the development perspectives identified, it is argued with empirical evidence that reliance on a single on-farm main output can be insufficient to ensure well-being in rural communities and "ecosystem services for wellbeing must be contextualised within changing rural economies" (Adams *et al.*, 2018, p.31). A livelihoods diversification framework is provided for rural development with rural-based alternative full-time off-farm

employment (Ellis, 2000, p.3–4). Although this could be an approach to attain rural livelihood sustainability, this contradicts both the concepts of intentional development with the participatory policy process and the household-focused production mode of the agrarian doctrines of development (Cowen and Shenton, 2008). Chakraborty *et al.* (2012), in the context of India, suggest that developed infrastructure has positive effects on labour force participation, employment and well-being of the rural people. In the context of resource scarcity in a single social–ecological setting (Gupta *et al.*, 2015) national governments across the globe are taking initiatives like industrialization and zone-based development like the recently established special economic zones (SEZs) with a promise to enhance rural livelihoods and well-being in the rhetoric (Cross, 2014). However, this approach of acquiring land from rural communities rather creates numerous problems for the land-losing communities (Kuaycharoen *et al.*, 2020; Potter, 2020).

2.3 Delivering the special economic zones

2.3.1 Origin of SEZs, policy goals, land acquisition and displacement

Often identified as incidents of capitalist accumulation (Banerjee-Guha, 2013; Levien, 2011), special economic zones (SEZs) have been defined as delineated enclaves with separate laws within the territory of a country (Laungaramsri and Sengchanh, 2019). The export-promoting zone created in Spain in 1929 (Paul and Sarma, 2013) or the Shannon Export Processing Zone (EPZ) in Ireland in 1959 (Farole, 2011; Murayama and Yokota, 2009) are argued to be the earliest examples of zone-based policy initiatives. Although the EPZs and SEZs are established to overcome policy constraints to facilitate investment and attract foreign direct investment (FDI), the SEZs are larger in size and established with diversified goals of promoting additional economic activities, industrialisation, infrastructure, employment and tourism which have linkage with the local economy unlike solely export focused goals of the former small sized EPZs (Jenkins *et al.*, 2015; Zeng, 2015). The SEZ concept has significantly progressed in recent times recruiting about 90-100 million people globally (UNCTAD, 2019) of which China alone employs over 40 million. Their huge contribution to the economy drives the contemporary rise in the popularity of SEZs (Bartlett *et al.*, 2019; Frick *et al.*, 2018). While in 1975 there were only 79 SEZs in 29 countries globally (Farole, 2011; UNCTAD, 2019), the number increased to 3500 in 130 economies in 2006 (Frick *et al.*, 2018). UNCTAD (2019) suggests that there were 5400 SEZs in 147 economies globally in 2018 where 72% of the global FDIs were located. It was also estimated in the mid-2000s that 20% of exports were carried out through the SEZs in developing countries (Frick *et al.*, 2018).

The SEZs are varied in type and have diverse stakeholders involved (Farole, 2011). Although 90% of the SEZs can be identified with the name ‘special economic zones’ (UNCTAD, 2019), there can be other types such as free trade zones (Luo and Zhi, 2019), industrial parks,

export processing zones, economic and technology development zones, high-tech zones, science and innovation parks, free ports, and enterprise zones among others (Jeong and Zeng, 2016). Diverse economic activities, both agricultural and non-agricultural, can be operated in the SEZs (Romyen *et al.*, 2019). It is suggested that the SEZs can be a means for overcoming the constraints of doing business and, as they are associated with better infrastructure, they can be used to pilot the economic and policy reforms and then replicate them within the entire economy (Jeong and Zeng, 2016). While the national governments adopting the policies and establishing SEZs are the principal stakeholders, the other key stakeholders are the SEZ authorities, zone developers, zone operators, and zone users (UNCTAD, 2019).

From policy perspectives, the SEZs are viewed as an effective tool for promoting industrialisation and development (Jeong and Zeng, 2016; Potter, 2020; Romyen *et al.*, 2019). The SEZs "as engines of economic growth" (Bedi, 2015,p.597) are suggested to bring development both inside and outside the zone (Romyen *et al.*, 2019) through static economic benefits and dynamic economic benefits (Jeong and Zeng, 2016). The expected static economic benefits are attracting foreign direct investment, creating employment (Ashournejad *et al.*, 2019; Zeng, 2015), increasing exports and earning foreign exchanges that contribute to the development of the country, and uplifting the standard of living of the people (Romyen *et al.*, 2019). The dynamic economic benefits are skill upgradation, transfer of technology and innovation, diversification of the economy (Frick *et al.*, 2018), and exchange of productivity of the local farms (Jeong and Zeng, 2016). Following an 'open door' economic policy in 1979, the Chinese SEZs yielded 'impressive' economic performance shortly after they were developed (Chu, 1987).

A radical emphasis on SEZ-based development has aggravated the long contentions regarding the development and appropriation of rural natural resources (Edelman *et al.*, 2013; Sathe, 2011). Gopalakrishnan (2007) suggests that about 5,000,000 hectares of agricultural lands were transferred for real estate and infrastructural development in the Chinese SEZs between 1986 and 1995. The small size and number of EPZs in India and Bangladesh, which were initiated in 1965 and 1983, respectively, did not have land issues as severe as in the case in contemporary times (Bhattacharya, 1998). Adopting a fresh and extended regulatory framework in 2005 India set up 700 SEZs (Bedi, 2015; Levien, 2012; Potter, 2020) which require acquiring a total of 200,000 hectares of land dispossessing 1.4 million households (Parwez and Sen, 2016). A similar policy initiative was taken in Bangladesh in 2010 to establish SEZs in rural areas by acquiring about 30,350 hectares (75,000 acres) of land for initially implementing 100 SEZs (Raihan *et al.*, 2020,p.24). Kuaycharoen *et al.* (2020) suggest that SEZs in countries in the Mekong Delta have also been associated with large amounts of land acquisition. However, although the Indian SEZs have often been presented with huge transformational benefits, they have not been effective in many respects (Bedi, 2015; Cross, 2014). The anticipated social and economic benefits to the SEZ

communities, as the recent literature suggests, are often outweighed by the adverse impacts that land acquisition has brought to them (Levien, 2012; 2017; 2018). Table 2.1 illustrates the amount of land acquired in the SEZs in eight Asian countries.

Table 2.1:

Amount of land acquired for SEZs in selected Asian countries

Country	Amount of land covered by SEZs (hectares)	Notes
China	5,000,000.00	Transferred between 1986 and 1995 (actual amount may yet be higher)
India	200,000.00	(Acquired and proposed lands)
Bangladesh	30,350.00	(Acquired and proposed lands)
Laos	29,627.90	
Myanmar	22,050.00	
Cambodia	14,814.40	
Pakistan	11,000.00	(Acquired and proposed lands)
Thailand	2,400.00	

Source: Data compiled from Khan and Anwar (2017), Kuaycharoen et al. (2020), and other sources.

Thus, the central role of land for development activities triggered its acquisition for the SEZs which are identified as predatory for being increasingly associated with the dispossession of the farmers and community members (Bedi, 2015; Levien, 2012). Despite the diverse economic and non-economic activities induced by SEZs, land acquisition for those is also seen as 'foreignization of space' (Fogelman, 2017; Vijayabaskar and Menon, 2018) and 'de-peasantisation' from diverse perspectives (Laungaramsri and Sengchanh, 2018; Levien, 2018). The current scenario of large-scale dispossession of farmers is significantly mediated by the national governments (Laungaramsri and Sengchanh, 2018; Rippa, 2019). As land acquisition has diverse motivations with various drivers involved in the process, holding an understanding of these as well as their consequences is emphasised (Vijayabaskar and Menon, 2018).

2.3.2 The nature, drivers and perspectives of compulsory land acquisition relating to development projects and SEZs

As indicated in the previous sub-section, the acquisition of large tracks of land by SEZs across countries has diverse impacts on land-acquired communities (Sims, 2017). Before going to explore the impacts of land acquisition, it is necessary to understand the nature, drivers, and diverse perspectives of land acquisition. Labelling compulsory land acquisition for implementation of projects including SEZs as a welfare initiative of the state, governments (understood as national governments) apply the power of an eminent domain, compulsory purchase, or expropriation with compensation method for this purpose (Atahar, 2013; Das and Saha, 2015; Levien, 2012; Sampat, 2013). Originally, the purpose of land acquisition was limited to government use only, which gradually expanded to the purpose of building large dams, mining, power projects, agroeconomic projects, roads, railways, urbanisation, wildlife conservation, industry and, more recently, as indicated in the previous section, the establishment of the SEZs (Cáceres, 2015; Kabra, 2015; Levien, 2017; Sathe, 2017). The involvement of global finance and capital combined with the neo-liberal policy initiatives extended land acquisition to numerous private uses of land (Mallik, 2018; Sathe, 2011). Considering ownership, although it may differ from country to country and across communities and ethnicity, as seen in India and Bangladesh, mainly two types of land—e.g., the government-owned land which is often occupied and used as private settlements or common resource pools and privately owned land—are acquired (Adnan, 2013; 2016; Yenneti *et al.*, 2016).

The compulsory land acquisition or land deal incidents are conceptualised from diverse points of view and the global 'land rush' is argued to have produced a huge 'literature rush' (Edelman *et al.*, 2013; Hall, 2013; Oya, 2013). In response to the questions of why and how land dispossession takes place and how it impacts societies and communities, the key concepts that are very widely considered in the scholarship are global land grab, primitive accumulation, and accumulation by dispossession. The key drivers, actors, and impacts of land appropriation are also understood through these lenses. Through these concepts, the literature highlights the political economy of state-mediated dispossession as an outcome of global capitalist accumulation from a neo-liberal standpoint of development (Bedi, 2015; Levien, 2011).

The concept of global land grab, which saw more widespread use in the literature after 2006, covers a wide range of incidents of land transaction and expropriation and includes 'water grabbing', and 'green grabbing', etc., to relate to the involvement of diverse factors and actors including the global capital (Edelman *et al.*, 2013; Gardner and Gerharz, 2016; Rudi *et al.*, 2014; Scoones *et al.*, 2013). The literature often embraces the point of contestation raised through 'accumulation by dispossession' (Harvey, 2004) or dispossession by 'contamination' (Escobar,

2006a; b) can provide a good lens to look into the roots of the crisis. However Gardner and Gerharz (2016) argue that land grab as a concept, cannot identify the underlying mechanism of actual land loss as land ownership change can take place on agreed terms. Moreover, often the owners are not users of the land and the real consequences of land loss are felt by the users who then become aggrieved. It is, thus, difficult to narrow down land grabs to a specific type to essentially call it a land grab and understand the real mechanisms and consequences through this (Gardner and Gerharz, 2016; Hall, 2013). Hall (2013) and Edelman *et al.* (2013,p.1526) argue that, while land grab provides a 'common-sense understanding' of incidents of land appropriation, it can be seen 'more precisely' through both primitive accumulation and accumulation by dispossession.

Marx's concept of 'primitive accumulation' identifies the process as taking control over land, separating the people from the means of production, and making the previous land owners land-less proletariats which was put forward by political geographer David Harvey (Adnan, 2013; Cross, 2014; Hall, 2013). Primitive accumulation, Harvey suggests, neither was viewed negatively by Marx regarding the social forms that it destroyed nor did he suggest any necessity of reverting to the "pre-capitalist social relations and productive form" (2003, p.163). Harvey (2003; 2004), however, proposes 'accumulation by dispossession' (ABD) arguing that capitalist accumulation and dispossession is an ongoing process which has entered into a new complexity after the 1970s. He argues that the inherent and "chronic problems of overaccumulation arising within expanded reproduction" (2003,p.156) of capitalism are solved by the "spatio-temporal fixes" (2003,p.185) by which it searches and penetrates into new markets to exploit resources dispossessing agrarian people. Despite being celebrated and widely used and argued to be a good starting point, ABD is conceptually vague as Harvey (2003; 2004) fails to define and theoretically differentiate ABD from primitive accumulation (Gardner and Gerharz, 2016; Levien, 2011).

The divergent views of land dispossession from ABD provide insights into the limitations of the concept and also help identify other issues involved in the process. Adnan argues that, without being essentially related to any capital–production relation, "land grabs can be propelled by political and particularistic conflicts based on race, ethnicity, caste or religion" (2013,p. 94). Furthermore, instead of dispossession, Adnan (2016,p. 7), takes the concept of alienation and develops a typology of land alienation which can be forced and unforced occurring both in direct and indirect ways. Drawing evidence from SEZs in India, Levien (2013; 2018) argues that land dispossession is often more related to the regimes of dispossession and neo-liberal state roles than to capitalist accumulation. The views, such as dispossession—being associated with the concept of temporality denoting a slow and gradual (Mishra, 2011) as well as a quieter and often hidden process (Gardner and Gerharz, 2016)—are divergent from the concept of capitalist accumulation. Similarly, dispossession happening through the proper market system without

force being applied or as a consequence of the informal credit system also does not correspond to the coercive conception of ABD (Mishra, 2011).

Land acquisition for the SEZs in Bangladesh, although often related, cannot be defined as ideal incidents of accumulation by dispossession as Levien (2011) finds in the case of India. In the absence of a full capitalist rural land market system, it is primarily propelled by the state initiative and helps the capitalist secondarily overcome the barriers to accumulation. The political economy of land dispossession in the SEZs in Bangladesh, thus, can be an embodiment of the state as land broker 'regimes of dispossession' where an extra economic coercive enforcement process is the guiding force (Levien, 2013,p.383). The recent initiatives can also be congruous with the concept of 'pork barrel projects' (Potter, 2020) meaning localised spending of money by governments for political gains which forms an 'economy of anticipation' making the SEZs true *Dream Zones* from the policy perspective as well as the community perspective (Cross, 2014).

2.4 Impacts of land acquisition, implementation of development projects and SEZs

With the drivers and actors identified in the previous sub-section, this sub-section discusses the diverse impacts of land acquisition for implementing projects including the SEZs. An understanding of the concepts of dispossession and displacement can be useful for identifying the stakeholders involved. Dispossession is definitionally associated with the original or de jure possession (Feldman and Geisler, 2012). However, in practice, land can be held on a de facto basis where the possessors or users do not have any legal rights (Feldman and Geisler, 2012; Gardner and Gerharz, 2016; Mishra, 2011). Instead of dispossession, the 'development-induced displacement' literature embraces the concept of 'displacement' focusing more on the consequences of displacement suggesting remedials (Downing, 2002; Parasuraman, 1999; Stanley, 2004). Displacement is defined "as dislocation from the homeland territory without social support in the new place of residence" which may also involve large-scale eviction of communities (Terminski, 2012,p.1). The acuter definitions show displacement occurring both directly or ex situ meaning physically evicted and indirectly or in situ, meaning not being physically displaced from houses or land but being affected invisibly, restricting access to lands or livelihoods (Cernea, 2003; Downing, 2002; Feldman and Geisler, 2012; Robinson, 2003). The concepts of dispossession of de facto and de jure as well as displacement of in situ and ex situ categorisations can provide a useful understanding of the stakeholders enabling us to examine the nuances of impacts.

As opposed to the alternative paradigm, namely, development without causing displacement, suggested by the radical–movementist school (Parasuraman, 1999), the managerial–reformist school suggests development as a necessity and admits displacement to be

an inevitable consequence of development (Dwivedi, 2002; Stanley, 2004). Therefore, the development-induced displacement literature inherently embraced the concept of resettlement. Rather than holding a radical–movementist view, which, in practice, may not be attainable considering the development needs in some countries, the managerial reformist view as adopted by Cernea (1997) seems rational. This is focused on minimising displacement and reconstructing the livelihoods of those whose relocation cannot be rationally avoided. This section discusses the impacts with their linkage to the policy issues, development benefits, and community members, and the prospects that paid employment has brought to the communities.

2.4.1 Differential impacts of land acquisition and marginalisation

There are several issues inherently linked to the displacement process which can be crucial for understanding the degree or magnitude of impacts. Hirsh *et al.* (2020) state that power, positionality, temporality, eligibility, and resistance are the core determinants of displacement. Temporality associated with displacement is crucial considering its impacts as the community members may be displaced within hours to several months as Hirsh *et al.* (2020, p. 9) suggest from diverse global cases. The positionality factor is linked to the elimination and compromising of place-based identity and the 'reidentification process' (Hirsh *et al.*, 2020, p. 11). Land acquisition incidents are also characterised by differentiated impacts, particularly in cases of the lower caste, tribal communities, women, and elderly people where the eligibility for compensation, power, and resistance factors can have reversible effects (Bedi, 2015; Cross, 2014; Jenkins *et al.*, 2014).

The impacts of land acquisition and displacement are dependent on the level of attachment of the communities to land for their economic, social, and cultural lives. Some communities such as the tribal communities (Banerjee-Guha, 2013), and the lower caste *Dalits* in India, have a greater spiritual connection to a particular place and to nature (Cook *et al.*, 2013; Escobar, 2006a). Displacement of those communities causes irreversible damage as the cultural, religious, and spiritual attachment to places cannot be recovered or restored (Cook *et al.*, 2013; Holden *et al.*, 2011). Rao (2018b) suggests that some communities, such as the Sherpa Clan in Nepal, have their God related to a particular place or village. Similarly, Holden *et al.* (2011) suggest that the indigenous islanders in the Philippines such as the '*Mamanwa'* have their animistic religion related to their environment and are severely impacted due to displacement. In such cases, land acquisition and displacement can bring in economic marginalization and the elimination of cultural and religious identity which can result in reduced functionings and capabilities when considered from the capabilities approach (Holden *et al.*, 2011; Rao, 2018b).

Impacts are found at different levels on the people according to their age and emotional attachment to land (Sathe, 2017). According to Sathe (2017), land in India takes the simile of

'mother', the loss of which is experienced with a strong sense of deprivation and emotional damage. It is found in India that elderly people are the most affected by land acquisition and tend to continue farming even in the reduced lands due to their lack of ability to work in the formal sector. Wang *et al.* (2019) suggest that although land acquisition is noticed to have a positive income effect on households in rural China, it affects the happiness of elderly people adversely due to their emotional attachment to land. These impacts can often be linked to low land recovery rate, reduced agricultural production for reduction of land and subsequent livelihoods failure which tends to trigger farmers' marginalisation and migration (Jaysawal and Saha, 2016; Patil and Ghosh, 2017; Ramachandraiah and Srinivasan, 2011).

2.4.2 Inadequate policy response causes impoverishment

The primary cause of impoverishment through land acquisition is argued to be rooted in policies being narrowly focused on monetary compensation which is also characterised by non-payment or a low amount (Cernea and Maldonado, 2018; Sarkar, 2007; Sathe, 2011). Compensation is a concept of providing an equivalent value for the land or property to the dispossessed or displaced people which is highly characterised by cash mode and is subject to entitlement (Terminski, 2015). Compensation is suggested to be a necessary component but insufficient to rehabilitate the displaced households in the communities (Patil and Ghosh 2017). Valuation of land depending on the registered land price, which is historically shown below the actual market price to avoid stamp duty tax in some countries is a reason why the landowners are paid a lower compensation (Atahar, 2013; Patil and Ghosh, 2017; Singh, 2012). Although some households with larger land holdings prefer monetary compensation, considering the diverse needs across households, it is suggested that a heterogenous compensation mechanism should be followed in case of compulsory land acquisition (Patil *et al.*, 2020). As monetary compensation alone is insufficient to meet the resettlement necessities of the displaced or land-acquired communities from the social, economic, and cultural aspects, resettlement only with monetary compensation is rightly regarded as 'resettlement with impoverishment' (Cernea and Maldonado, 2018,p.31).

Rehabilitation, as with resettlement, is conceptually broad meaning not compensation in monetary terms and recovery of land alone; rather, it includes recovery of all physical structures as well as social–cultural institutions and networks including those involving faiths and beliefs of the people (Patil and Ghosh, 2017). Due to the failure of monetary compensation to restore livelihoods and income sustainability, the concept of rehabilitation emerges in the resettlement process seeking consideration of the loss of physical property, occupations, social capitals, networks, and cultural and spiritual resources and restoring them sustainably to the level of pre-acquisition times, irrespective of legal entitlement and property rights (Cernea, 2003; Patil and

Ghosh, 2017). The rehabilitation concept allows for overcoming the limitations of the cash mode of compensation which is relevant in some communities that lack a cash orientation in their livelihoods, as suggested by Saxena (2020b).

Apart from the modes, the policy and implementation issues relating to rehabilitation and resettlement also affect the landowners adversely. This is because a number of developing countries do not have resettlement policies and often follow the resettlement guidelines of the international donor agencies such as the World Bank, the ADB, and the JICA that finance those projects (Atahar, 2013; Cernea and Maldonado, 2018; Zaman, 1996; Zaman and Khatun, 2017). A lack of regulatory framework and administrative support in the national context also affects the implementation of these financers' guidelines (Cernea and Maldonado, 2018). Moreover, a majority of projects implemented by a country are not financed by the donor agencies, and hence, the resettlement guidelines laid out by them are not followed in those cases (Atahar, 2013). Improper implementation of resettlement policies and difficulties in the recovery of replacement land are the core challenges in livelihood reconstruction (Jaysawal and Saha, 2016; Smyth *et al.*, 2015). The resettlement literature emphasises the reconstruction of the livelihoods of the impacted community members (Cernea, 1997; 2003; Dwivedi, 2002; Smyth and Vanclay, 2017) 'through growth-enhancing financial investments' (Cernea, 1999, p.2156). Thus, from the fairness perspective, it is plausibly pointed out that resettlement is regarded as a development activity through the sharing of project benefits with communities in order to compensate for the appreciating land value in the longer term (McDonald *et al.*, 2008; Shen, 2015; Wilmsen *et al.*, 2011).

Although the literature highlights policy inadequacy and often improper implementation of policies, most research findings are formulated without linking policy issues in the global paradigm or considering the perceptions of the people involved in the process (Cernea and Maldonado, 2018). As seen in Nuremowla (2016) in the case of Bangladesh, the inferences of policy inadequacy and improper implementation are made without linking with the view of the people involved in the policy formulation or implementation process. This also applies to other studies in the Bangladesh case undertaken by Gardner (2018) and Mahmud *et al.* (2020) where the perceptions of the implementing personnel are absent. It is, thus, important to consider if the policies include components such as social impact assessment, resettlement action plan, monetary compensation, rehabilitation, employment and social safety nets, and benefit sharing, and whether they are implemented with efficacy (Atahar, 2020; Zaman and Khatun, 2017).

To synthesise the findings of this sub-section, the literature on land acquisition and development in the Bangladesh context reveals a knowledge gap which lies within the impacts of formal employment being out of the scope of the extant studies. This is mainly because the case studies either did not focus on the impacts of development benefits or the projects highlighted in

the studies did not feature employment, or created only temporary jobs resulting in subsequent joblessness and livelihood crises (Gardner, 2018; Mahmud *et al.*, 2020; Nuremowla, 2016). Moreover, in highlighting the resettlement policy issues, studies suggest that the policies are inadequate, monetary compensation-focused, and not implemented properly. Furthermore, these studies did not include analyses of the latest enactment and lack a clear linkage with the policy dynamics that may consider the greater welfare of the affected communities in diverse contexts and, most importantly, perceptions of the implementing personnel (Atahar, 2013; 2020; Zaman and Khatun, 2017). Considering the social–geographical and policy context with respect to the latest enactment the following questions are posited: *What are the land acquisition and resettlement policy considerations in Bangladesh for meeting the resettlement needs of affected members in diverse communities beyond monetary compensation? How do policies relate to the geographical, social, and livelihood arrangements of the communities in which land acquisition and the SEZs are implemented?* It is also expected that the SEZs will bring different impacts on the communities compared to other infrastructure projects as they feature permanent employment with spill-over effects which seem to increase household income, capabilities, and entitlements, as suggested in the literature (Alkon, 2018; Yang *et al.*, 2019).

2.4.3 Development projects fail to meet expectations

National governments take the development projects for convincingly approaching the communities highlighting their assumed good to the locality where they are implemented (Potter, 2020). Policy response through compensation, rehabilitation or resettlement support cannot reverse some damages that often occur by compulsory land acquisition (Cook *et al.*, 2013). Monetary substitutes for land, as Fatimah and Hutami (2020) suggest, may not be used for income-generating purposes and can be used in purchasing luxury products. Therefore, the lasting welfare impacts of implemented projects can be sought through the transformational impacts they can have on the communities. However, Levien (2013) suggests that the projects, e.g., the SEZs, often fail to meet their promised benefits.

The reason for the development projects failing to transform communities is attributed to several factors in the literature. Although the land is acquired with the promise to create diverse opportunities for the communities, failing to operationalise the SEZs causes frustration among community members (Cowaloosur, 2014). Despite rural livelihoods being damaged by land acquisition for development projects, the jobs in the formal sector are mostly inaccessible to the community members (Banerjee-Guha, 2013; Brown, 2019; Cook *et al.*, 2013; Cu *et al.*, 2020; Sims, 2017). As a result, they often engage in the 'temporary, insecure, and low paying' jobs 'mostly as security guards, gardeners, janitors and drivers' (Levien, 2012, p.949). On the one hand, reduced farmland, grazing lands and agricultural employment restrict livelihoods; on the other hand, lack

of access to the benefit of the SEZs fails to integrate the lives of the lower caste people (Levien, 2017, p.1126). Drawing evidence from the Lao SEZs, Sims (2017) suggests that damage to livelihoods in the highlands and failing to integrate into the formal sector resulted in a survival crisis in the communities which has forced many community members to choose precarious forms of labour such as prostitution. It is also suggested that some of the zones do not use the acquired land for development in the true sense, which the land-losing individuals could benefit from (Parwez and Sen, 2016). Often, zones lack connection with the domestic economy and consequently, the local people in the post-resettlement time are under poor conditions (Laungaramsri and Sengchanh, 2019). A striking finding suggests that the failure to integrate the impacted people into waged employment led to 're-peasantisation' in those communities (Laungaramsri and Sengchanh, 2019) which is a concerning portrayal of a shattered dream.

Not only do projects like the SEZs fail to provide employment to the community members, but they also introduce other social crises affecting the lives of the community members adversely. Ruthless coercion in dispossessing the *Dalit* people in India and breach of laws by the state agencies violating human rights cause social disruptions and even casualties (Nuremowla, 2016; Ramachandraiah and Srinivasan, 2011). Industrialisation and zone-based development may erode the social capitals and increased migrant–local tensions may cause social instability (Brown, 2019; Intarat, 2018; Laungaramsri and Sengchanh, 2019; Levien, 2015; Sims, 2017). Besides, gambling, violence, organised crimes, unlawful detention and demolition of religious centres are reported to have done severe social–cultural damage of the community members in the Lao SEZs, triggering financial loss to the casinos (Sims, 2017).

It is worth noting that the literature from the livelihoods perspective suggests contradictory evidence and often mixed impacts of agricultural land acquisition for industrialisation and urbanisation projects within communities which, according to Miles (2017), constitutes an evidence gap. Although paid employment has resulted in increased income, land acquisition often suggests negative impacts on other capitals such as natural and social capitals (Nguyen and Kim, 2020; Pham Thi *et al.*, 2019; Quansah *et al.*, 2020; Xiao *et al.*, 2020; Yang *et al.*, 2019). The findings from Ghana or Vietnam (Nguyen and Kim, 2020; Pham Thi *et al.*, 2019; Quansah *et al.*, 2020), however, do not suit in many other demographic and socio-economic contexts such as the South Asia and Bangladesh.

2.4.4 The changing dynamics of rural livelihoods and the need for paid employment

With diverse impacts of land acquisition, inadequate policy response for resettlement and the failure of the SEZs to bring expected development for communities, it should also be considered that the reliance on a single source, off-farm based earnings is unable to provide for

the subsistence necessities of all the members adequately (Ellis, 2000). Drawing evidence from India, Pingali *et al.* (2019) suggest that, despite the rural output has increased by seven times in a decade, the share of agriculture in rural income has decreased from 72% to 39%. The characteristic of the *'lagging states'* is high labour engagement in the low-productive agriculture sector as, in India 'more than 60% of the rural workforce continues to be employed in agriculture-based livelihoods, despite the share of agriculture output being around 17%' (Pingali *et al.*, 2019, p.50). It is also suggested that a large number of households in rural areas already rely on some non-farm source for their livelihoods (Chandrasekhar and Mehrotra, 2016).

The shrinking trend of natural resources in rural communities together with the underdeveloped off-farm sector aggravates the poverty situation. Adams *et al.* (2018) suggest that the rural social–ecological system alone cannot support the livelihood needs of the whole community. The failure of the non-farm sector to emerge with waged employment opportunities is suggested to be the main reason behind the unchanged poverty situations in the communities in rural Bangladesh (Adams *et al.*, 2018). Poverty reduction rates are found to be higher in households engaged in the part-time farming and off-farm sectors in Bangladesh which also indicates a necessity for livelihood diversification (Salam, 2020). Further to these, the unavailability of land on easier and more profitable terms, increase in agricultural production costs and low profitability have decreased the popularity of agriculture in some rural communities in Bangladesh (Gardner, 2018). As a consequence, as Gardner (2018) suggests, the popularity of formal sector employment is found to be on the rise.

Similarly, an off-farm sector not only contributes to livelihood diversification but also assists in overcoming problems arising from unequal resource access. From the livelihoods diversification perspective, Ellis (2000) plausibly points out that non-farm rural employment is the best option to diversify livelihoods in the rural context. The necessity is also reported in recent studies such as that of Ayana *et al.* (2021), identifying the determinants of livelihood diversification, who assert that emphasis should be given to diversifying rural livelihoods moving beyond the natural resource basis. Pingali *et al.* (2019) suggest that non-farm employment does not alone eliminate the unequal access to land that lies in the rural areas, it can also help to bring the casual workers of the informal sector such as women to the formal sector to remove the overall inequality prevailing in the communities. However, although a non-farm sector brings employment opportunities, it will not automatically provide everyone with equal access to employment which may also be determined by specific skills and other social norms, as reported in Heintz *et al.* (2017) and Andrew (2009).

It is also posited that rural communities with access to paid employment are likely to recover faster from resource loss caused by land acquisition. Paul and Sarma (2019) suggest that the affected and unaffected households had no livelihood difference in the long term as found

after three decades in India. From the livelihoods perspective in the Vietnam context, Nguyen and Kim (2020) and Cu *et al.* (2020) suggest that land acquisition does not negatively impact the communities, and with government compensation support, the impacted people adapted quickly to the changed situation and livelihoods are stabilised soon after their land loss. However, a key issue of these studies is that they were carried out in the peri-urban context where consequences of land loss are less severely felt due to the availability of alternative sources of income. That the farmlands are a community resource and not a household property in the context of Vietnam should also be taken into consideration. The livelihood dynamics that the studies suggest were already characterized by a gradual transition which is why the people could adapt to the changes quickly.

In line with this changing dynamic of rural livelihoods, Xiao *et al.* (2020) examine the Chinese context and suggest that the reduction in natural resources is not essentially linked to adverse impacts on the livelihoods and well-being in the land-acquired communities. It is suggested that, although natural capital has decreased all other capitals are found to have increased in the land-acquired households who accepted the resettlement substitutions. These findings, however, can be highly contextual and may not fit in situations as Quansah *et al.* (2020) suggest that land acquisition has negatively affected the livelihoods of the smallholder farmers in the rural communities in Ghana. The community members with a strong dependence on traditionally gained skills for livelihoods based on natural resources are not considered in the compensation plans due to entitlement issues which may have negative impacts.

2.4.5 Emancipatory prospects of SEZs with paid employment and other opportunities

A striking trend of fantasising about paid employment for better living provides a linkage to the changing dynamics of rural livelihoods which supports the 'urban bias' rather than the 'agrarian doctrines' of development as discussed in Cowen and Shenton (2008). The plurality of functions of paid employment is often identified as an expectation leading to organised protests for being employed in the formal sector as described by Gardner (2018), a preference for off-farm paid employment over farming as highlighted by Harvey (2003), and arriving with emancipatory prospects for many in the communities (Cross, 2014; Dutta, 2019; Pham Thi *et al.*, 2019). Although ABD can be seen as damaging, Harvey's observation regarding people's necessities and preferences becomes a crucial point of consideration in this respect.

> The choice of sticking with industrial labour or returning to rural impoverishment, many within the new proletariat seem to express a strong preference for the former. In other instances, sufficient class power has been achieved to make real

> material gains in living standards and to achieve a standard of life far superior to the degraded circumstances of a previous rural existence (2003, p. 164).

Similarly, Cross (2014, p.3) quoting the former chief minister of West Bengal, India, Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, states that what was established "to remove the economic backwardness" and prevent the communities "from remaining steeped in poverty" also emerged as the embodiment of hope and immense value to the communities.

> The dreamed-of or anticipated future has been central to […] discourses of capitalist modernity. The dream that industrial modernity can bring about an end of scarcity, an abundance of goods, permanent employment, prosperity and the fulfilment of personal happiness has played a vital role in political scripts and languages, underpinning twentieth-century blueprints for living the good life (Cross, 2014, p.8).

The SEZs emerging with iconic significance to the local communities formed an "economy of anticipation" or a state of "imagining and living towards the future" (Cross, 2014, p.5). In an economy of anticipation, the lower caste *Dalits* imagine caste equality through paid employment which, to them, are places for "liberatory potentials" (Cross, 2014, p.91). The age-old social hierarchy prevailing in the societies has restricted the lower castes where the young people discovered that SEZs provided for better lives, eliminated subjugation, and ensured emancipation.

Moreover, paid employment can have significant implications for landless people and those who face land alienation for diverse reasons as stated in Adnan (2016). Even with land and natural resources available in the communities, there is a presence of unequal access to those (Gardner and Gerharz, 2016). These can be due to diverse reasons e.g., the exclusion of some tribal people and specific social groups by the law as found in Bangladesh (Adnan, 2016; 2013). Access to land can also be restrained, facilitated and determined by formal or informal power (Feldman and Geisler, 2012). This can be a vital reason, as is found in Bangladesh, why even the landless communities mobilise for paid employment which was promised to them at the time of land acquisition (Gardner, 2018). However, neither Gardner (2018), Nuremowla (2016), nor Mahmud *et al.* (2020) in their studies in Bangladesh could examine the impacts of paid employment as the projects highlighted in the studies did not feature permanent employment.

Through the capabilities approach, the literature takes a narrow consideration of the impacts of land acquisition that not only causes displacement and dispossession but also brings infrastructural development. In her seminal works through the lens of the capability approach, Rao (2018a; b; 2019) identifies the functionings of land to the owners and this is seen in the

context of land acquisition. It is identified that there are diverse functionings of land to the owners and some of these are rooted within specific community contexts. The inadequacy and flawed considerations of compensation are also highlighted in her works which provide alternative approaches to compensation models replacing or reconstructing the valuable functionings of land ownership. However, the capabilities approach is understudied by Rao (2018a; b; 2019) as she does not consider the functionings that the implemented development projects may offer to the community members. In the agrarian context, such as in Bangladesh, land is a principal source of livelihoods for most rural people, but what this means to almost half of the rural people without functional land as suggested by Mahmud *et al.* (2020) in terms of enhancing their capabilities and what implemented development projects mean to them are crucial questions. Besides, as discussed earlier, it is needed for households in rural communities to engage in off-farm activities to meet their survival necessities (Ellis, 2000; Pingali *et al.*, 2019). Therefore, the arrival of the SEZs may provide completely different means to the rural people, irrespective of landownership (Cross, 2014) and, more importantly, to the landless people which needs to be examined from a wider perspective. In this regard, the following crucial questions arise: *How are diverse forms of displacement and dispossession with the resettlement measures experienced by community members in the SEZs*? *How are the capabilities of the land-losing community members impacted by the change of resources through displacement and infrastructural development*? *How do the opportunities of the SEZs impact the capabilities of members without facing land loss in rural communities?*

2.5 Gender, development and displacement

Gender plays a significant role in the field of development and displacement as land acquisition, resettlement and development opportunities have different meanings to women from men in many considerations (Agarwal, 1995; Nussbaum, 2000). Mehta (2009) suggests that in the case of land acquisition and development, a 'double blind' social perspective—namely, gendered and exclusionary property rights and resettlement considerations with discriminatory low wages—brings in deprivation for women. Drawing evidence from diverse global cases Levien (2017) suggests that although some women had better access to education after relocation, gender-based discriminatory property rights, reduction in agricultural employment, and reduced farming affect women most severely. Smyth and Vanclay (2018, p.569) suggest that land acquisition and "the breakdown of social networks and reduced access to natural resources" affect women the worst. This is also supported by empirical evidence from Bangladesh, India, and other global cases (Levien, 2017; Nuremowla, 2016).

Adopting the analytical perspective of the capabilities approach Rao (2019) suggests that holding land has positive well-being effects on women safeguarding them from domestic

violence, abuse and discrimination. Therefore, the acquisition of land by governments for implementing infrastructure projects, in Rao's (2019) view deprives women of their fundamental functionings. The analysis of Rao (2019) is drawn from a narrower perspective as functionings offered by land only to the landowners are explored. Land can provide significant functionings to rural women without access to land and possessing land on a de facto basis as argued by Agarwal (1995), who are excluded from Rao's analysis. Contextual issues such as low access of women to operational land including through the rights and claims of inheritance (Agarwal, 1995; Mansoor, 1999; Nazneen, 2017; Sultana, 2010), societal expectations, restrictive gender roles, geographical barriers, and low participation in paid work (Akhter *et al.*, 2017; Heintz *et al.*, 2017; Kabeer, 2011; Kabeer *et al.*, 2013) should also be considered while assessing the impacts of land acquisition.

Considering women's deprivation from diverse aspects in rural communities, it is also necessary to identify how their functionings are enhanced by the projects implemented on the acquired lands. Although the literature identified mixed livelihood impacts of land diversion, mostly in negative terms, it is suggested that the rural and marginalised women in India and Vietnam had better social status and dignity working in the SEZs (Dutta, 2019; Pham Thi et al., 2019). Kabeer (2020, p.11), however, suggests that, with economic growth in India, participation of rural women in the labour force has decreased. Drawing evidence from Bangladesh Gardner (2018) suggests that land acquisition and the establishment of development projects have demolished the old hierarchical social system. The typical 'patron client' relationship between the rural rich and the poor has eroded and a new form of social capital has emerged among the poor community members (Gardner, 2018). Paid work and opportunities can have huge implications for women who are deprived of their capabilities and choices due to adaptive preference, social subjugation, and low position in the social hierarchy, as suggested by Nussbaum (2000):

> Women in much of the world lose out by being women. Their human powers of choice and sociability are frequently thwarted by societies in which they must live as the adjuncts and servants of the ends of others, and in which their sociability is deformed by fear and hierarchy (Nussbaum, 2000, p.298).

Andrew (2009), in the context of the UK, suggests that women have low representation in some socially perceived male jobs such as construction engineering. This also has huge implications as availability and access to waged work can be equally important for the well-being of women.

With disproportionate impacts of land acquisition, women in Bangladesh have low access to land and property as stressed by Sultana (2010) and Khan *et al.* (2016). The social–geographical factors, including patriarchal norms and societal expectations, as Heintz *et al.* (2017) suggest, result in a low participation of women in the paid sector which rather aggravates the situations of

women in society. Considering low and de facto access to land (Agarwal, 1995) the emergence of paid employment within the communities may induce aspirations among women as seen in the case of the *Dalits* in the Indian SEZs in Cross (2014). From the perspective of the capabilities approach, Naz and Bögenhold (2018) show that home-based paid work enhances the well-being of rural women in Pakistan. It is, thus, necessary that the impacts reported by Rao (2019) are examined from a combined and broader perspective for women viewing how those affect capabilities both from the contexts of land acquisition as well as infrastructure development. In the interplay of low-level female participation in paid work due to the geographical and social–cultural barriers (Heintz *et al.*, 2017; Kabeer *et al.*, 2011) and the need for female members to engage in paid work and their associated benefits in the personal and social contexts (Kabeer *et al.*, 2013), the following questions arise: *How do the SEZs generate aspirations for women's employment and other economic activities? How does integration into these opportunities impact the capabilities of women? How does women's participation in the economic domain contribute to social development?*

2.6 Conceptualizing land acquisition, SEZs and rural well-being through the analytical lens of the capabilities approach

Generally, human well-being is defined or measured in two broad conceptual approaches, namely subjective well-being and objective well-being (Binder, 2013; Western and Tomaszewski, 2016). The subjective approach to well-being, as the work of Kahneman, Diener and Schwartz (1999) states, is focused on life satisfaction (cognitive evaluation) and happiness or unhappiness (emotional state) (Diener *et al.*, 2002; Western and Tomaszewski, 2016). Sen's view of well-being is neither happiness-centric nor subjective as capabilities and functionings are objective in nature (Hasan, 2017). The subjective account of well-being is argued to have its weaknesses as it is criticised for being prone to hedonic adaptation (Binder, 2013) and person-specific (Griffin, 1988). Sen (1986) also finds the utilitarian happiness or satisfaction approach to well-being measurement seriously wrong.

> Consider a very deprived person who is poor, exploited, overworked, and ill, but who has been made satisfied with his lot by social conditioning (through, say, religion, or political propaganda, or cultural pressure). Can we possibly believe that he is doing well just because he is happy and satisfied? (1986, p. 12).

The capability approach (Sen, 2008) or capabilities approach (Nussbaum, 2003) or 'capabilitarianism' is an approach that can be used in a multidisciplinary way and with different purposes to create diverse capability theories (Nussbaum, 2011; Robeyns, 2016). The capability

approach considers that the achieved living of a person is the combination of functionings (valuable doings and beings) and capabilities which together constitute "the quality of life" (Alkire, 2002; Robeyns, 2011; Sen, 2000; 2008). This is understood as how "people value their ability to do certain things and to achieve certain types of beings (such as being well nourished, being free from avoidable morbidity, being able to move about as desired, and so on" (Sen, 1988, p.16). The capability of a person is understood as the ability to choose between the alternative sets of functionings (Sen, 2008). This exemplifies the freedom of choice of a person over alternative forms or means of living. The central idea of functionings and capabilities is that a person's freedom of choice for beings and doings is more important than what is held or possessed by them (Sen, 1986; 2008).

> In this view, individual claims are to be assessed not only by the incomes, resources or primary goods the persons respectively have, nor only with reference to the utilities they enjoy, but in terms of the freedoms they actually have to choose between different ways of living they can have reason to value (Sen, 2000, p.74).

Therefore, the standard of living or well-being, according to Sen, is not just related to the "opulence, commodities, or utilities" that a person enjoys; rather, it is a matter of functionings and capabilities of that person in choosing his beings and doings (1986, p.23). Achieved functionings are also argued not to be dependent alone on commodities owned by a person; rather they are equally dependent on the availability of public goods such as health services, medical services, and educational services and the possibility to use them freely (Sen, 1988). It is also argued that the "objects of value" in a person's well-being may be various but these should be seen from the individual's own perception of personal welfare (Sen, 2008). For Sen (2008), capabilities are well-being freedoms while functionings are the well-being achievements that individuals value for themselves.

Conceptualising land acquisition and rural development through the establishment of the SEZs through the Capabilities Approach (Sen, 1985; 1986; 1999; 2008) provides a wider view of the diverse impacts of both land and resource reduction and the opportunities brought about by the SEZs in rural communities. Not only does this allow us to look into the changes in the means, but also allows us to examine how the policies and social–geographical and personal conversion factors (Robeyns, 2016) operate to influence the achievements. This also corresponds to the theories of rural development from the livelihoods and livelihoods diversification perspectives (Ellis, 2000; Woodhill *et al.*, 2022). In the depleting natural resources in rural communities (Adams *et al.*, 2018) land acquisition puts pressure on livelihoods causing damage to natural and physical

resources (Parwez and Sen, 2016). The SEZs also can bring numerous benefits to resource-scarce rural communities providing choices to individuals (Cross, 2014). There are many possibilities of the capabilities approach (Robeyns, 2016; 2017) from where the capabilities, such as the ability to achieve certain functionings, can be examined. Rao (2019) examines the fundamental functionings of land from the land acquisition (reduction in resources) perspective only. Opportunities brought about by the development projects through land acquisition can create capabilities and can help achieve ample functionings which leaves scopes for expanding the fundamental functionings of Rao from a wider perspective. Therefore, the capabilities approach needs to be reconceptualised to capture the capabilities of the impacted individuals for land acquisition as well as development in the SEZs in rural communities.

In his representation, Robeyns (2005a) identifies the key theoretical and conceptual aspects of the capabilities approach that are constructed on means to achieve (capability inputs) and freedom to achieve which, together, lead to achievement as capabilities or functionings. Robeyns' "cartwheel view of the capability approach" stresses the necessity of a purpose and aggregation of the functionings and capabilities in the core elements of the capability approach (2016, p.404). The components of the capabilities approach, such as means or goods and services, and conversion factors, such as social–geographical factors that mediate the means for achievement in the land acquisition and development context, can be related to the resettlement necessities outlined in Cernea (1997) for ensuring the welfare of the impacted. It is also considered that the circumstances in which people make their choice from the available opportunities are "enabling and just" (Robeyns, 2005a; 2016), which relates to compensation and resettlement. The means or the goods and services are used as capability inputs for achievement which, in the land acquisition context, is related to monetary compensation and other economic and social–cultural aspects of resettlement stressed in the resettlement framework (Cernea, 1997).

Figure 2.1 illustrates the conceptual framework of this study which considers means (goods and services), freedom (ability to choose alternative means), and end as achievements. The creation of the SEZs occurs in the policy decisions prior to land acquisition. The government authorities or implementing bodies acquire land for the SEZs that causes a change in the means or capability inputs (land, farming, fishing, houses, physical infrastructure, etc.) through displacement and dispossession. That may cause damage to the means, thereby affecting the displaced and dispossessed individuals. Land acquisition involves policy interventions such as compensation, resettlement, and infrastructural development with employment opportunities that can revise means or capability inputs. Individuals also negotiate the personal, social and environmental conversion factors by which their available capability sets or the opportunities of achievable functionings are formed. Individuals make choices from their available capability set or

achievable functionings to achieve their capabilities and/or valuable functionings relating to their well-being.

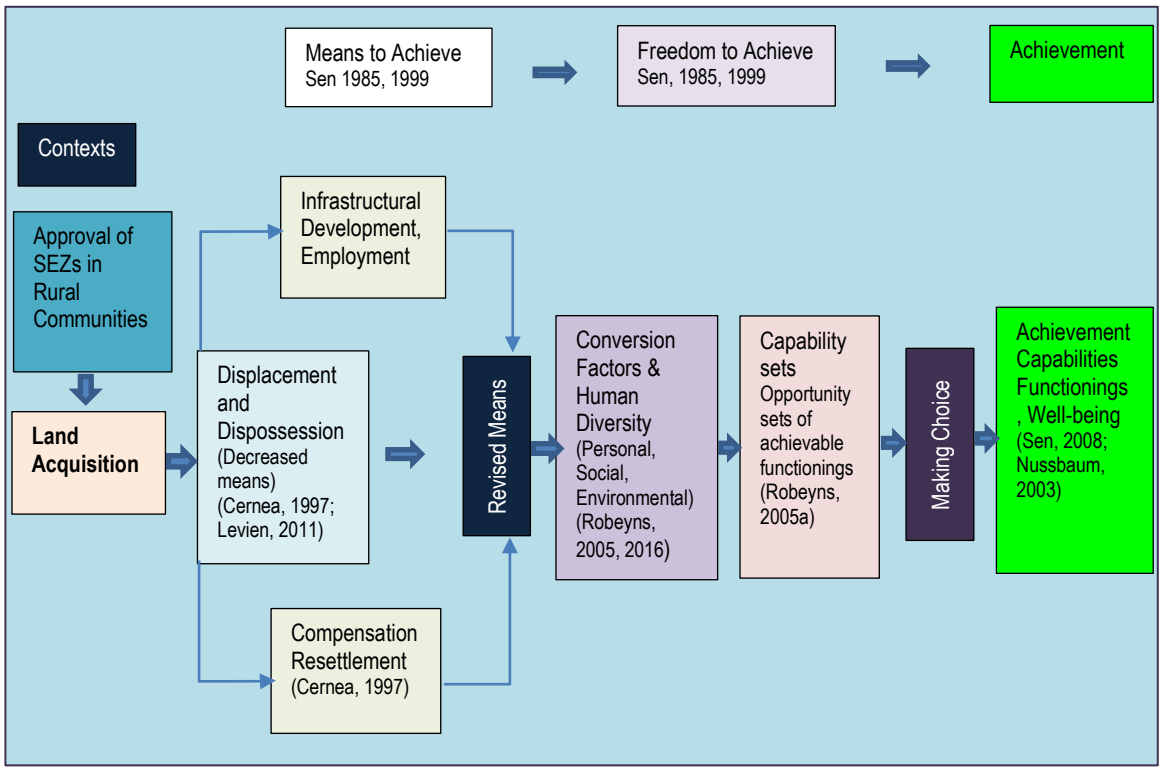

Figure 2.1:

The Capabilities Approach for Land Acquisition and Development Source: Own conceptualisation based on Cernea (1997), (Nussbaum, 2003), Robeyns (2005a), and Sen (1985, 1999, 2008).

The SEZs in Rural Communities: As seen in the literature above, like elsewhere in the globe, the creation of the SEZs in Bangladesh is based on political decision-making and regulatory frameworks. For example, the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) Act 2010 is the relevant policy document to create a body that was responsible for establishing as many SEZs as necessary in Bangladesh. Initially, the implementation of 100 SEZs in rural areas is taking place which inherently links the SEZs to the rural communities across the country.

In this study, a community is understood in the territorial base, like a neighbourhood, where people are 'affected by common physical, social and economic environment' (Spicker, 2019,p.80) which is defined in sub-section 2.2 of the current chapter. Considering land acquisition and establishment of SEZs, 'community', in this study is understood as a 'development community' meaning the people within a geographical area who are impacted by land acquisition and the establishment of SEZs (Saxena, 2020a) in the rural context. In this study, the community includes both the land-losing members as well as members without land loss including those who were previously landless and are residents being impacted by land loss or development happening in the SEZs.

Land acquisition: As seen in the literature, land acquisition occurs in two ways— through a direct purchase method where land can be purchased directly from the owners, and through compulsory land acquisition applying law supported by an eminent domain of the state (Singh, 2018). The direct purchase order can also include a participatory process with community members opening the scope for negotiation with the landowners over the land purchase. Land acquisition by law is a compulsory method of land acquisition that can happen through consultation with the community members/landowners or without consultation. However, when the notification of land acquisition is issued, landowners and residents in the communities have to leave the land compulsorily.

Dispossession and displacement causing reduction in means and freedom: Land acquisition leads to dispossession and displacement of community members (Stanley, 2004), which can cause severe damage to the means and freedom of the community members. Terminski (2012) suggests that about 15 million people are displaced globally through major development projects every year. Dispossession or displacement are often interchangeably used but there are important differences between these concepts. Dispossession is associated with original or legal possession which excludes possessing the land without any legal ownership— which is relevant in the context of SEZs in Bangladesh. Displacement includes both in situ and ex situ displacement (Gardner and Gerharz, 2016). Jaysawal and Saha (2016) extend displacement to also include economic displacement of the evictees.

Dispossession and displacement are interrelated with the impoverishment of the community members caused by landlessness, homelessness, and loss of income (Cernea, 1997) which is the reduction of means to achieve the capabilities. As means are the primary goods or goods and services (e.g., land, farming, fishing, monetary compensation, paid employment, business, etc.), these are essential for the individuals to attain their ends or achievements in the displacement and dispossession contexts. Impoverishment, according to Sen (1999), is capability deprivation which is understood as limiting the means and abilities or freedom to achieve (instead of normative notions of poverty as lowness of income). Dispossession and displacement without proper resettlement measures can, thus, lay out the conditions for capability deprivation of the individuals.

With a high density of population and the majority of people depending on land for living in rural communities, Bangladesh experiences land dispossession caused by multiple forces (Feldman and Geisler, 2012). As a consequence of diversified ways of conversion of agricultural lands, non-agricultural use of land increased from 1.18 million hectares in 1976 to 2.4 million hectares in 2010 which denotes rapidly increasing pressure on agricultural lands (Hossain, 2015). Studies suggest that half of the country's current 57.4% cultivable land will be lost in the next 25 years (Gardner, 2018; Hossain, 2015). High demand for land has contributed to a 600% rise in land

prices between 1990 and 2010 and, consequently, land has not remained a sole means of living, but has increasingly become a symbol of social prestige and power (Gardner, 2018; Nuremowla, 2016). In the context of this decreasing trend, land acquisition creates grounds for capability deprivation of the present 48% functional landless including those who are going to lose land and constitute the new landless group with more dispossessions happening in the future (Gardner, 2018; Mahmud *et al.*, 2020; Zaman and Khatun, 2017).

Policies for compensation and resettlement as recovery measures: Sen (1999) argues that enhancing real freedom is both the 'primary end' as well as the 'principal means' of development. It is also suggested that inadequate income lays strong grounds for an impoverished life (Sen, 1999; Zheng *et al.*, 2008). The key idea of capability deprivation, however, lies in the conception that poverty should not be viewed as lowness of income alone; rather, the 'impoverished life' is associated with the deprivation of freedom that significantly restricts an individual's ability to undertake activities and make important choices (Zheng *et al.*, 2008). Expanding the capabilities for enjoying valuable beings and doings is argued to be the goal of both development and poverty reduction. Access to positive resources and the ability to make choices are crucial for the enhancement of capabilities (Alkire, 2002). Three specific actions, according to Alkire, can redress human deprivation— "(1) to provide satisfiers of vital needs (in the absence of which life is blighted), (2) to expand vital capabilities, and (3) to increase people's capabilities to meet their vital needs" (2017, p.249).

Land acquisition by law involves the provision of compensation and resettlement of those who are displaced or dispossessed. There are diverse modes of compensation and resettlement. Compensation is defined by law as monetary compensation. However, resettlement has considerations not only for monetary aspects but for the reconstruction of any house or structure damaged by land acquisition, rebuilding the social–cultural institutions damaged, and restoring the damages to the same level as those were in the pre-acquisition time. The non-monetary aspects of resettlement, thus, can be the establishment of networks, and the reconstruction of social places and structures such as mosques, temples, and buildings of cultural importance that are part of the social and personal lives of the individuals. Scott *et al.* (2018) suggests that these cultural elements can enhance capabilities and rural well-being. Resettlement also includes providing any livelihood assistance and skill development training to the affected individuals for pursuing economic activities or providing employment for recovery of income, thus creating capabilities. The impoverishment risks or conditions for capability deprivation by displacement or dispossession are suggested to be reversed by the resettlement measures including employment, social safety nets, and benefit sharing (Atahar, 2020; Cernea, 1997; 2003).

Infrastructural development creates opportunities for enhanced means and freedom: Acquisition of land is legally 'justified' by economic and infrastructural development including the

construction of factories, business spaces and physical structures (Cross, 2014) both inside and outside the SEZs (e.g., roads and information and communication infrastructure). Industrialisation happening and businesses growing inside the SEZs bring in ample opportunities for employment for the community members. Sen cited in Moss (2013, p.65) suggests that "governments, not just individual actors, have [a role] in creating capabilities". Infrastructural development can also bring in many opportunities outside the SEZs in addition to employment opportunities. This includes the growth of business outside the SEZs induced by improved roads, electricity and business environment. This can increase the means and opportunities creating capabilities of the community members which is primarily reduced by land acquisition or as Adams *et al.* (2018) argue, are absent in the rural communities. This can also have an impact on the capabilities of those who previously did not own land or who are not directly affected by land acquisition but gain the opportunity to be employed or engaged in other occupations created or induced by the SEZs.

Policy initiatives such as the establishment of SEZs in the rural communities in Bangladesh can be of huge value from the perspective of rural well-being as they are expected to bring diverse opportunities to the community members. The fact that poverty rates of 26.4% in the rural areas are higher than 18.9% in the urban areas in Bangladesh and that the poverty reduction rates are highest— 43.3% in households engaged in part-time farming and 32.9% in off-farm activities—suggests the necessity of a strong off-farm sector through developed infrastructure (Salam, 2020). However, the decreasing natural resources failing to meet the livelihood needs together with the absence of off-farm employment resulted in aggravated poverty conditions in the country (Adams *et al.*, 2018). It is also suggested that demand for off-farm paid employment in the land-acquired communities is on the rise which is evidence of the transition of livelihoods (Gardner, 2018). It is, thus, suggestive that the SEZs with their diverse benefits such as off-farm paid employment can top up and diversify rural livelihoods (Woodhill *et al.*, 2022) and create capabilities for the rural community members irrespective of their status of ownership of land. In Sen's view of well-being, the 'objects of value' is determined by a person's own perception of personal welfare (Sen, 2008) and personal freedom of choice takes position over opulence or wealth. The availability of large-scale permanent employment in the SEZs established on the acquired lands leaves ample scope for knowing how the changes in choice and capabilities of the land-losing, landed and landless people occur and how they perceive these changes.

Revised means: Compensation and resettlement substitutes and the development opportunities such as employment opportunities and other opportunities arising revise the means of the community members. This can change any or all of the capability inputs (land, farming, house, road, and other infrastructures), revising those further from the reduction or damages that happened after the land acquisition.

Conversion factors and human diversity: The functionings and capabilities of a person are dependent on the internal and external factors defined as 'human diversity' and 'conversion factors' (Crocker and Robeyns, 2009) or "conversion functions [meaning] the degree to which a person can transform a resource into a functioning" (Robeyns, 2016, p.406). The conversion factors consider that there are some specific characteristics in goods, commodities, and services that make them attractive to people as they can contribute to functionings (Robeyns, 2005a). Conversion factors by Crocker and Robeyns (2009) are grouped into three, namely, (i) personal conversion factors— i.e., physical condition, sex, skills, and intelligence, etc.; (ii) social conversion factors— i.e., public policy, social norms, social constructs e.g., class, gender, race and caste; and (iii) environmental conversion factors— i.e., geographical locations, climate, pollution, and the like. Conversion factors are related to human diversity, the source of which can be understood as the difference in the level of conversion factors (Robeyns, 2005a; Crocker and Robeyns, 2009; Robeyns, 2016). The decrease in the means (e.g., land, house, farming, and other occupations) or opportunities and addition in means through resettlement and infrastructural development (e.g., opportunities for off-farm paid employment, self-employment through small businesses and enterprises) are mediated by the conversion factors. Public policies such as resettlement considerations or employment policies, as conversion factors, can include or exclude individuals from means (recovery of land or getting employed for an income). Social conversion factors such as norms and gender roles can allow or prohibit individuals such as women from engaging in outdoor work. Similarly, geographical, and personal conversion factors such as distance of community from work and age or skills can facilitate or restrict access to means. These factors convert the means enabling or restricting access to certain types of activities such as farming, fishing, paid work, or other activities.

Infrastructure, education, and skills are crucial for pursuing a living in Bangladesh which are often related to policies (Rahman and Akter, 2014). Rahman and Akter (2014) also suggest that female-headed households fail to engage in any activities to earn a living. Recognising policy as a social conversion factor and human diversity aspects (differences in the level of education, skills) are helpful for understanding a true account of well-being. This conceptualisation will enable us to look into the compensation framework that is in practice in land acquisition for development projects and would offer valuable insights into formulating an inclusive, comprehensive, and fairer compensation policy to enhance capabilities. The compensation framework currently has a strong consideration based on entitlements which needs to broaden to the actual needs of the community members (Zaman and Khatun, 2017), and the capabilities approach can provide a basis for attempting to replace capabilities and functionings rather than the equivalent value.

Capability sets or available opportunity sets for achievable functionings: According to Sen, "the freedom to lead different types of life is reflected in the person's capability set" (Sen, 2008, p.273). Based on land ownership, the status of receiving compensation money, and other opportunities available to individuals, community members have different capability sets or alternative opportunity sets for their achievable functionings. For example, the compensation money received by a person can be used for buying land, opening a shop or donating to the community mosque or temple. Each of these has separate functioning and the individuals choose the functionings they have reason to value.

Making choice: Individuals make choices based on their aspirations and reasoning to achieve their valuable functionings. On the one hand, land acquisition may reduce the choices of individuals. To many, the compensation received for the land can provide a preferred means and create capabilities, thus enhancing the ability to make choice. On the other hand, the opportunities brought in by the SEZs can create more opportunity to achieve the desired functioning thus enhancing the ability to make the most valuable choice.

Achievements: The achievements can be capabilities or functionings which have their specific significance (Fleurbaey, 2006). Sen does not suggest a specific set of basic capabilities and keeps the capabilities approach intentionally broad and, consequently, "relevant to a wide variety of circumstances" (Alkire, 2005, p.119). Nussbaum (2003; 2011) endorses a list of 10 specific central human capabilities which can be useful to assess empirically. Nussbaum's central human capabilities are of similar inspiration to Abraham Maslow's (1943) theory of human motivation which emphasises: "(i) creation of independent categorization of multiple human motivations or needs; and (ii) the hierarchy in which these motivations or needs are prioritized" (Rao, 2019, p.71). The five human needs proposed by Maslow are physiological needs, safety needs, love needs, esteem needs, and self-actualisation needs (Maslow, 1943). Similarly, although from a different perspective, central human capabilities suggested by Nussbaum (2003, p.41–42) are: 1. Life (e.g., "being able to live to the end of a human life of normal length"; 2. bodily health (e.g., "being able to have good health"); 3. bodily integrity; 4. senses, imagination and thought; 5. emotion; 6. practical reason; 7. affiliation; 8. other species; 9. play; and 10. control over one's environment (Nussbaum, 2003; 2011). Despite some capability scholars such as Robeyns (2016) finding Nussbaum's version of the capabilities approach rather limiting, this can be helpful when working with diverse contexts as this allows us focus on or adhere to human needs. Scott *et al.* (2018) links Nussbaum's (2003) list of capabilities from the cultural values perspectives to conceptualize rural development and well-being.

In the process of measuring well-being in public policy, Alkire (2016) suggests that functionings and capabilities should be considered. Nussbaum (2003) defines her Central Human Capabilities as being able to achieve each capability as an end which combines being and doing

with freedom. Combining basic needs with individual capabilities can be useful for ensuring greater human achievements (Alkire, 2017). While capabilities and functionings can be multiple, Rao (2019) plausibly combines capabilities with the human needs of Maslow (1943) to determine the functionings of land for the land-losing individuals. In this study, achievements are defined as the core capabilities which are derived from the central human capabilities aligning with basic human needs which help conceptualise and understand three aspects of well-being of individuals—namely, economic well-being, social–affective well-being, and personal (physio-psychological) well-being—as determined by Naz and Bögenhold (2018).

Table 2.2 illustrates a synthesis of the basic human needs (Maslow, 1943), central human capabilities (Nussbaum, 2003), Fundamental Functionings (Rao, 2019), and aspects of well-being identified by Naz and Bögenhold (2018) to derive the core capabilities. The well-being aspects outlined in Naz and Bögenhold (2018) are also congruous with the economic and social–cultural aspects of resettlement rebuilding which are to be considered in the policies (Cernea and Maldonado, 2018). However, unlike Rao (2019) who identified fundamental functioning for land losing individuals only, this study does not only look at the land-losing individuals or the land-losing context. Rather, this study examines the core capabilities of the land-losing individuals, individuals without land loss, or previously landless who can be otherwise impacted either by land loss or development in the sense of employment and other opportunities coming through infrastructural development. While there can be more achievements to value, these systematically allow us to look into the minimum threshold of achievements that a human is capable of based on the basic human needs in the context of land acquisition in the rural communities.

Table 2.2:

Synthesis of the core capabilities relating to needs, capabilities and well-being

Basic Human Needs after Maslow (1943)	**Central Human Capabilities Nussbaum (2003)**	**Fundamental Functionings Rao (2019)**	**Well-being Naz and Bögenhold (2018)**	**Core Capabilities derived from basic needs, central human capabilities, and well-being.**
Self-actualisation needs	**(6) Practical Reason** (being able to decide good for oneself and plan for one's own life…) **(4) Senses, Imagination, Thoughts** (Being able to use the senses, to imagine, think, and reason)	Being able to protect oneself from discrimination, exploitation, violence.	Personal Well-being	**Personal and Psychological Capabilities: personal dignity, personal identity, Education, play, Life and Life-Security**
Self-respect (esteem) needs	**(3) Bodily integrity** (being able to move from place to place. Protect from violence, have sexual and reproductive choice…)	Being able to maintain and enhance self-respect and identity		

Social affiliation (love) needs	**(5) Emotions,** (Being able to have attachments to things and people outside of ourselves…) **(7) Affiliation,** (Being able to live with and toward others…)	Being able to maintain and establish social networks and associations and harness personal, familial, and societal interests through these	Social and Psychological Well-being	**Social-affective Capabilities:** **Emotions and affiliation**
Safety and security needs	**(1) Life** (Being able to live a life of normal length, this overlap with health and accommodation but more related to physio-psychological aspects and hence a personal capability) **(10) Control Over One's Environment**, (Being able to hold property… seek employment)	Being financially secure	Economic Well-being	**Economic Capabilities:** **Accommodation, Health, Nourishment, Income, Employment**
Physiological needs	**(2) Bodily Health** (Being able to have good health, including reproductive health; to be adequately nourished; to have adequate shelter) (**8) Other Species** (Being able to live with concern for and in relation to animals, plants, and the world of nature)	Being able to secure basic necessities for life		

Source: Own synthesis through the combination of the Central Human Capabilities (Nussbaum, 2003,p.41-42), Human Needs (Maslow, 1943), Fundamental Functionings (Rao, 2019), and aspects of well-being (Naz and Bögenhold, 2018).

In the multiplicity of functionings (Robeyns, 2016), the Central Human Capabilities and associated functionings relating to basic needs help understand the impacts meaningfully and systematically in light of different aspects of human well-being in rural communities. The core functionings will be qualitatively investigated to understand the functionings of the individuals in the three land-acquired communities where the SEZs are established. Earlier studies such as Rao (2019) in the land acquisition context and Naz and Bögenhold (2018) in the paid employment context also adopted qualitative approaches to understanding functionings and well-being, respectively, in a single community context. Although this study takes a qualitative approach to assess well-being through the use of the interview method, this includes the land-losing context, employment context, and other opportunities arising through infrastructural development creating capabilites in the rural comunities. This study, thus, extends the scope for examining the capabilities created by the establishment of the SEZs with their diverse development opportunities as indicated above. Interpreting the core capabilities with three aspects of well-being also provides a practical sense of the changes happening to the individuals in different communities in Bangladesh.

Table 2.3 illustrates three aspects of overlapping well-being, core capabilities, and core functionings to operationalise the capabilities approach for this study. Well-being is inductively measured through the achievement of the corresponding core functionings to each Core Capability and then these are applied to understand each dimension or aspect of well-being. Rather than taking a procedural approach (Robeyns, 2003; 2005b) this study combines needs and capabilities to derive a list of core capabilities from the Central Human Capabilites of Nussbaum (2003) and determine each corresponding functioning. Although this definite list of capabilities are often restrictive, particularly in restricting individuals' freedom of choice from alternatives, this is helpful when working with diverse community contexts as engaging with many individuals to know their preferences can cause preference distortion (Moss, 2013; Naz and Bögenhold, 2018). Despite the capabilities or functionings being definite, this can still be used to assess how freely alternative means (e.g., business instead of farming) are used by individuals to achieve their functionings. Through these core functionings, the resettlement aspects highlighted to be significant for land acquisition and development context can be well measured.

Table 2.3:

Own analytical framework for understanding well-being through the Capabilities Approach (Nussbaum, 2003) in the land acquisition and development context.

Aspects of Well-being	Core Capabilities	Corresponding Core Functionings
Economic aspects	Nourishment Income, wealth	Being able to be nourished, secure income and wealth, and ensure economic security through those.
	Employment	Being able to be employed and secure employment through attainment and use of skills to ensure economic security.
	Accommodation	Being able to own or secure an accommodation
Social–affective aspects	Emotions	Being able to be attached to place of choice, live with families, meet near ones, and provide care work.
	Affiliations	Being able to maintain networks, trusts, and social places and enhance them to accomplish personal and familial goals through those.
Personal (physio-psychological) aspects	Life and Life-Security	Being able to live one's life without stress and fear of assault or violence.
	Bodily Health	Being able to maintain good bodily health.
	Education	Being able to receive education.
	Personal Identity	Being able to protect, maintain or enhance self-respect and personal identity.

	Personal Dignity Play	Being able to protect oneself from discrimination, humiliation, and mental stresses. Being able to engage in recreational activities

While the ability to achieve each functioning will be translated as achieving the respective capability, the lack of that functioning or inability to achieve that functioning is understood as deprivation of that capability. This is then assigned to the associated dimension of well-being to understand it as positively or adversely impacting that dimension of well-being. The capabilities are also often overlapping across well-being as all aspects of capabilities are individualistic by nature. The defined functionings against each derived capability help specify the goal of each functioning and achievement of the capability as an end, which, in turn, helps understand its specific well-being aspect. For example, emotions as a core capability can be related to the personal or psychological well-being of an individual. However, when considering the end or functioning as 'being able to live with family and relatives', this relates to the affective and social aspects of an individual's life and, hence, can reflect in the social–affective well-being. Conceptualising well-being through central human capabilities (Nussbaum, 2003) helps overcome criticisms of the capabilities approach which are pointed at the measurement challenge, intractable broadness (Crocker and Robeyns, 2009), chances of misconceptions (Alkire, 2009), vagueness (Nussbaum, 2003), lack of specificity and philosophical weakness as to good and right (Robeyns, 2016), and unsuitability for a specific development project (Smyth and Vanclay, 2017).

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter explores the literature from diverse perspectives to understand the complete scenario of land acquisition and links those to development initiatives such as establishment of the special economic zones. Exploring the perspectives of displacement and dispossession, this identifies the relationship between land acquisition, dispossession and development and livelihoods and well-being. This also links the dispossession and displacement taking place in the SEZs and their impacts on the community members. In the changing dynamic of rural livelihoods and depleting natural resources, it is found that off-farm paid employment is desired for topping up livelihoods in rural communities. Combining human needs with capabilities, this chapter conceptualizes core capabilities and proposes a framework for exploring the impacts of land acquisition on means and freedom of achievement to understand three aspects of well-being, namely economic, social-affective and personal (physio-psychological) well-being.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to propose, discuss, and rationalise the key methods adopted for the purpose of the research. An overall description of the research design and research approach taken by the researcher in order to attain the research goal is provided in this chapter. Introducing the three case study areas and discussing the selection criterion with reference to a systematic typology of case studies, namely, archetypes, stereotypes and prototypes, this also rationalises the case study method applied. A discussion on the methods of data collection is also attached where the interview method was principally applied conducting semi-structured interviews with government experts, community experts and community participants. A document review method which was also applied to understand the policy context before the interviews, is also discussed here. The data analysis process is explained providing details of the coding structure and key thematic areas where the relationship among core functionings, core capabilities and aspects of well-being is established. This chapter also explains the methods adopted to verify data collected from different sources. As some methods were applied and strategies were taken considering the coronavirus outbreak, the overall impacts of COVID-19 on the current research are also briefly discussed.

3.2 Research design and research approach

Taking the view of development and quality of life considering human differences (Sen, 1986), this research adopts a relevant philosophical stance entailing the incorporation of the values, beliefs, and research goals of the researcher (Dougherty *et al.*, 2019). A subjectivist ontological positioning of this research affects its epistemological positioning which, together, lead to its methodology (Marsh and Furlong, 2002). An “interpretivist view invites the researcher to investigate meaning behind the understanding of human behaviour, interactions and society” (Pulla and Carter, 2018, p.10). Interpretivism is the most appropriate approach for this research as it allows the researcher “to develop an understanding of social life and discover how people construct meaning in natural settings” (Neuman, 2014, p.104). This research requires a deep engagement with the impacted people in order to understand the impacts of land acquisition, displacement, and dispossession bringing about changes in the capabilities of individuals in rural communities. As land acquisition and its impacts are also related to the policy interventions and their implementation, this paradigm helps understand these issues in the local context. Finally, how development benefits and their anticipated benefits affect the community members could best be understood through the interpretivist paradigm.

With the aim to understand the impacts of land acquisition in the SEZ communities in Bangladesh, this study contributes to the existing knowledge by addressing three objectives. The first objective is to understand the geographical, social, and policy contexts of land acquisition in the SEZ communities in Bangladesh. The social–geographical features, policy arrangements, livelihood patterns, and their dynamics in which individuals and households operate their activities are explored. The second objective is to examine the impacts of resource change on the capabilities of the community members in the SEZs within the dynamics of rural livelihoods. This fills the knowledge gaps arising from the isolated view of impacts of land acquisition from that of development. Another intention of this objective is to explore how the SEZs contribute to the transition of livelihoods affecting the capabilities of individuals in the context of depleting natural resources in the land-acquired rural communities. The third objective is to assess the development effects of SEZs on women in respect of aspirations and capabilities across communities and livelihoods. This objective seeks to contribute to the knowledge by delving into how paid employment at doorsteps induces aspirations of women; how it helps them transcend the social–cultural barriers to accomplish their achievements; and how the changed situations of women contribute to social development.

To achieve the aim and objectives of the study, both primary and secondary data were analysed. Primary data were generated from in-depth interviews with two key groups: 1) Experts in the government of Bangladesh, who play a role in the policies relating to and implementation of land acquisition and establishment of the SEZs; and experts such as NGO personnel and local educational personnel who have a deep understanding of the impact contexts to achieve the first objective of the study, and 2) the respondents who are impacted by land acquisition from the communities in the SEZs to achieve the second and third objectives. The first objective is achieved through answering two questions: (i) *What are the land acquisition and resettlement policy considerations in Bangladesh for meeting the resettlement needs of affected members in diverse communities beyond monetary compensation?* (ii) *How do policies relate to the geographical, social, and livelihood arrangements of the communities in which land acquisition and the SEZs are implemented?* Secondary data were analysed from a review of the relevant documents e.g., government laws, policies, and circulars relating to land acquisition, resettlement, and rehabilitation. These were analysed in relation to the expert opinions mainly to understand the impact contexts. Based on the contexts, the second and third objectives are achieved through examining the impacts on individuals. The second objective involved answering the following questions: (iii) *How are diverse forms of displacement and dispossession with the resettlement measures experienced by community members in the SEZs*? (iv) *How are the capabilities of the land-losing community members impacted by the change of resources through displacement and infrastructural development*? (v) *How do the opportunities of the SEZs impact the capabilities of members without facing land loss in the rural communities?* The third objective was achieved by

answering the following questions- (vi) *How do the SEZs generate aspirations for women's employment and other economic activities?* (vii) *How does integration into these opportunities impact the core capabilities of women?* (viii) *How does women's participation in the economic domain contribute to social development?*

The conceptual framework developed through the literature review and constructed on the capabilities approach combined with aspects of livelihoods approach and resettlement concept aided in attaining the objectives as it identifies the core issues to look into. The core concepts of the conceptual framework are constructed around the means, freedom, and achievement of individuals in the land-acquired communities. The conceptual framework defines the pathways from the creation of the SEZs which is followed by land acquisition in the rural communities. Land acquisition brings in displacement and dispossession of the community members, changing their original means of achievement. Land acquisition in the SEZs also involves compensation and resettlement services and infrastructural development bringing in new means for the individuals from the changed means after displacement and dispossession. Besides, the conversion factors such as policies, social environmental (social norms, geographical location), and personal factors (skills, age) and human diversity (difference in conversion factors among individuals) are significant for constituting capability sets or opportunity sets of achievable functionings. From the available capability sets, individuals make choices for achieving their functionings corresponding to the core capabilities. The core capabilities harnessed with human needs indicate or relate to three aspects of well-being—economic well-being, social–affective well-being, and personal (physio-psychological) well-being. This conceptual and analytical framing through the capabilities approach allows for examining impacts with the nuances.

Table 3.1 illustrates the research design stating the conceptual framework, research objectives, and research questions with the data collection and analysis methods. Evaluating the core capabilities across communities and livelihoods required examining the changes that the community members experienced in their capability inputs or means such as land, occupational means, compensation money, resettlement house, and services like health services, transport, and electricity both in tangible and intangible terms. This also required looking at the freedom in choosing their ways of life that create, enhance, or affect the capabilities concerning their well-being. These components relating to the perceived and experienced aspects of lives are highly qualitative in nature and, hence, it was appropriate to follow a qualitative research approach. One-off in-depth interviews were conducted with respondents comprising the participants from land-losing and evicted households and households without losing land, including those who did not own land previously in the communities, and changes in the core capabilities were understood through their perceptions and experiences before and after the establishment of the SEZs. However, as they experience no sense of loss in the context of land acquisition, assessing

changes in the capabilities of the in-migrants was out of the scope of this study. This also included interviewing the government officials, seeking expert opinions to help construct a holistic understanding of the policy issues; and NGO and educational personnel in the communities, to understand the potential implementation issues and impact context relating to land acquisition and establishment of the SEZs. Finally, analysing policy documents such as government rules, circulars, and resettlement plans and policies helped to understand policy arrangements, dynamics, and efficacy in meeting the community needs in the social as well as economic terms.

Table 3.1:

Research design and research methodology

Conceptual Framework	**Research Aim**	**Objectives**	**Supporting Questions (SQ)**	**Methods and Data**	**Data Analysis**
Creation of the SEZs by policy framework The SEZs identified/ to be established in rural communities Land acquisition in the Rural Communities Displacement and dispossession through land acquisition Change in the means of community members Policies for Compensation and Resettlement for reversing damages Infrastructural development, employment and other opportunities Revised means Forming Capability sets or opportunities for attainment Making choice by individuals for their achievement Achievements: Core capabilities (Encompassing Economic aspects,	Research Aim: This study aims to understand the impacts of land acquisition in the SEZ communities in Bangladesh.	Objective (a) To understand the social–geographical and policy context and livelihoods in the SEZ communities in Bangladesh.	*SQ. i) What are the land acquisition and resettlement policy considerations in Bangladesh for meeting the resettlement needs of affected members in diverse communities beyond monetary compensation?* *SQ ii) How do policies relate to the geographical, social, and livelihood arrangements of the communities in which land acquisition and the SEZs are implemented?*	Document review. In-depth semi-structured Interviews with expert (government, NGO, and community)	Qualitative analysis (thematic analysis) of interview and secondary source (relevant law, policies) data
		Objective (b) To examine the impacts of resource change on the capabilities of the community members in the SEZs within the dynamics of rural livelihoods.	*SQ. iii) How are diverse forms of displacement and dispossession with the resettlement measures experienced by community members in the SEZs?* *SQ iv) How are the capabilities of the land-losing community members impacted by the change of resources through displacement and infrastructural development?* *SQ. v) How do the opportunities of the SEZs impact the capabilities of members without facing land loss in the rural communities?*	In-depth semi-structured interviews Of land dispossessed, displaced, and landless individuals.	Qualitative analysis (thematic analysis) of interview data
		Objective (c) To assess the development effects of SEZs on women in respect of aspirations and capabilities across communities	*SQ. vi) How do the SEZs generate aspirations for women's employment and other economic activities?* *SQ. vii) How does integration into these opportunities impact the core capabilities of women?* *SQ. viii) How does women's participation in the economic*	In-depth semi-structured interviews with affected community members	Qualitative analysis (thematic analysis) of interview data

Social–affective aspects, Personal (Physio-psychological) aspect of well-being)		and livelihoods.	*domain contribute to social development?*		

3.3 Selection of case study sites

As communities can be impacted differently by land acquisition and development projects, the selected cases must allow the most appropriate understanding of the situations across communities and livelihoods of locales and occupations. For this, the selected cases serve two purposes. First, being located in different regions (administrative divisions), this allows the researcher to examine the impacts on core capabilities through the changes in the livelihoods of occupations (farming, fishing, mixed) and explore how these impacts differ in diverse social–ecological arrangements. Second, the SEZs at different stages of implementation allow the researcher to understand how the transitions occur and how opportunities contribute to the changing of capabilities with development happening.

Selecting SEZs from different locations and stages enables looking at the transition in the communities and assessing the impacts in diverse social–geographical contexts and situations which, although in different contexts, fit in the typology of (stereotypical, archetypical, and prototypical) cases' outlines by Brenner (2020,p.208). The coastal Mirsharai Economic Zone (MEZ hereafter) is selected or identified as an archetypical (unique) case study with the community's most diversified livelihoods of occupation. The agrarian Srihatta Economic Zone (SREZ hereafter) is identified as the stereotypical (common with most rural communities) case study with a major dependence on rice-based farming. Conversely, in the transitioning Meghna Industrial Economic Zone (MIEZ hereafter), the community members mostly depend on waged work and business with very little farming remaining. This SEZ is identified as the prototypical case study as this has developed with significant employment happening, reflecting what the other case studies are likely to look like when they grow. Looking into three communities of different types and SEZs of different stages of development also helps understand the policy implementation issues from diverse perspectives.

3.3.1 An Archetypical Case Study: Mirsharai Economic Zone (MEZ)

The Coastal Mirsharai Economic Zone (MEZ) is part of the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Shilpa Nagar (BSMSN), the largest SEZ in Bangladesh which is being implemented over 30,000 acres of land in the coastal Chottagram district of Bangladesh 200 kilometres away from Dhaka (BEZA, 2018). Approved in 2013, the SEZ started development work in November 2015, having already acquired 16,654 acres of the land in different phases while land acquisition of some other

parts of the SEZ was still under progress (BEZA, 2020a). The BSMSN already approved USD 19.5 billion investment and aims to employ 1.5 million people on completion (BEZA, 2020a). The feasibility study of MEZ conducted by the BEZA and the World Bank shows that the lands acquired in the first phase were mainly three types—farmlands, homesteads, and ponds—which required to relocate 1047 households both on-site and off-site. Relocation of businesses and shops was also required to make way for the construction of an approach road (BEZA, 2014). BEZA (2014) identifies that the people of the Mirsharai sub-district are engaged in agriculture, fishing and business. The livelihoods in the coastal Mirsharai region are dependent on the natural resources such as plain land for cultivation of rice and vegetables, ponds for aquaculture, canals, the sea and mangroves for fishing, cattle rearing, and collecting fry and firewood (Barua and Rahman, 2019). Considering the location, size, and livelihoods components identified in the site, this largest SEZ in the country fits in the archetypical or unique category of cases in Brenner (2020) definition.

3.3.2 A Stereotypical Case Study: Srihatta Economic Zone (SREZ)

The Agrarian Srihatta Economic Zone (SREZ) situated in Moulvibazar district in Sylhet division is one of the earliest SEZs in Bangladesh in terms of inception of land acquisition and development of the zone. The project covers 352.1 acres of acquired lands which includes farmlands, houses and homesteads, ponds, and a large water body. Apart from land loss, land acquisition also involved displacement of the community members. The SREZ is projected to invest over USD 1.3 billion with an estimated employment of 43,831 people through the already approved investment (BEZA, 2021). The agriculture-based Sylhet region, with 87 cropping patterns and rice covering over 90%, experiences over 0.3% annual decrease of farmlands (Muttaleb *et al.*, 2017). The rural farm-based livelihoods, where remittance sent from the UK play a dominant role (Adams, 1987; Choudhury, 1993), are changing due to multiple challenges (Gardner, 2018). In this changing dynamic of livelihoods, it is useful to understand whether the SEZs are fitting in and contributing to the alternative means for communities. Resembling other communities in the agrarian context in Bangladesh, following Brenner's (2020) classification, this case study falls within the category of stereotypical or generic case of SEZs in Bangladesh fitting in the ideal agrarian livelihood context.

3.3.3 A Prototypical Case Study: Meghna Industrial Economic Zone (MIEZ)

The Transitioning Meghna Industrial Economic Zone (MIEZ) is one of the fastest developed and most progressed SEZs in Bangladesh established on 110 acres of approved land and was already functional in terms of production with nine production units operational (Star, 2020). The SEZ is in the Sonargaon Sub-district of Narayanganj district about 30 kilometres away from the capital city Dhaka and is adjacent to the Dhaka–Chittagong highway. The MIEZ already employed over 10,000 people and started making impacts with this large-scale permanent

employment which enables the researcher to understand these impacts on the transitional rural livelihoods of the locale or communities (Star, 2020). According to the typology of Brenner (2020), this can be identified within the category of prototypical case as other cases are expected to be similar to this as they develop. Table 3.2 describes the cases with their rationale.

Table 3.2:

A key features of the three case studies

Case Study	Description	Stage	Significance
Mirsharai Economic Zone (MEZ)	Located in coastal Chattogram District. Largest SEZ in the country. Coastal livelihoods.	Partially developed plus land acquisition running for some part.	Allowed examining impacts in the coastal livelihoods.
Srihatta Economic Zone (SREZ)	Moulvibazar District Plain agrarian lands. One of the earliest established SEZs in the country.	Partially production inaugurated (mostly development stage).	Allowed understanding livelihoods' impacts in the non-coastal or generic agrarian perspectives.
Meghna Industrial Economic Zone (MIEZ)	Narayanganj district close to the capital city. Transitioning rural livelihoods.	Fully developed and production is running. Employment created.	Allowed understanding impacts in the transitioning rural context.

3.4 Methods of data collection

As explained in the research design, this study combined the collection of both primary data and secondary data. Primary data were collected from the interviews with policy experts (government and SEZ experts from the policy and implementation aspects) and community experts (NGO officials and local schoolteachers). Most importantly, this includes interviews with community participants who are directly impacted by land acquisition and the establishment of the SEZs.

3.4.1 Expert interviews

Interviewing experts, also viewed as 'key informants' or 'elites' by Dexter, can "help the investigator acquire better picture" combined with other methods (2012,p.21). A purposive sampling, which "is typically used in qualitative research […] for the most proper utilisation of available resources", was applied for this research (Etikan *et al.*, 2016,p.2). To understand the land acquisition, compensation and rehabilitation policy for addressing the first objective with a purposive sampling of 14 people consisting of officials in the Ministry of Land, the District Administration involved in land acquisition implementation (Yasmin *et al.*, 2020), and people in the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) implementing the SEZs, as described in Table 3.3 Interviews were conducted remotely with video-calling application(s) mainly on WhatsApp with prior appointment through email or telephone. That telephone interviews, as Harvey (2011) argues, can be efficient when interviewing people located at different places also equally applies to interviewing adopting any remote method. Using the video-calling method provides real-time experience and scopes for clarification (Lupton, 2020). However, limitations and challenges with interviewing the elites as stated by Dexter (2012) were considered. It was considered that requesting interviews with the officials of the Ministry of Land, the Executive Chairman, or the officials of the BEZA and the Additional Deputy Commissioner online could take considerable time to get a reply. Adequate caution was taken while interviewing the experts or elites as they tend to take control of the interview and allow less time to investigate in depth. Data protection and confidentiality of the participants were maintained as per the University of Southampton research ethics rules, and relevant UK and Bangladesh data protection rules. As a civil servant, the researcher was also aware of positionality factors and did not make undue application of his official identity to influence the collection of primary data. However, his previous experience with the office organogram and practices facilitated selecting the appropriate experts and understanding the policy and implementation issues. Remotely organised and conducted interviews were a strength considering that this facilitated the data collection when the COVID-19 travel restrictions were imposed in the UK, in Bangladesh, and elsewhere in the global context. Ethics approval for the expert interviews was taken from the ERGO II through the ERGO number 62264.

Table 3.3:

The design of expert interviews for understanding land acquisition and SEZ policy and implementation issues

Case Study/ Organisation	Interviewee	Number	Method of interview	Significance
Ministry of Land and BEZA (For overall understanding)	Official from the Ministry of Land	1	Remotely Video	Policy level
	High Official of BEZA	1	Remotely Video	Policy level
Case Study MEZ	1 Additional Deputy Commissioner, Land Acquisition, 1 Assistant Commissioner Land, 1 Land Acquisition Officer, 1 BEZA official employed in the SEZ	4	Remotely Video	Policy and Implementation
Case Study SREZ	1 Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue, 1 Assistant Commissioner Land, 1 Land Acquisition Officer, 1 BEZA official employed in the SEZ	4	Remotely audio/ video	Policy and Implementation
Case Study MIEZ	1 Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue, 1 Assistant Commissioner Land, 1 Surveyor, Land Acquisition Section. 1 SEZ Official	4	Remotely audio/ video	Policy and Implementation
	Total participants	**14**		

To gain an unbiased account of the impact contexts and to have broader understanding of the impacts eight experts outside the government and BEZA were interviewed face-to-face following all COVID-19 regulations. These experts were NGO officials who were working in the SEZ communities and teachers working in the community schools who also observed and experienced the changes of members in the communities. For interviewing, these experts were approached directly as the UK and Bangladesh COVID-19 travel restrictions eased. The NGO officials were

selected based on their involvement in activities in the case study areas. Table 3.4 illustrates the sample design and mode of interview with the experts from communities.

Table 3.4:

Sample design for the expert interviews for understanding implementation issues and impacts on the communities

Case Study	Interviewee	Number	Method of interview	Notes
Case Study MEZ	1 NGO Official 1 Community School Teacher	2	Face to face	Implementation issues and impacts
Case Study SREZ	1 NGO Official 1 Community School Teacher	2	Face to face	Implementation issues and impacts
Case Study MIEZ	3 NGO Officials 1 Community School Teacher	4	Face to face	Implementation issues and impacts
	Total	**8**		

3.4.2 Interview with the community participants

While the BEZA data suggest that 1047 households were displaced in the first phase that acquired 500 acres of lands in Case Study MEZ, the actual number of affected people is likely to be higher in different phases that acquired over 30,000 acres of land. As data regarding affected households in Case Study SREZ and Case Study MIEZ are missing, the researcher depended on evidence from other cases, national data stating 2122 people living per square kilometre arable land (Rai *et al.*, 2017), and proxy data from an official at SREZ to estimate that over 1000 people are directly affected in each case combining both physically displaced and dispossessed of their lands.

A purposive sampling, which allows for identifying particular types of cases for in-depth investigation (Neuman, 2014, p.274), was used in combination with snowball sampling (Neuman, 2014, p.275) to reach out the interconnected participants within the community and recruit them for the community interviews. A gatekeeper method that helps to gain access to hard-to-reach participants and research sites (McFadyen and Rankin, 2016) was used to help recruit participants. Community gatekeepers, who according to Bashir (2023, p.1501) have a profound

understanding of the "social, cultural and political backdrop" of the community that they represent, were recruited for the current research. One male person from each community was recruited as gatekeeper with one additional female person added in the MIEZ case study for gaining access to female members. The gatekeeper in MEZ was a male student and social worker from the community who was familiar with most community members. A land-losing individual who was also the owner of a shop in the community and familiar with the SREZ community members was recruited as a gatekeeper at the SREZ case study. A community member who was running a shop in the community was selected as a gatekeeper in the MIEZ. A female member of the community who was working at the MIEZ also assisted in reaching out female participants working in the MIEZ. The role of the gatekeepers was to help identify each type of participant, provide address and mobile numbers and make a connection between the researcher and the participants. Other than providing contact addresses and mobile numbers and familiarizing the researcher with the participants, the gatekeepers did not have any direct role in the participant recruitment process e.g., requesting or pressing the participants to participate. The participants identified through a snowball sampling were also approached and contacted in person, which helped to avoid possible bias caused by the gatekeepers' choices by pushing forward their own agenda (Bashir, 2023).

A total number of 80 community participants—31 from the coastal MEZ, 23 from the agrarian SREZ, and 26 from the transitioning MIEZ community as presented in Table 3.5—were interviewed considering participants' relevance and suitability to the required data. Considering land loss, 45 respondents are from land-losing households as described in Appendix A, and 35 are from the households that did not face land loss as described in Appendix B. Out of the 35 participants who did not face loss of land, 19 participants owned land (farmland and/or non-farmland) while the remaining 16 were previously landless. Considering gender, 52 participants were male and 28 were female. The demographic features of 28 female participants are described in Appendix C. For determining sample size convenience in the COVID-19 reality and availability of time was considered. Although 60 interviews with community participants were initially planned in the COVID-19 situations, considering participants' diversity 80 interviews from three case studies (31, 23 and 26 in MEZ, SREZ and MIEZ respectively) were conducted. Mason's (2010) study on 560 qualitative studies adopting 26 methodological approaches reveals that the number of interviews ranged from 1 to 95 and the median and mean numbers were 28 and 31 respectively. This provided insight into the practical sample sizes of different qualitative research which, according to Mason (2010), was often larger than needed. Naz and Bögenhold (2018) took a capabilities approach and conducted five interviews with focus group discussions to understand the impacts of home-based waged work on women. However, for the current research, the decision was made to stop interviews when the participants were repeating the same information or 'nothing new [was] being added' (Bowen, 2008, p.140).

Table 3.5:

Recruitment design of the key informants for understanding the impacts

Case study	Number of participants by type			Total number	Mode of interview	Significance
	Participants losing land	Participants not losing land				
		Owning land	Previously landless			
Coastal MEZ	20 (Male 13, Female 7)	6 (Male 6)	5 (Male 3, Female 2)	31 (Male 22 Female 9)	Face-to-face	Provides understanding of the impacts on the stereotypical case in the coastal community context.
Agrarian SREZ	14 (Male 8, Female 6)	4 (Male 3, Female 1)	5 (Male 3, Female 2)	23 (Male 14, Female 9)	Face-to-face	Provides understanding of the impacts on the archetypical case in the general agrarian community context.
Transitioning MIEZ	11 (Male 7 Female 4)	9 (Male 7, Female 2)	6 (Male 2, Female 4)	26 (Male 16, Female 10)	Face-to-face	Provides understanding of the impacts on the prototypical case in the transitioning community context.
Total	**45 (Male 28, Female 17)**	**19 (Male 16, Female 3)**	**16 (Male 8, Female 8)**	**80 (Male 52, Female 28)**		

Interviews were conducted face to face following all COVID-19 rules. Data confidentiality, anonymity, and other ethical issues were maintained with the University ethics rules, and the UK and Bangladesh data protection rules and regulations. Being a civil servant, the researcher was aware of the positionality factors and did not use his official post, position, or identity to influence the process of primary data collection. An ethics approval for the face-to-face interviews with the eight experts (NGO and community schools stated in Table 3.4) and participants from the communities was secured from ERGI II through the ERGO number 67184. The ethics rules were followed throughout the research and no participant was interviewed without a written consent. To ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants, the audio records of the interviews were stored with an assigned code for each participant (e.g., EI01CC, PI01AM) and a

Microsoft Word document was created with the same code for transcription of each interview. After transcribing in word form, the interview audio records were removed from the researcher's personal computer. For the sake of anonymity, each participant was given a pseudonym. The interviews were conducted in the Bengali Language and were transcribed and translated in English by the researcher.

3.4.3 Semi-structured interview

For the purpose of data collection, the semi-structured interview method was applied as it allowed the researcher to have a list of the topics to guide the interview and provides flexibility to pose additional exploratory questions to the interviewee (Corbin and Strauss, 2015). Before preparing the semi-structured interview guide, the five stages—justification, prior knowledge, developing the guide, pilot testing and presenting—suggested in the framework of Kallio *et al.* (2016) were considered. A semi-structured interview method of study is justified as, otherwise, some of the themes and concepts could be missed while interviewing the experts as well as the community members. The second stage requires that a semi-structured interview should be guided by prior knowledge which is supported by the literature review and an analysis of the relevant policy documents. The topic area, policy, practices and their impacts are adequately understood by these. The third stage is the preliminary development of an interview guide which for the expert interviews and community participant interviews was pilot-tested in the fourth stage and, finally, presented for the purpose of the research (Kallio *et al.*, 2016). The length of the interviews in both cases was 30 minutes to one hour depending on the willingness and interest of the participant. The interview guides with the topics/ questions for interviewing policy (government) experts and community experts are attached in Appendix D and Appendix E respectively. The interview guide for conducting interviews with the community participants is attached in Appendix F.

3.5 Data analysis

Data analysis involves breaking down the data into their constituent components and resolving it in order to "reveal the characteristic elements and structures" Dey (2005, p.31). This entails systematically organising, integrating, and examining data in order to identify "patterns and relationships among the specific details" Neuman (2014,p.477). As this study conceptualises the key issues identifying the themes, a deductive approach (Reichertz, 2014) was suitable for the purpose of this research. However, to understand the impacts, an analytical framework was also developed which guided the analysis where the achieved functionings were translated to the understanding of core capabilities, and three aspects of well-being were understood inductively. However, during the analysis, the researcher was open to new themes or concepts emerging in

order not to miss any crucial point or issue. This study, thus, followed a combination of both deductive and inductive approaches.

3.5.1 Document analysis

An analysis of the relevant policies, rules, and regulations was conducted to understand the land acquisition and resettlement policy environment and policy dynamics in the Bangladesh context. Apart from understanding the policy environment, a goal of this analysis was to have a general understanding of the key provisions to formulate the semi-structured interview guide for the expert interviews. For this, the policies related to land acquisition, resettlement and establishment of the SEZs are identified with the use of purposive sampling as Neuman (2014) suggests this to be a useful sampling method for content analysis. The review of the policy is based on the criteria set out based on the key issues such as social impact analysis, resettlement action plan, monetary compensation, resettlement activities, employment provisions, and benefit sharing identified in the literature concerning global best practices. These were connected to the key themes and concepts of resettlement highlighted in the conceptual framework of this study. Table 3.6 describes the policy documents analysed in this study.

Table 3.6:

Description of the policy documents

Name of policy document	Year of Publication	Number of pages	Source
Acquisition and Requisition of Immovable Property Ordinance 1982	1982	24	The Ministry of Land, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Website: www.minland.gov.bd Document URL: https://minland.gov.bd/site/view/law/%E0%A6%86%E0%A6%87%E0%A6%A8-%E0%A6%93-%E0%A6%AC%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%A7%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%AE%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%B2%E0%A6%BE
Acquisition and Requisition of Immovable Property Act 2017	2017	19	The Ministry of Land, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Website: www.minland.gov.bd Document URL: https://minland.gov.bd/site/view/law/%E0%A6%86%E0%A6%87%E0%A6%A8-%E0%A6%93-%E0%A6%AC%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%A7%E0%A6%BF%

			E0%A6%AE%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%B2%E0%A6%BE
Implementation Instruction of the Acquisition and Requisition of Immovable Property Act 2017	2017	12	The Ministry of Land, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Website: www.minland.gov.bd Document URL: https://minland.portal.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/minland.portal.gov.bd/page/ed5f2c1f_6c2e_435e_ac96_147b59ffdbf3/10162019123715.pdf
The Resettlement Policy Framework 2020	2020	26	Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority, Prime Minister's Office, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Website: www.beza.gov.bd Document URL: https://beza.gov.bd/document-and-publication/

For the purpose of the analysis, the computer-assisted data analysis tool, NVivo, was used. Data were coded in broad themes identified from the literature. Data were coded around social impact analysis, resettlement action plan, compensation (rates, time, and issues), rehabilitation aspects (provisions for providing houses and other supports), reconstruction of social–cultural institutions, and benefit sharing. Although a thematic analysis was carried out based on the key themes and concepts identified, coding was open for the emergence of any new code or theme. The data from the document review were combined with the interview data for formulating final findings regarding the policy and their implementation. Appendix G demonstrates the codes relating to document analysis and expert opinions applied to understand the policy and livelihood contexts.

3.5.2 Analysis of the interview data

The analysis of the interview data was carried out by applying thematic analysis which is considered to be a systematic and foundational method in qualitative analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). It is widely used as it is deemed to be a flexible method (Braun and Clarke, 2006). A thematic analysis was applied by coding and retrieving data to understand the content meaning, identifying excerpts containing data as per codes, indexing codes and categorising codes to identify patterns and themes. While analysing qualitative data, it is important to understand the intended meaning "looking beyond individual text" (Coffey, 2014, p.373) which applies for the interview transcripts. The interview data were well-familiarised and coded with an open coding

method. The theoretical aspects identified and the analytical framework presented in section 2.8 of Chapter 2 guided the analysis. Although the policy documents were approached with 'selective coding', remaining open to the arrival of any new codes or themes allowed looking beyond the themes identified in the literature (Neuman, 2014). While analysing the interview data the researcher was open to any new code or theme as the aspects of dispossession and displacement could have diverse natures and outcomes.

Data were coded extensively and applied to three broad categories; namely, means, freedom, and achievements in three case studies. In order to understand impacts separately, two contexts were considered, first, in the land acquisition, displacement, resettlement, and development from the land-losing context which includes 45 land-losing and evicted participants; and second, in the development, e.g., employment and infrastructural improvement in the context of without losing land and previously landless 35 participants in the three communities. Human diversity was considered and impacts on women (28 female participants) were also understood both in the land acquisition as well as the development context considering conversion factors such as social norms, geographical distance, and accessibility.

Means to achieve were considered with respect to changes in the means (land and recovery of land, farming, fishing, aquaculture, other occupational means, receive of compensation, resettlement house, and services) brought by land acquisition and resettlement supports. To understand the freedom aspects, the ability to choose from alternatives (farming, paid employment, business) was considered with human diversity and conversion factors and participant's ability to achieve their core capabilities was investigated. The achievements were understood by assigning data to the core capabilities—i.e., nourishment income wealth, employment, accommodation, emotion, affiliation, life and life security, bodily health, education, personal identity, personal dignity, and play—which are identified in the analytical framework. These core capabilities were understood by the attainment of each corresponding functionings illustrated in Table 3.7. Aspects of the three overlapping well-being—i.e., economic well-being, social–affective well-being, and personal (physio-psychological) well-being—were understood inductively by assigning the core capabilities against each corresponding aspect of well-being.

Table 3.7:

Core functionings, core capabilities, and aspects of well-being (own source)

Core functionings	Core capabilities	Aspects of corresponding well-being
Being able to be nourished, secure income and wealth, and ensure economic security through those.	Nourishment Income, wealth	Economic well-being

Being able to be employed and secure employment through attainment and use of skills to ensure economic security.	Employment	
Being able to own or secure an accommodation.	Accommodation	
Being able to be attached to place of choice, live with families, meet near ones, and provide care work.	Emotions	Social–affective well-being
Being able to maintain networks, trusts, and social places and enhance them to accomplish personal and familial goals through those.	Affiliations	
Being able to maintain networks, trusts and social places and enhance them to accomplish personal and familial goals through those	Life and Life-Security	Personal (physio-psychological) well-being
Being able to maintain good bodily health.	Bodily Health	
Being able to receive education.	Education	
Being able to protect, maintain, or enhance self-respect and personal identity.	Personal Identity	
Being able to protect oneself from discrimination, humiliation, and mental stresses.	Personal Dignity	
Being able to engage in recreational activities.	Play	

The core functionings were self-explanatory which helped to understand the achieved core capabilities of individuals. For understanding core functionings such as being able to be nourished rather than real intake of food or calories, the ability to achieve food pursuing occupational means (farming, fishing, livestock rearing, waged work, business, and renting out house and land) and income was considered. Achieved core functionings were considered while coding data to each core capability. This was, therefore, linked to income, wealth, and status of compensation money of the individuals in the households. Ability to achieve each functioning was understood as the attainment of each corresponding capability. The achieved capabilities were translated to understand the well-being of three aspects—economic well-being, social–affective well-being, and personal (physio-psychological) well-being. Appendix H details the codes categorised as per key themes and concepts to understand the impacts from the land acquisition and resettlement context, employment and infrastructural development context, and human diversity (women) and conversion factor (social norms, geographical, and personal) context.

The use of diverse methods such as document analysis and expert interviews with government officials, NGOs personnel and community key informants aided in ensuring data rigour. Not only did this provide strong evidence of the latest policy considerations and the implementation practices, but also helped understand the impact contexts in detail, based on which the individuals operate their activities. This also helped cross-check the perceptions of the government officials both from the policy and implementation end and from the NGO officials and community experts. The expert interviews provided an understanding of the overall contexts

which helped to explore the impacts on the community participants with greater nuances through purposive sampling.

For writing up and reporting the findings, all comments and quotes by the participants were written in their own perceptions and narratives. Freedman and Bell (2009) suggest that there are always risks of taking perceptions as reality as perceptions do not always equal or align with reality. From their analysis of the drinking water choices of individuals at a university Saylor *et al.* (2011) suggest that the perceived risk (from tap water) can influence individuals to prefer perceived safety (bottled water) even without holding any information about the real risks. However, for this research perceptions, in some cases, could be explored and verified with the researcher's understanding of reality from other sources of data e.g., document analysis and expert interviews already collected by the researcher. For example, as the researcher had insights into the compensation rates from content analysis, perceptions could be examined and probed when the narratives of the participants regarding the compensation they received or expected to receive differed or mismatched with the amount of land they lost. Similarly, if data from interviews with government, NGO and other community experts reveal the reality that no land-losing individual or household was provided with a resettlement house, any perception of the participants differing from this could be checked and verified by the researcher asking for details or further explanations before accepting it as reality.

In qualitative research, a single method can be inadequate to solve the issues with 'rival explanations' and, therefore, triangulation is used to resolve this problem (Patton, 1999, p.1192). Data triangulation is a type of triangulation that uses, compares and cross-checks data collected from different means for investigating a single phenomenon (Donkoh, 2023; Patton, 1999). For the purpose of data triangulation or fact-checking of comments of interviewees and across interviewee types i.e., government experts, community experts and community participants some methods were applied. After entering each case study area and before starting interviews with participants, observation of the community and community members was done for two-three days. This also continued for the whole field visit period as observations were done every day before and after the interviews were conducted in the communities (from October 2021 to February 2022). This was done by familiarising the researcher with some community members such as tea vendors, shopkeepers and grocers who were not part of the interviewees but held a deep understanding of the changes in the community, households, and individuals. During the field visit observation of the developed land, roads, new houses, shops, and household assets like cars and cattle also helped in knowing about the current status of the participants. The local NGO offices and schools were visited and discussions with individuals outside of the sample were held before recruiting NGO officials and local schoolteachers for interviewing as community experts. The gatekeepers also provided an overall idea of the households and individuals about the status

of land loss and land recovery, compensation, resettlement, and employment. These helped in understanding the overall situation and impacts of land acquisition, displacement, status of resettlement, employment, income and infrastructural development of the communities and individuals.

This research is designed following the COVID-19 regulations and demonstrates both strengths and some unavoidable weaknesses of the design. The remotely organised expert interviews are a strength as they facilitated making contacts, recruiting, and interviewing participants at different locations conveniently and efficiently, as capturing the qualitative cues from the experts was not as important. However, the field visit was organised after the COVID-19 travel restrictions were eased which delayed the data collection. Apart from these, interviewing participants face-to-face with social distancing rules, face mask requirements, and sanitising hands at all times affected the process. Furthermore, finding suitable outdoor environments or open rooms with ventilation facilities also affected the efficiency of data collection. Sitting at a safe distance from participants required being louder than usual which could have affected the willingness of the participants to provide detailed responses to the questions.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter discusses the methodology adopted for the purpose of data collection and analysis to attain the research goal in the COVID-19 situation. In order to achieve three objectives and the overall aim of the research this adopted a qualitative approach and two specific methods— content analysis and interview methods. Out of 100 SEZs in Bangladesh, three SEZs were selected purposively and systematically to understand the transition as well as impacts across different types of livelihoods e.g., coastal livelihoods, agrarian livelihoods and advanced rural (transitioning) livelihoods. To understand impacts from diverse perspectives and relate those to the current policy arrangements policy experts, local community experts and community participants were interviewed adopting a semi-structured interview method. To reach out to participants identified with a purposive sampling, gatekeepers were recruited from each community. Computer-based qualitative data analysis software NVivo was used. Taking the theoretical position of the capabilities approach data were coded around the core functionings to understand changes in core capabilities and interpreted impacts on economic, social-affective and personal aspects of the well-being of individuals.

Chapter 4: Understanding the Geographical, Social, and Policy Contexts of Land Acquisition and Infrastructural Development Across Communities

4.1 Introduction

This section analyses the contexts of implementing new special economic zones (SEZs) with a focus on the social–geographical contexts, land acquisition and resettlement policy arrangements, and implementation practices that affect the lives of individuals in the land-acquired communities in Bangladesh. To address the first objective of the study which is to understand the geographical, social, and policy contexts of land acquisition in the SEZ communities, this seeks to answer the following questions: *What are the land acquisition and resettlement policy considerations in Bangladesh for meeting the resettlement needs of affected members in diverse communities beyond monetary compensation? How do policies relate to the geographical, social and livelihood arrangements of the communities in which land acquisition and the SEZs are implemented?* First, the national resettlement policies are analysed with a focus on the economic and social–cultural aspects of the resettlement of the community members as the policies apply to all communities. In addition to a qualitative review of the policies, experts both from the government as well as from the communities (NGO officials and community school teachers) are interviewed to understand the policy considerations, implementation practices and issues in diverse community contexts. Semi-structured interview topic guides for government experts and community experts are attached in Appendix D and Appendix E respectively. In the context of land acquisition, displacement, and development, policy interventions are crucially linked with geographical and social contextual factors for determining the well-being of individuals in the impacted communities. Second, the case study areas are explored to understand the geographical features, natural resources, and social and infrastructural arrangements relating to the livelihoods of occupation in the land-acquired SEZ communities which concern the environmental and social contextual factors (conversion factors) outlined in the conceptual framework. This helps to identify the resettlement needs of those who faced both physical and economic displacement in diverse community contexts and link those with the policy arrangements.

In the land acquisition and development context, policies can be very significant for providing the affected individuals with access to resources. These can also be significant conversion factors as compensation and resettlement consideration, employment, and rebuilding

of damaged physical infrastructure can be vital for affected members to be able to convert resources to achievements. Sub-section 4.2 provides an analysis of the policies relating to land acquisition and resettlement and their implementation practices in the three case studies. Relating to the literature on land acquisition and resettlement policies in the global and Bangladesh contexts, a criterion for analysing the policies of Bangladesh is drawn out. This also provides an understanding of the policy dynamics of land acquisition and resettlement. Sub-section 4.3 explores the three case studies selected for this study providing an understanding of the geographical and social features, the pattern of livelihoods, and their changes with land acquisition and infrastructural development. This section also explores the implementation practices and issues to achieve an immaculate view of the contexts.

For analysing land acquisition and resettlement policies, this section considers the protection, reconstruction, and creation of capabilities in the social, economic, and cultural dimensions as these are the key concerns in the resettlement policy debate (Atahar, 2020; Cernea and Maldonado, 2018; Shen, 2015). The promise of transforming the lives of members in communities in positive terms is also a central policy goal in the establishment of SEZs (Cross, 2014). Nevertheless, the development communities, that generally "pay the cost of development" (Saxena, 2020c), are given little space and are not considered adequately in the land acquisition policies (Cernea, 1997). From this perspective, Sen's conception of development as enhancing freedom (Sen, 1988; 1999) and capabilities can provide a broader sense of the policy arrangement. The consideration of this analysis is based on the resettlement and development needs, which is focused on identifying elements of compensation, rehabilitation measures, employment and social safety nets, and other benefit-sharing factors to reverse capability deprivation and create and enhance capabilities.

4.2 Analysing the policy contexts of land acquisition for SEZs

The national land acquisition legislations and policies in Bangladesh evolved from the Land Acquisition Act of 1894 which was introduced in British India (Atahar, 2013). After the formation of Pakistan and India in 1947, Bangladesh (then East Pakistan) had different Acts in operation for the purpose of land acquisition. In 1971, Bangladesh emerged as an independent country and enacted the Acquisitioning and Requisition of Immovable Property Ordinance (ARIPO) 1982 repealing the Act of 1894 and other enactments of the Pakistan period (Atahar, 2013; Zaman and Khatun, 2017). The ARIPO 1982 was replaced by the Acquisitioning and Requisition of Immovable Property Act (ARIPA) 2017 after over three decades of operation. Although the ARIPA 2017 is the key policy for land acquisition in Bangladesh, it did not feature many of the aspects of resettlement (Zaman and Khatun, 2017) and lacked clear guidelines on how to implement the law relating to resettlement. Subsequently, the Ministry of Land of

Bangladesh issued an implementation instruction subsequently after the ARIPA of 2017 was enacted (MOL, 2017). Apart from that, the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) formulated the Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) of 2020 to provide resettlement guidelines for implementing the SEZs (BEZA, 2020b).

Considering the geographical and social features, the scale of land acquisition and displacement, the diversity of livelihoods of occupation, and infrastructural development it is necessary to understand how policies integrate aspects beyond monetary compensation to meet the resettlement needs of the community members. This sub-section explores the national policy arrangements and implementation practices which are applicable for all three communities. The policy requirements stressed in the land acquisition and resettlement literature as identified in the literature review (Chapter 2) are divided into four relevant areas: monetary compensation; rehabilitation which includes protection and reconstruction of houses, community infrastructure and common resources; employment and social safety nets; and benefit-sharing activities based on revenue earning.

4.2.1 Key considerations in the policies

The relevant national policies introduced above—i.e., the Acquisition and Requisition of Immovable Property Ordinance (ARIPO) 1982, The Acquisition and Requisition of Immovable Property Act (ARIPA) 2017 and the Implementation Instruction for ARIPA 2017 that are applicable for all land acquisition incidences in the country—are analysed. This also includes reviewing the Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) 2020 formulated by the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) for resettlement purposes in the implemented SEZs. The necessity of a feasibility study is stressed in the national legislation by which, as the experts suggest, probable impacts are pre-assessed and suggestions to avoid or minimise displacement are made prior to land acquisition. However, a resettlement action plan, although designed for large projects, e.g., the coastal MEZ, was found to be absent in projects with smaller size and with lower budget, e.g., the agrarian SREZ and the transitioning MIEZ. The considerations for substituting the land value and cost of reconstruction of residences through monetary compensation, providing resettlement houses to the displaced, and reconstructing livelihoods through employment and other social supports and benefit sharing have huge implications for advancing the well-being of the impacted and, hence, are explored in the policies. The arrangements of these aspects relating to the implementation practices in these three SEZ case studies are discussed in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1:

Arrangement of the aspects of policies

Area of analysis	ARIPO 1982	ARIPA 2017	Implementation instruction of ARIPA 2017	Resettlement Policy Framework 2020
Compensation	Based on legal ownership [Section- 7], 150% of land price, Within 60 days [Section- 7].	Based on legal ownership [Section-11 (2)] 200-300% of land price Within 60 days [Section 11]	As in ARIPA 2017	Based on ARIPA 2017 But often increases the amount to actual necessity.
Resettlement	House: No provision Protection: Yes (Place of worship, graveyards, cremation grounds [Section 3]) Participation: Limited, not direct [as objection in Section 4]	House: Maybe/ not mandatory [Section-9 (4)] Protection: Absent, (Any land can be acquired for a public purpose and public interest [Section 4(13) proviso] Participation: Limited, secondarily	House: Yes (with no legal provision/backup in ARIPA 2017) Protection: Absent, (graveyard and mosques can be acquired providing reconstruction cost) Participation: Limited	House: Yes, Protection: Yes Participation: Yes
Employment	Not included	Not included	Not included	Not explicitly stated
Benefits sharing	Not included	Not included	Not included	Not included in terms of revenue sharing.

The national laws, namely, the ARIPA 2017 and its predecessor ARIPO 1982, are principally monetary compensation based. These laws have the provisions that the legal landowners are entitled to compensation, the rate of which is fixed considering the average market price (documented sale value) of similar lands in the previous 12 months. However, due to a faulty valuation system and irregularities, a gap prevails between the real market price of land and its documented sale value. This rate was 150% of land value and 100% of structure in the Ordinance of 1982 which was increased in the current law. As per rates of the ARIPA 2017, the compensation is paid at 200% additional to the land value and 100% additional to the value of

structures which often becomes insufficient for land recovery and reconstruction of houses. Considering the gaps between the ARIPA 2017 and the World Bank directives, the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) formulated the RPF 2020. This widened the rate to the actual necessity of replacement lands or 200% of the average market price of the land whichever is higher. Similarly, if the 100% rate additional to the resettlement value (for house tree, crops, and the like) fixed in the ARIPA falls short in considering actual needs, the RPF 2020 considers additional payment to the affected persons (BEZA, 2020b, p.5–6). For private use of lands, the ARIPA 2017 has a compensation rate of 300% additional to the market price of land. This is, however, not the case for the SEZs implemented by BEZA, as it is implementing them as a government agency. The law has the provisions that the landowners should receive the compensation within 60 days after the land acquisition office receives the money.

As the country lacks a dedicated resettlement policy, a variation in the degree of emphasis on rehabilitation or resettlement additional to monetary compensation is identified across the policy documents. Rehabilitation was not considered in the ARIPO 1982 but was included in the ARIPO 2017 in the sense of providing houses to the evictees without making it a compulsory action. The Ministry of Land formulated the Implementation Guidelines of the ARIPA 2017, stressing that the implementers must rehabilitate all evicted persons (MOL, 2017). The RPF 2020 details each of the resettlement measures to be taken by prescribing the methods and processes (BEZA, 2020b), which, however, are only applicable for land acquisitions in part of the coastal MEZ that happen after 2020. The agrarian SREZ and the transitioning MIEZ were implemented before the formulation of the RPF 2020, and the policy had no effect of these SEZs. However, the RPF 2020 with a broader perspective not only includes provisions for providing houses to the evicted but also takes a participatory approach, suggesting discussion with homeowners to know the actual necessity and preference of households. Beyond the monetary substitution for land, the RPF 2020 states that people losing income by relocation of businesses are to be paid relocation allowances if providing replacement land for relocating business is not possible. There are also agricultural transition allowances in the RPF 2020 which may extend to two to three times the price of the annual produces. In addition, there are provisions in the RPF 2020 for covering any unforeseen impacts or damages faced by the households. Allowances for female-headed households, livelihoods enhancement support such as providing a seeds allowance, and livelihoods training to the households for coping with these unforeseen impacts should they occur are positive examples of recognising human diversity and the differential needs of community members. Thus, the BEZA resettlement policy framework has broader rehabilitation considerations compared to the provisions of the national law ARIPA 2017.

The protection of community infrastructure and common resources is significant in the resettlement process. The national laws such as the ARIPO 1982 and ARIPA 2017 do not leave any

guideline for protecting these. These provisions are, however, included in the RPF 2020. The only thing that was considered in the ARIPO 1982 was that it prohibited the acquisition of graveyards or cremation grounds. In contrast, the ARIPA 2017 considered overcoming the implementation barriers, and walked backwards, allowing the acquisition of such places only with replacement expenditures provided. However, the MOL (2017) stressed the necessity of providing a strong justification for any such case of acquisition. Being only a policy document containing instructions, the MOL (2017) could not go beyond the original provisions of the ARIPA 2017. The RPF 2020 considers these issues and prohibits acquiring any such place, including the buildings or places of educational, cultural, and historical significance. The RPF 2020 also considers the cultural difference of the ethnic and indigenous communities. Considering that the damage to the infrastructures, such as, electricity, gas, water, and other amenities will have a "community-wide impact", the RPF 2020 includes provisions for rebuilding those (BEZA, 2020b, p.7).

There are provisions for community participation in the national legislations (e.g., the ARIPO 1982 and the ARIPA 2017) in an implied way; however, they fail to provide the implementing body with clear guidelines regarding the initial social impact assessment (SIA). The ARIPA 2017 and the implementation guidelines of the Ministry of Land (MOL, 2017), for example, provide guideline for considering potential community protests, the magnitude of displacement before land acquisition starts, and suggesting alternative place if necessary. This is widened in the RPF 2020 as there are community discussions included which means informing the community of the potential benefits and risks of the project. The national legislation of 2017 also has an institutional complaint mechanism, and the arbitrator can increase the compensation amount up to 10% higher than the amount fixed by the Deputy Commissioner according to the ARIPA 2017. However, it lacks a local grievance redress system which is then harmonised by the RPF 2020 as it frames a local committee for redressing grievances.

The SEZs are commonly taken as enclaves with multiple benefits; however, neither the ARIPA 2017 nor the RPF 2020 has any explicit provision for tangible sharing of the benefits in terms of sharing revenues with the affected community members. There is also no provision for direct employment of the affected household members or any safety net available where employment in the SEZs is not possible. Generally, an estimated budgetary framework covering all resettlement needs is stated in the RPF 2020, but it disregarded the longer-term development needs of the communities and did not link the project benefit to the enhancement of the capabilities of the locals to mediate the damages in the context of the appreciating land value.

4.2.2 Issues with implementation of policies

Despite the national legislations being applicable for all land acquisition project, data from interview with government officials, NGO officials and community schoolteachers suggest that

there were significant gaps between the policy provisions and resettlement practices. Although some innovative approaches were often introduced to expedite payment of the compensation money, due to diverse factors this did not work. The challenges of implementation policies regarding compensation are often related to the shortage of logistics in the offices, corrupt practices of the government officials, evil capture of miscreants in the whole compensation system and litigations and disputes about land matters. Despite policies providing guidelines, the weakness of implementation was also seen in providing resettlement houses and protecting common resources. Table 4.2 illustrates the status of payment of monetary compensation in selected three case studies which is characterized by significant delay in the process. Apart from delays in making payments, incidents of misappropriation of money by miscreants cause significant damage to many landowners. The miscreants are a group of people in the land-acquired communities who forge documents, produce false documents in support of fake ownership of land, impersonate real landowners, or often lodge baseless complaints to the land acquisition offices to delay the process of paying compensation and misappropriate compensation money both official and unofficial ways.

Table 4.2:

Status of payment of compensation in three SEZ case studies (2016-2021)

Case Study	Acquisition Number	Year of Acquisition	% of compensation money paid till August 2021	Notes
Coastal MEZ	MEZ (06/2016-17)	2016-17	35.6%	
	MEZ (25/2016-17)	2016-17	68.1%	
	MEZ (01/2017-18)	2017-18	46.4%	
	MEZ (02/2017-18)	2017-18	51.2%	
	MEZ (03/2017-18)	2017-18	00.0%	None of the compensation is paid in the last 3–4 years as assessment by the Department of Forestry is not yet done.
	MEZ (13/2017-18)	2017-18	61.4%	
	MEZ (09/2018-19)	2018-19	23.9%	
	MEZ (07/2020-21)	2020-21	9.9%	
	MEZ (06/2016-17)	2016-17	35.6%	
Agrarian SREZ	SREZ	2015-16	70%-93%	Based on comment of the experts, as they could not give exact data.
Transitioning MIEZ	MIEZ	2018	100%	A direct purchase method was applied.

Source: Government experts provided data from office records during interview.

The data from the interviews with the government officials, however, suggest that implementation practices often transcended the policy provisions which can be a policy inclusion

in the future. Data from the policy expert interview reveal that some privately owned SEZs, such as Sirajganj SEZ (outside of the case studies), were implemented acquiring lands at 300% compensation, however, this did not apply in the private SEZ case (MIEZ) selected for the study. The nontitle holders or de-facto possessors holding land without legal ownership were also compensated in some SEZs such as Sirajganj Economic Zone, Sirajganj District, Bangladesh and Japanese Economic Zone, Narayanganj District, Bangladesh which, although they are not part of the three case studies, can be regarded as examples of a good compensation practice in the SEZs. Detailed implementation practices and issues identified in the process are discussed with the social–geographical features of each case study in the next sub-section.

4.3 Understanding the geographical and social context of livelihoods and implementation of policies in the SEZ communities

The geographical and social–cultural aspects of livelihoods of the community members and implementation of policies are crucially linked for determining livelihoods in the land-acquired SEZ communities. Exploring three case studies, this section identifies significant differences in the geographical and social–cultural arrangements and infrastructural development that assist individuals and households in making choices for attaining their capabilities. Figure 4.1 illustrates the location of the three case studies in the Bangladesh map.

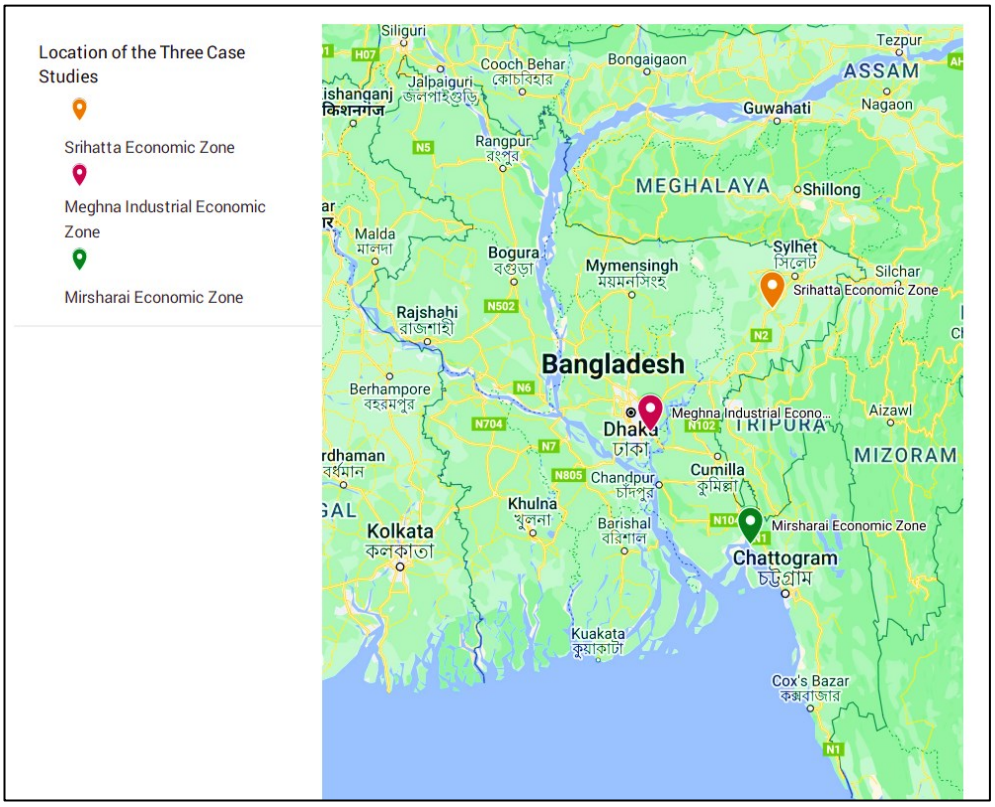

Figure 4.1:

Location of the three SEZs in the map of Bangladesh. Source: Map created from Google (n.d.)

4.3.1 The coastal Mirsharai Economic Zone (MEZ)

As seen in the case description in Chapter 3, the coastal MEZ (GPS location 22.750449, 91.460846) is the largest SEZ in the country, comprising over 30,000 acres of land, which was approved in 2013 and started development in 2015 (BEZA, 2020a, p.45). The MEZ has the distinct landcover of plainlands, mangroves, canals, and seashore as the main types of land in this coastal SEZ. The main road of the community as demonstrated in Figure 4.2, was one of 139 polders constructed in the coastal areas of the country as part of protecting coastal agricultural lands from salinisation (Reinhard *et al.*, 2022) which was a major infrastructure facilitating agriculture in the community. Several sluice gates were installed on the polder to regulate the flow of canal water and protect the community lands from being inundated with saline water during high tide (Paul and Rashid, 2017). These sluice gates also helped drain out the excess rainwater from the community land during low tide. The interviewed community experts suggest that, due to landlessness, smallholding of land, depleting natural resources and little scope for diversifying livelihoods beyond the natural resource bases, the community members mostly maintained low income in the pre-acquisition time. For the landless and small-hold farmers, farming became less profitable and mainly met subsistence needs. Despite this, the members of the community remained in farming and agricultural waged labour due to a lack of choice. In the pre-acquisition time, as Table 4.3 illustrates, the coastal community had a dependence on livelihoods of diverse occupations such as agriculture, livestock rearing, fishing and aquaculture, fry collection, and gathering on community land and forests prior to land acquisition, which Barua and Rahman (2019) also reported in their study based in this coastal Mirsharia region. Artisanal fishing was the most common occupation of households, which was mostly subsistence in nature. Livestock rearing facilitated by the community grazing lands, the mangroves, and the canals was so profitable that some households held hundreds of cattle.

Figure 4.2:

Land cover change in the Mirsharai Economic Zone. Source: Map prepared by researcher from Google Earth (2022a). Image 4.2.1 depicts the pre-acquisition scenario in 2014 and Image 4.2.2 depicts post-acquisition changes in 2022.

Table 4.3:

Types of pre-acquisition means or livelihoods of occupation in the coastal MEZ

Type	Resources involved	Dependent members/ beneficiaries
Agriculture and sharecropping	Private and government land	Landed and landless members
Artisanal fishing	Sea and canals	All households
Fry collection	Sea and canals	Women and children
Aquaculture	Family ponds	Pond owners, well-off households
Livestock rearing	Private lands, government grazing lands, canals	Agricultural families, landless families
Gathering (timber, cow dung, honey, date juice)	Sea, canals, mangroves	Women and individuals from low-income households
Waged work	Agriculture and other	Low-income families and women
Running small enterprises (shops)	Private/government lands adjacent to community road, market	Farming or non-farming households

Source: Data from interviews with government and community experts.

Ownership of land was a determinant of power, influence, and the social hierarchy where households with land and power were placed in the upper tier. Not only the private landowners but also those taking possession and control over the government *khas* lands with unofficial power and influence provided land to the landless in return for money and share of crops. The increase in the number of landless people put a strain on the limited land and common resources in the coastal side. Because the male and the female members of the coastal community had separate roles, destruction of natural resources was harsh on the destitute women who were mostly dependent on common resources. As elsewhere in Bangladesh, as seen in Rahman and Akter (2014), women in the community generally played the homemakers' role and assisted the household members with the farming during harvest time while the males were the main earning members of the households. Female members in most households did not have outdoor economic activities or an attachment to the waged sector (Rahman and Akter, 2014). Activities that women from low-income households were engaged in were animal husbandry, fry collection, and gathering leaves, cow dung and tree branches which, as depicted in Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.3, was reduced significantly, leading to severe stress for the female members. Those from low-income households—particularly female-headed households without support from their

husbands or male members of the household—engage in activities such as agricultural waged work and household work with low, discriminated, and negligible wages.

Figure 4.3:

Land conversion and depletion of natural resources in the coastal MEZ. Source: The top-left image (4.3.1) was retrieved (with written permission) from a report of the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority, BEZA (2020a, p.116) demonstrating the pre-acquisition grazing lands and cattle. Other images are from the researcher's own source captured during the field visit.

Land loss and the damage to natural resource-based occupational activities was further aggravated by diverse issues of compensation and resettlement. Apart from the government lands, private land was also acquired which includes both lands privately owned by households and lands that were allotted by the government to landless households for agricultural use. The extension of the road from the MEZ site to the Dhaka–Chattogram Highway, as illustrated in Figure 4.4, involved the displacement of a large number of people. The figure shows that two lanes of the road were completed while construction of the other two lanes did not start until the end of the field visit of this study. The gateway to the MEZ is constructed indicating the full width of the road for which lands would be acquired in future.

Implementation gaps in the policies in the context of the coastal MEZ are mainly found in the cases of payment of compensation, providing resettlement houses, and protecting natural resources and physical infrastructure. Since 2016, In the coastal MEZ, land acquisitions in eight phases were accomplished. In the highest paid incidence, 68% of the compensation money was paid up to August 2021. Although the land acquisition office at the coastal MEZ set up a

temporary office close to the community for payment of compensation at people's doorsteps without landowners having to travel to the district headquarters, only less than 25% of the total payable money could be disbursed through a month-long payment campaign due to diverse issues with the land documents, disputes, and litigations over the ownership of land. The data presented in Table 4.2 show that, in one instance, not a single payment was made in 3–4 years due to assessment delays by the Department of Forestry. Moreover, as the ARIPA 2017 came into being after notification was issued, compensation in some cases was paid at a lower rate following the ARIPO 1982, which made it difficult for landowners to recover land. The community members living on the roadside were evicted from de facto-held government lands and, hence, were not compensated for the land or for the houses they had lived in. Despite the RPF 2020 providing guidelines, only 189 households were to be provided with resettlement houses, the implementation of which had not started as the data from the expert interviews suggest. Despite policies providing guidelines, natural resources and structures were not protected to minimize community-wide impacts. The mangroves were destroyed, canals were obstructed, and sluice gates were often made non-functional by the land cover changes. A *Majar* (grave of a pious personality) was evicted during the construction of the road as the government experts suggested. Although direct benefit sharing is not specified in the policies, the community was often benefited from the employment and infrastructural improvement such as the new road and the super dyke. The other proposed activities such as construction of mosques, schools, and colleges which are to be implemented in the future are likely to impact the community positively. Despite this, the implementation gaps had adverse impacts not only on the households but also had community wide impacts.

The establishment of the SEZs brought in infrastructural improvements some of which were crucially linked to the livelihoods of the community members. The direct infrastructural development happened through some completed and ongoing construction of the factories inside the MEZ. With USD 19.5 billion approved in investment (BEZA, 2020a), land is allocated for USD 16.7 billion proposed investment where the MEZ intends to produce automobiles, garments and textiles, steel, petrochemicals, shipbuilding, paints, and others creating employment for 1.5 million (BEZA, 2021). As of February 2022, over 7000 people were working in diverse positions. Although most people were recruited in the construction sites, some were working at the BEZA office, banks, and operational factories. Apart from this, the ongoing construction of factories and buildings created opportunities for the locals to engage in activities such as supplying materials to the construction firms in the SEZs. However, employment in or engagement with such supply businesses were not equally accessible to all community members as access is determined by power, influence, networks, recruitment policies, and social norms. Considering the enhancement of skills of the community members, as the interviewed government officials suggested, training would be provided to 30,000 people to recruit to different sectors in the SEZ. Lack of electricity

and physical infrastructure were the main hindrances to the growth of businesses and a paid sector in the community before the arrival of the SEZs. Electrification in the community has impacted people positively as this has made it easier for businesses to grow. The widening and upgrading of the SEZ road from its earlier narrow form reduced travel inconvenience and commute times from the community to the sub-district headquarters. Electrification and improved roads also made it easier to carry and market farm products, commute to access health and other services, and pursue waged work. As shown in Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.4 (4.4.3), a 23-kilometre-long super dyke is constructed along the shoreline for the protection of the coastal MEZ from extreme weather events such as cyclones and tidal surges. The super dyke will also safeguard the community members from frequent cyclones which devasted the coastal area on several occasions, often damaging hundreds of thousands of lives with properties as suggested by Hossain and Mullick (2020). Thus, the improved infrastructure has already created some jobs and is creating many more; has made commuting easier; and has provided safety from weather events. All these positively affect all aspects of the lives and livelihoods of the community members.

Figure 4.4:

Infrastructural development (roads, dyke, and buildings) in the coastal MEZ. Source: Researcher's own photos captured during field visit in January–February 2022.

4.3.2 The agrarian Srihatta Economic Zone (SREZ)

The SREZ (GPS location 24.62704244,91.67042044) is situated in the North-Eastern Moulvibazar District of Bangladesh as indicated in Figure 4.1. The SREZ acquired 352.12 acres of land in 2015 which includes both privately owned agricultural land and government-owned

community water bodies. Before land acquisition took place, this was a farming-based or agrarian community with rice being the main agricultural produce as in most other parts of the country. There were two crops of rice produced in the lands; *aman* and *boro. Aman* is a rain-fed variety planted during the Monsoon (June–July) and harvested in October–November. *Boro,* on the other hand, is a dry season crop planted during the winter in December–January and harvested in April–May. There were other crops cultivated in the lands but those were not as plentiful as rice was. Although households owned cattle, that was mostly possessed by people who had agriculture. Fishing was not a major economic activity in the community; however, people used to get fish for subsistence or household consumption from the community swamp lands during the wet season. Figure 4.5 illustrates the River Kushiara, the main river in the district which is situated close to the North-West corner of the SREZ and was a source of fishing for some members, access to which was not restricted by the SREZ. However, for decades, the Beri *Baor*, a dead arm of the River Kushiara with an area of over 100 acres was also a source of fish for the community, which was fully acquired for the SREZ. According to the interviewed experts, the acquired land in the community was the habitat for ducks and other poultry all year round. Most households had ponds in their home premises or homesteads which enabled them to engage in aquaculture. Apart from these, the Sherpur Bazar, a hub for the business conglomerate, was within a kilometre distance which provided commodities and occupational means for some members. A fraction of the members comprised of a Hindu caste called *Sutradhar* who had worked as carpenters although farming was the principal economic activity for most households.

Figure 4.5:

Land conversion and infrastructural development in the agrarian SREZ. Source: Two maps at the top generated from Google Earth (2022c) which are images of 2017 and 2021, respectively. Three

images at the bottom are photos of infrastructure and construction work taken by the researcher during field study. The area inside the yellow mark indicates the acquired land for the SREZ.

Apart from agriculture, as Table 4.4 illustrates, dependence on foreign remittances was a distinct feature in the SREZ community which was vital to determine the social hierarchy. What Ahmed *et al.* (2015) suggest has greater resemblance for the residents of the Sylhet region who had a long tradition of settling in the UK (Adams, 1987; Choudhury, 1993; Hossain, 2014), Europe, and other parts of the globe which is also suggested by Gardner (2018). The members of the households were still settling in Europe and the Middle East. Household members with comparatively higher education and greater income and assets tend to settle in Europe and other developed countries while those with lower education and less assets choose the countries of the Middle East. Those who had no or little education and resources were unable to grasp this opportunity and remained in the lower tier of the hierarchy in the community. Experts commented that, after the death of the first-generation settlers in the UK, the trend of sending remittances to Bangladesh appeared to have gradually reduced which put a strain on the income situation of the households. With overseas remittances, ownership of land remained central to the social hierarchy as the lands of the expatriates were held by the relatives, family members, and other community members over whom the owners had substantial influence.

Table 4.4:

Pre-acquisition livelihoods of occupation in the agrarian SREZ

Type	**Resources involved**	**Dependent members /beneficiaries**
Agriculture and sharecropping (rice and vegetables)	Private lands	Landed and landless members
Remittance (significant source of household income)	Individual and household resources, networks	Individuals for households with affordability
Carpentry (limited)	Individual skills	S*utradhar* (caste)
Waged work	Farm and off farm	Landless, low-income household
Fishing (subsistence)	River Kushiara, Beri *Baor*	Only few adjacent households
Aquaculture (subsistence)	Family ponds	Owners of ponds
Livestock rearing	Community lands, homestead	Households with agriculture
Collection (cow dung, leaves, branches of trees, herbs)	Community lands	Male and female

Source: Interviews with NGO officials, schoolteachers, and government officials

Pre-acquisition livelihoods of occupation demonstrated in Table 4.4 were undergoing transition driven by social–economic changes. Community members with higher income and assets often reside in Moulvibazar town or Sylhet city in order to access advanced education and health services and economic opportunities, with their houses and lands being maintained by relatives or other household members. The *Sutradhars,* who traditionally depended on their social or caste occupation of carpenters, were no longer able to maintain themselves with little income and were engaged in farming and farm-based waged work. The profitability of agriculture has reduced with increased expenses. Apart from these, the tougher terms of getting land, increased expenses of agriculture, and increased wages of farm-based workers made farming difficult in the community in general. The sharecroppers and leaseholders were engaged in subsistence farming not because they liked it but because they had no alternative means of living. Community members often returning from abroad and some others in the community are being engaged in activities such as small enterprises, shopkeeping, and other service sector employments. The male members were the earning members in the households while the female members from the wealthy and solvent households mostly worked indoors in non-economic domestic works. Only women from the low-income households were engaged in farm-based work or domestic aid work to earn a living.

According to the interviewed government officials, the land for the SREZ was acquired in two phases in the same year and had issues with payment of compensation, as seen in Table 4.2. The first phase included the community lands alone and later the Beri *Baor* was included in the acquisition list which reduced natural resources, thereby damaging agriculture including sharecropping, animal husbandry, and gathering. In the beginning, the incident of land acquisition was met with resistance from community members as it involved loss of farmland and eviction. The realisation of their inability to stop the process of acquisition resulted in a change in the overall scenario of unwillingness and the community members were later demanding the promised fair compensation, rehabilitation, and employment to make up for the damage to their livelihoods. A portion of the community members who were not the direct users of their lands and mostly lived abroad were very enthusiastic about land acquisition, thinking that the lands are of no direct use to them while the acquisition would provide them cash which, otherwise, was not possible to sell off. Even after the government acquired the whole 352 acres of land, some community members requested the responsible officials to acquire more lands for the SREZ speculating that they would get higher value for their lands. Data from Table 4.2 demonstrate that monetary compensation was not received by a significant number of landowners even after six

years of land acquisition. A seen in the overall context of Bangladesh (Sultana, 2010), female heirs rarely claim their share of compensation which is a hindrance in pursuing their economic means.

Data from the interviews with the experts reveal that the focus of the policy in the agrarian SREZ case study was merely on providing compensation to the community members which could not be done effectively due an evil capture of miscreants in the total compensation system. Apart from delays caused by government authorities, land-losing individuals faced diverse institutional and non-institutional barriers in the process of receiving the monetary compensation. Various issues in this regard included lack of accountability and corrupt practices of officials, intentional litigation by syndicates, and fraudulent appropriation of monetary compensation which together construct the evil capture. According to the interviewed experts from the agrarian SREZ, a significant number of landowners in this community lost their legally entitled compensation through the misappropriation by miscreant groups of *dalals* (brokers and deed writers), officials from the land acquisition offices, and local powerful politicians who often hold public offices and are in control of the entire syndicate. This often ranged from producing forged documents of ownership at the personal level to tampering with land records preserved in different government Record Rooms which is a serious issue in the land management system. Although the rates were often profitable compared to the market price, due to the delays and misappropriation, the policy goals were not achieved. In the case of the resettlement houses for the evicted people, this case study outlined a resettlement project which was not implemented. The acquisition of the Beri *Baor*, a waterbody used by the community as a source of water and fish, is an example of common resources being damaged by this SEZ.

Infrastructural development of the agrarian SREZ remains limited inside the SEZ without significant direct effect on the community members. According to an official of BEZA, with a total proposed investment of over USD 1.3 billion on spinning, ceramics, glass, steel, and garments, about 43,831 jobs are expected to be created in this SEZ for which the companies are carrying out the construction work of their plants. However, the pace of implementation has slowed due to impact of the COVID-19 outbreak in early 2020. Despite land being acquired in 2015, only one company with limited production activity was operational up to January 2022 where some people both from the community and outside are recruited. As seen in the coastal MEZ, most people in the agrarian SREZ are also engaged in construction work with about 1000 people working in this sector. Targeting the inward migration of workers and increased economic activities, some community members invested in small enterprises such as grocery, coffee shops, and others. The land-losing community members were also recruited in diverse positions including in the BEZA office as promised during land acquisition. However, the interviewed experts reported that the representation of the members from land-losing households and female members in such recruitment was very low. The experts also stressed that paid work may benefit the young women

and women from low-income households as the older female members and women from affluent families do not take up outdoor paid work.

4.3.3 The transitioning Meghna Industrial Economic Zone (MIEZ)

The MIEZ is located (GPS location 23.647529, 90.585413) in the Sonargaon sub-district of the Narayanganj District, which is close to Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh. Because of the developments in the jute industry, Narayanganj was compared to the Scottish city of Dundee, being called the 'Dundee of the East' (Noman *et al.*, 2016). Before the MIEZ was established in September 2018 on 110 acres of land, parts of the district of Narayanganj including the City of Narayanganj were already an industrial area with over half of the country's knitwear and one-thirds of garment manufacturing being located in the district. The expert interview data show that the sub-district of Sonargaon had steel and engineering, garments, jute mills, sugar mills, and aluminium mills making it one of the significant business and industrial hubs of the district. The Sonargaon region has historical significance as it was once the capital of the country until 1610 (Noman *et al.*, 2016; Van Schendel, 2020). The Museum of Folk Art and the ruins of the abandoned Panam city, which are tourist attractions, are situated close to the MIEZ site (Khan, 2009; Noman *et al.*, 2016). According to the interviewed community experts, despite poverty, many people of the region considered themselves descendants of a superior legacy and were not very industrious by nature.

Figure 4.6:

Map of Meghna Industrial Economic Zone before and after land acquisition. Source: Map produced by the researcher from Google Earth (2022b)

The MIEZ is located within Mograpara Union (a rural administrative unit) which was adjacent to the Dhaka–Chattogram Highway. Although farming was still present in the rural communities in Sonargaon, the transitioning MIEZ community was the least dependent on farming compared to the other two communities and the changes were happening rapidly over the last decade. Figure 4.6 illustrates the land cover before and after the land acquisition in the MIEZ. The lands acquired for the MIEZ were mostly low, marshy, and unsuitable for farming where the low-yielding agriculture and subsistence aquaculture were the sources of income for the households, as depicted in Table 4.5. The growth in businesses, industrialisation, and other

service sectors pulled most of the community members to off-farm occupations including the paid sector. Some rich households with large-hold lands in the community used to live in the capital city of Dhaka and their lands were sharecropped by others for subsistence farming. These community members often had relations to the lands for generations and the landowners offered patronage to the community-based users. Even members of those households with subsistence farming were engaged in other economic activities such as paid work or businesses. Although not quite to the same extent as found in the SREZ case, households had linkages with overseas remittance as some participants formerly lived in different countries.

Table 4.5:

Pre-acquisition livelihoods of occupation in the transitioning MIEZ

Type	Resources involved	Dependent members / beneficiaries
Agriculture and sharecropping (rice and vegetables)	Private lands	Landed and landless members
Small and medium enterprises	Household resources	Members with funds
Paid work/waged work	Infrastructure and skills	Male and female
Remittance	Family resources	Households with affordability
Aquaculture (subsistence)	Household ponds	Pond owners

Source: Interview with NGO officials, government officials, and local schoolteachers

As the land that was acquired for the MIEZ were lowlands mostly covered with water and hyacinths during the wet season, as shown in Figure 4.6, agriculture was not very profitable in the community. The main crops were rice, wheat, potatoes, and vegetables but crop yield was not significant as most of the lands remained uncultivated. Some members of the community used to travel to other parts of the district to work in the paid sector before the arrival of the MIEZ. The community, although adjacent to the national highway, has low infrastructure within it. The community road, as Figure 4.7 illustrates, was upgraded to a *pucca* road just a year before the field visit and most of the community that was also without electricity in the pre-acquisition time now has electricity. The houses that were within the currently acquired land for the MIEZ were not well connected by road communication.

Figure 4.7:

Infrastructural Development and Land Use Changes in the Transitioning MIEZ. Source: Researcher's own source captured during field visit in November–December 2021

Considering the mode of acquisition, the transitioning MIEZ case study is distinct compared to the other two cases as the MIEZ is privately owned and a direct purchase method was principally opted rather than acquiring land under compulsory land acquisition by law. The MIEZ authority also used the people with influence to convince the unwilling landowners who were paid a percentage of the land value for their services. There were land deals which created scopes for some community members to gain significant wealth. For the land being directly purchased, the national land acquisition policies regarding compensation were not in effect in this case. As the money was paid directly to the landowners, no incident of misappropriation was reported in this case. A direct purchase system should ideally be based on negotiation which was only done as a community-wide discussion to fix the rates. However, land was often acquired with coercion on the landowners compelling them to leave their land and place of residence. Although the national legislation—namely, the ARIPA 2017and the BEZA RPF 2020 —stress improving resettlement houses and minimising land acquisition, none of these is effective in this case study. The site manager of MIEZ reported that the evicted people were not provide any resettlement house. Nevertheless, the MIEZ acquired 130 acres of land expanding the zone from its approved 110 acre causing further displacement in the community. A community road was permanently closed with its direction being changed due to the implementation of the SEZ.

The MIEZ is the fastest grown SEZ considering industrialisation and employment and was implemented within the shortest time after land acquisition. Although most lands were acquired between 2016 and 2017, the zone came to operation promptly in September 2018 which

facilitated the community members as businesses and services in the locality developed. Despite being a very small SEZ compared to the other two case studies the MIEZ recruited about 10,000 people in the fully operational factories. Nine foreign companies alongside domestic ones are operating in the MIEZ and the key sectors are mobile phone manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, textile chemicals, paints, others textile products, and water and beverages. This case study is identified as the prototypical case study of the SEZ communities because, as other SEZs grow, those are expected to undergo the same changes as the MIEZ. As for the participation of women in the paid sector, there is a changing trend in the community after the MIEZ came into being. Formerly, women who needed work could not opt for paid work beyond the boundary of the household. In contrast to the other two cases, the tendency of female members in this community to participate in paid work was greater and underwent further transition allowing greater access of women to the paid sector. The community was already in transition from the pre-acquisition time, and there were some social crises that were often severe during the land acquisition. Incidences of social crimes such as thefts, extortion and clashes are frequent in the zone area. As the community experts report, in extreme cases these clashes even led to the murder of community members involved in the land deals. Although the MIEZ has been operational for several years, Figure 4.6 demonstrates that land is being acquired for the extension of the zone beyond its approved 110 acres.

4.4 Conclusion

The key findings of this chapter are that the quantity of land acquired and the mode of acquisition of land varies across case studies. The case studies also have different levels of progression in terms of implementation of the SEZs which is directly related to the creation of employment and other opportunities such as infrastructural development. This chapter also finds that the compensation and resettlement policies are inadequate and are poorly implemented in the context of Bangladesh. As there is no dedicated resettlement policy in Bangladesh, the land acquisition policy is used for compensating the affected landowners. However, due to a lack of clear guidelines and inadequate provisions resettlement activities are poorly executed in the SEZs and are narrowly focused on the land-losing individuals.

These findings are significant as they are related to the key aspects of the conceptual framework constructed around the means to achieve, freedom to achieve and achievement. Monetary compensation with resettlement in the sense of accommodation and livelihood support as depicted in Cernea (1997) is a very crucial means of achieving the core capabilities of nourishment, income and wealth, accommodation, employment, education, health and other core capabilities identified in the conceptual framework. Although identified as a capability in itself, employment can be an effective means of achieving multiple capabilities as seen in Naz and

Bögenhold (2018). Similarly, benefit sharing is sought to compensate the land-losing individuals in the long run in the context of appreciating land value in the land-acquired rural communities (Atahar, 2020). Compensation based on legal entitlement and the absence of resettlement, employment and benefit sharing can deprive capabilities of individuals. Failing to protect natural and social resources can also affect the economic and social lives of individuals. Thus, the attainment, fulfilment and enhancement of these core capabilities can be affected by inadequate provisions and poor execution of the policies. This can negatively impact the economic aspects, social-affective aspects, and personal aspects of the well-being of the community members. This analysis of the latest enactment on land acquisition and resettlement in Bangladesh helps us understand that the policies are reviewed with improved rates of compensation compared to the earlier policies as seen in Atahar (2013), Zaman (1996) and Zaman and Khatun (2017). However, when considering the overall improvement in the policy domain, this chapter contributes with the evidence that a significant change regarding resettlement is found neither in the policies nor in the implementation practices.

Chapter 5: Displacement, Resettlement, and Development Impacting the Capabilities of the Land-losing Community Members

5.1 Introduction

This chapter investigates how the land acquisition, change of ownership, possession, and reduction in the availability of land and resources and the arrival of new opportunities bring about changes in the capabilities of land-losing community members in three SEZs; namely, the coastal Mirsharai Economic Zone (MEZ), the agrarian Srihatta Economic Zone (SREZ), and the transitioning Meghna Industrial Economic Zone (MIEZ). A large body of literature highlighted dispossession and displacement in the SEZs with resettlement issues in diverse global contexts. The literature also shows that both land and opportunities brought by development projects are crucial for the livelihoods of individuals in rural communities. However, little is known about how land acquisition for the newly established 100 SEZs, one of the largest phenomena of land acquisition in the country, impacts the members of diverse communities in Bangladesh. Resource changes in the land-acquired SEZs happen through both the immediate loss of land and natural resources, eviction of houses and structures with reversal of damages through resettlement services, and the arrival of opportunities through development. Sticking to the land loss, eviction, and reversal measures, the focus of this chapter is the change of possession of land, availability of resettlement services, and the arrival of new opportunities and their impacts on the capabilities of community members who resided in the communities. The broad area of land acquisition and resettlement is explored by answering two questions: *How are diverse forms of displacement and dispossession with the resettlement measures experienced by community members in the SEZs*? *How are the capabilities of the land-losing community members impacted by the change of resources through displacement and infrastructural development*? Answering these questions will address part of the second objective (the other part is addressed in Chapter 6) of this study which is to examine the impacts of resource change on the capabilities of the community members in the SEZs within the dynamics of rural livelihoods.

With a view to knowing the changes caused by land acquisition, this chapter explores how livelihood means such as access to land, agriculture, and fishing, representing the ability to make choices for means, are impacted due to land reduction, eviction from houses, and damage of physical infrastructure and how they affect the core capabilities of the community members. As the well-being achievements of the dispossessed and displaced are significantly dependent on the

resettlement measures and arrival of new opportunities through the establishment of the SEZs, this chapter also focuses on monetary compensation, resettlement houses, and protection and reconstruction of natural resources and physical infrastructure with emphasis on the arrival of new means of living through the SEZs. The impacts on achievement or core capabilities of the community members are seen through economic, social–affective, and personal (physio-psychological) aspects of well-being as stated in the conceptual and analytical framework of the study. Sub-section 5.2 explores the forms of direct and indirect displacement often relating to legal or de-jure dispossession and de facto dispossession experienced by the community members as they can have adverse effects on their means of living. In the context of resource loss, reversal measures, and opportunities, sub-section 5.3 explores the impacts of land dispossession and displacement with resettlement and development on the core capabilities such as nourishment, income and employment, accommodation, employment, emotions and affiliation, bodily health, education, identity relating to the economic, social–affective, and personal (physio-psychological) aspects of the well-being of the land-losing community members. These core capabilities are derived from the human needs and Central Human Capabilities as synthesised in Chapter 2. Sub-section 5.4 concludes the chapter by relating its findings to the earlier studies. Questions regarding land acquisition, compensation, resettlement, income and wealth changes, employment, health and education were asked during the interview with the land-losing participants. A detailed topic guide for the semi-structured interview with community participants is attached in Appendix F. The comments and quotes from the participants are written up from their own perceptions and narratives.

5.2 Displacement and dispossession affecting means of the land-losing community members

From the three case study areas, 45 participants from land-losing and/or evicted households were interviewed. Out of the 45 land-losing or evicted participants, 20 (13 males, seven females) are from the coastal MEZ community, 14 (eight males, six females) are from the agrarian SREZ community, and 11 (seven males, four females) are from the transitioning MIEZ community. Considering the age group, 11 participants are aged 30 years or less; 23 are aged between 31 and 54 years; and 11 are aged 55 years or over. In the context of education, 16 attended to primary level; 12 are below secondary (grades 6–9) level; and the remaining 17 had completed secondary to postgraduation level education. Data from the participant interviews reveal that the participants experienced diverse forms of displacement and dispossession in the communities. The most common forms of displacement are identified as the direct loss of land and eviction from houses which were experienced by all of these participants. There were also some other issues relating to displacement as some people, beyond their acquired lands, faced

damage to land and property due to waterlogging caused by the SEZ. Participants also reported their exclusion from the surrounding environment due to the fencing of the acquired land that resulted in restricted access to means of living such as to the sea, waters, forests, grazing lands, common resources and, often, means of communication such as direct access to highways. Some participants shared that the stability of their lives was disrupted as they were likely to be displaced for a second time. As seen from the social–geographical contexts in Chapter 4, the participants also shared the same experiences that coercive means of displacement were applied in all three communities. Table 5.1 illustrates the sample demographic features of the land-losing participants in their SEZ communities.

Table 5.1:

Sample demographic description of the land losing and evicted participants

Sl. No., Participant Code & pseudonym	Participant Type	Case Location	Male/ Female	Age	Education	Occupation/ Income source
01: PI01AM Faijul	Land-losing, Evicted	MEZ	Male	52	Below Secondary	Unemployed, savings from remittance

The full table is attached in Appendix A

Data from the interviews with land-losing individuals from the coastal MEZ reveal that the acquisition of private and government-owned *khas* (unused/fallow) lands, destruction of the mangroves, loss of access to the sea due to the acquisition of the coastal lands and fencing of the MEZ, and filling in of canals resulted in reduced means for the community members. The reduction of means was reported to be loss of agriculture, loss of fishing in the sea and canals, loss of cattle due to reduced farming, reduced space in the household, and reduced community grazing land. The female participants from this community reported that reduced access to the sea, canals, and mangroves affected their activities such as collection of fries from the sea, timber and branches from the forest, and farm-based waged work which provided means of income and living. The eviction and relocation of houses and shops and the closure of some businesses also reduced the means of income.

Land-losing participants in the agrarian SREZ community reported that land acquisition affected them mostly through eviction from houses and the reduction in household wealth with loss and reduction in the amount of agriculture. Although fishing was not a significant means of living in the community, the acquisition of a large water body called the Beri *Baor* affected the individuals who used that as a source of fish for subsistence. Besides, the community land used to be inundated during the rainy season including paddy fields and other lowlands were also sources of subsistence fishing for many in the community. Loss of income through aquaculture and cattle was also reported. Apart from the direct loss of land and houses, participants also reported in-situ

displacement by degradation of land and loss of agriculture due to waterlogging caused by the filling in of a water channel by the SREZ as demonstrated in Figure 5.1. Participants from this community reported that they had huge social damage due to disagreements and disputes arising over the share of compensation. Some landowners residing overseas were willing to give the land to the SREZ which created unnecessary dispossession and eviction of the de facto possessors. Damaged familial and social relations and broken networks with relatives often affected their economic means and they were deprived of the money sent from overseas.

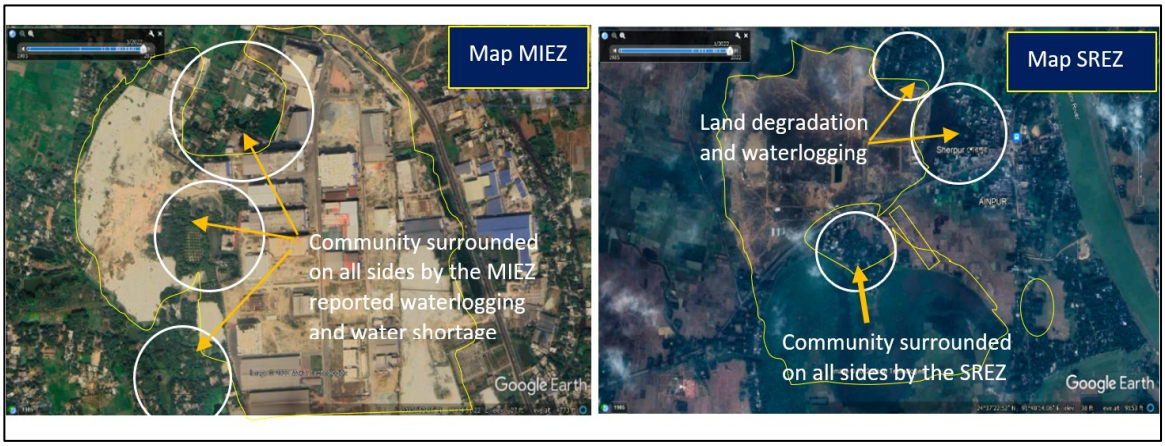

Figure 5.1:

Indirect or in situ displacement in the transitioning MIEZ and agrarian SREZ. Source: Map MIEZ is produced by the researcher from Google Earth (2022b) and Map SREZ was produced from Google Earth (2022c)

The participants from the transitioning MIEZ reported the least dependence on agricultural lands. The members from the land-losing and evicted households were already engaged in some other means of income as the community was in an advanced stage compared to the other two communities. However, evidence shows that some participants regarded farming as their own means of income without being dependent on others. The loss of private ponds also affected their ability to do subsistence aquaculture which provided food security to the households. Land acquisition in this community affected the participants mostly through the loss of valuable lands, social–environmental degradation, inconvenience of relocation, and humiliation and mental stress caused by coercion applied by the authorities. As demonstrated in Figure 5.1, the members are affected by the acquisition of the surrounding lands around their residences in the MIEZ community.

5.3 Resettlement support, opportunities, and coping strategies impacting the core capabilities of land-losing individuals

Despite diverse forms of dispossession and displacement causing damages to the means of living, the participants' experience with monetary compensation and resettlement services was mostly unpleasant. A review of the policies and data from expert interviews, as presented in sub-section 4.3 of Chapter 4, reveals several issues affecting the means and choices of the participants. The evidence from the data from the interviews with both the experts and the land-losing participants suggests that, with some exceptions in part of the agrarian SREZ community, compensation received by landowners was low. This was due to the faulty valuation process based on the average market price of the land in the last 12 months, as stated in the policies discussed in Chapter 4. That most participants from the coastal MEZ and agrarian SREZ community either received or were going to receive compensation at a lower rate than the current market price of land had an adverse impact on their ability to choose alternative means through land purchase or other investments. Due to a faulty system and often corrupt practices of assessment of rates, as seen in the agrarian SREZ case, discriminatory rates were applied. Owners of the low-lying lands often distant from the main road in the agrarian SREZ received between Taka 250,000 and 812,000 per decimal (an acre equals 100 decimals) while some participants with better lands in the same community received Taka 50,000 per decimal. However, findings both from expert interviews and participant interviews show that compensation rates were higher than the actual market price for some landowners in the agrarian SREZ.

Apart from the low rates, non-payment of compensation, misappropriation of compensation, and delays in the payment were some other issues that the land-losing participants reported to have affected them severely. About 60% (12 out of 20) land-losing or evicted participants in the coastal MEZ reported that they either did not receive monetary compensation at all or received partial compensation while part of it was pending in the office which they had visited for five to six years. Similarly, about 65% (nine out of 14) of the land-losing and displaced participants in the agrarian SREZ were not compensated at all, only partially compensated, or faced compensation loss due to misappropriation (six out of 14 participants). All land-losing and evicted participants from the transitioning MIEZ reported that they received their money; however, they failed to buy replacement farmland as the land price increased manyfold after the land acquisition.

Over half of the land-losing participants from three case studies were displaced from their places of residence with most of them reporting that they had significant difficulty coping with the changed situation. As known from the expert interview data presented in Chapter 4, data from the interviews with the community participants also suggest that the delays in the

implementation of the resettlement projects compelled the individuals to take shelter on the government lands, on their neighbours' land, or rent houses, spending money from their limited savings. Evicted participants from the coastal MEZ were found to have taken microcredit from the NGOs to buy possession of government lands from influential locals possessing government lands unlawfully and shifting or building temporary huts.

Apart from experiencing issues with compensation and resettlement, the land-losing and evicted individuals were found to be engaged in new economic activities—e.g., paid work, business and small enterprises, construction business and supply of material to the construction sites, renting of houses, and transportation and driving. Table 5.2 demonstrates that participants from all three case studies engaged in the new occupational means; however, land-losing participants from the transitioning MIEZ community have 171% engagement, signifying that some participants and/or their household members were engaged in more than one new activity. While paid employment was the top activity of land-losing individuals in the coastal MEZ and agrarian SREZ, it was comparatively less popular in the transitioning MIEZ due to the availability of other opportunities in the community.

Table 5.2:

Land-losing participants engaged in new means of income

Case study	New means of Income and living	Engaged land-losing participants/household members
Coastal MEZ	Paid employment MEZ (offices, banks, and factories)	35%
	Waged work outside the MEZ	5%
	Business/ small enterprises	20%
	Construction business/supply of material	10%
	Transportation (driving auto rickshaws, cars)	15%
Agrarian SREZ	Paid employment (office and factories)	36%
	Business/small enterprises	28%
	Construction business/supply of materials	21%
Transitioning MIEZ	Paid employment (offices, factories)	27%
	Business/ small enterprises	72%
	Renting out house	63%
	Transportation	9%

Source: Sample demographic data analysed from interviews with 45 land-losing participants

5.3.1 Impacts on the core capabilities of individuals in the coastal MEZ community

Participants from the coastal MEZ community reported that the loss of houses, farmland and farming, fishing, cattle and gathering in community land adversely affected their core capabilities. Land acquisition and eviction without providing resettlement houses triggered the loss of farmlands, houses, agriculture, fishing, cattle, and collection and gathering affected the participants' ability to be nourished and secure income, wealth, and accommodation. The de facto users who previously lived on the government land not only lost their houses but also were removed from their places of identity. The fact that participants had visited the office for over five–six years for compensation shows that delays damaged their income and wealth, causing significant mental stress. Some participants who resettled on the acquired land itself or lived adjacent to the newly built MEZ road were under perennial psychological stress as they would be removed from the place anytime in the future. However, some land-losing participants who received compensation or gained access to employment and business opportunities in the MEZ have increased income and wealth and reported increased economic and personal (physio-psychological) well-being.

Land acquisition affected the economic activities of the women, restricting their capabilities such as nourishment, income, and wealth which are significant from the stance of human diversity outlined in the capabilities approach. The women (total female participants 28) from the land-losing households (16) were found not to have received any compensation as per their share of the inheritance. As seen in the literature, due to social norms women generally do not claim a share of the inheritance; instead, the money was generally received and spent by the male members. Women in female-headed households (total six) across communities failing to receive compensation were found to be living wretched lives. This deprived them of their ability to secure means or necessities and disrupted their ability to attain economic security. This also affected their ability to protect themselves from discrimination, humiliation, and mental stress.

Box 5.1:

The story of Hamim, a young male participant

Hamim is a 22-year-old land-losing male participant with Higher Secondary (12th Grade)-level education from the coastal MEZ community. He lives with his father, mother, two brothers, and two sisters in the household with three more sisters married off. Being adjacent to the highway, part of his house has gone inside the new road. They are living with the apprehension of being evicted at any time as the house is inside the acquired land of the MEZ. The

participant's father has farming based on sharecropping and the farming is reduced after the land acquisition as the lands are scarce now. During the acquisition time, they had livestock consisting of 14–15 buffalos, 5–6 cows, and about 100 sheep. They also had many poultry in the house. The participant reports that they now have only three cows and no buffalos, and this is because of the reduction of the grazing land and space. He also used to catch fish and fries, which have been permanently lost as the seashore has been acquired and converted to the MEZ. To cope with the changed situations, he opened a shop in the community in 2020 which is providing an income of about BDT 15,000 [about GBP 120–130] a month. Although his personal income has increased, he was worried about his two brothers who neither got access to work in the MEZ nor could do the demanding construction work. The loss of the cattle was the biggest loss of his household wealth. Besides, he has an extremely uncertain life as he was promised that he would be provided with a resettlement house. Knowing that they would be leaving this house soon, they did not repair the holes in the roof and suffered for the whole of the rainy season. In the diminishing farming community, they know they cannot remain in the place where he was born and lived all his life.

De facto possessors of land who were removed or likely to be removed from their long-possessed coastal government land and houses had an adverse effect the core capabilities of accommodation and personal identity and dignity. The agonising story of a 22-year-old male participant in Box 5.1, whose house was acquired and who could be evicted at any time, portrays the deprivation of capabilities of a person through eradicating his identity attached to his place of living. His narrative shows that, although he coped with the situations of land and cattle loss by opening a shop which provides him with a moderate income, deprivation of his capability of accommodation is associated with humiliation and damage to emotions. He reported:

> I think, many have the ability to repair [their houses]. But they are not doing that... They think that would be a waste of their hard-earned money. They are going to get a house soon. This also happened to us. The tin [iron sheet] roof of our house had holes. Water licked and trickled on us when we were sleeping at night. We suffered for over six months. [But] we did not waste money on repairing... thinking that we are going to get a house soon. *(Hamim, Male displaced, deals in small business in the coastal MEZ)*

Elderly participants reported that reduced amount of land, loss of access to the sea and the mangroves, and reduced agriculture and availability of grazing lands reduced the number of cattle often from over 100 to only a few. A land-losing 65-year-old participant reported that he

lost only 0.10 acres of land for which he received compensation at such a low rate that he could not buy any land afterwards. Although his house was not acquired or damaged, reduced grazing land compelled him to sell off all his buffalos, cows, and sheep. This affected his capability for nourishment, income, and wealth as cattle were a source of milk for the purpose of household consumption as well as for selling in the market. To narrate his changed situation, he stated:

> I had 50–60 Cattle. Those were cows and buffalos... And at least 80-100 sheep were in my house. So, that's what I always depended on. I never counted the income... Whenever I was in need of money, I sold those... And there was milk in the household… The forest is gone… The grazing lands and the canals were very helpful for the buffalos. There is no grass now. How can you keep the buffalos? Farming has decreased. If you want to buy hay, those are also expensive now. Without *khas* [grazing] lands you cannot afford to keep them. So, I sold them gradually. *(Zeabul, Male 65, land-losing from coastal MEZ)*

This quote portrays that the participant underwent severe damage to income and household wealth which had an adverse impact on his economic well-being.

The eviction of shops due to the construction of roads caused a temporary closure of businesses affecting individuals' ability to secure income in the coastal MEZ. A female participant from the coastal MEZ community shared that her husband was running a shop which was relocated and closed for several months due to land acquisition and extension of the zone road. Even after the construction was completed, the shifting of the shop to a new place in the changed physical environment resulted in the loss of income for her household. Her husband was not compensated for his evicted shop and the household faced financial loss through having to the reconstruction of the shop at their own expense. This also damaged income due to the temporary closure of the shop which was a deprivation of their economic capabilities, such as income and wealth. She reported:

> The zone's road removed the shop. Our business was damaged... but we received no compensation. The government promised many things... But we received nothing. Earlier the shop was near the old road. That was very busy. We had an income of 1200-1300 Taka a day. Now that has dropped. He says, and often I also sit in the shop [and know]… that it is sometimes 500-600 and often it is 800-900 taka on the good days… This is not all. We received no money for rebuilding the

> shop. After about 5-6 months, we set it up again. *(Marzana, Female 28, MEZ, homemaker and runs family business)*

The quoted evidence illustrates that, despite the shop being rebuilt, it became disconnected from the new road allowing fewer people to visit the shop. Although they were able to recover from the damages caused by land acquisition, this decreased earnings of the household from the shop significantly.

Land-losing participants employed in the coastal MEZs (five out of 20 participants, seven in the household context) often with increased personal income identified themselves to be worse off considering the loss of wealth and income in the context of the households. A 22-year-old land-losing participant reported that 48 decimals (about half an acre) of his farmland was acquired by the MEZ damaging part of his house which they needed to repair. A roadside shop owned and run by him was also evicted by the road project without compensation. His father used to do farming and additionally worked in a rice mill which was also evicted and subsequently closed permanently. He is also stressed about the long pending compensation for the lands as well as getting evicted fully when the other two lanes of the road are constructed. Although he was recruited as an office associate in the administrative office of BEZA in the MEZ, he assessed his situation to be worse off in the context of the household:

> My father used to work in a mill. I had a shop... So, together we could often have 20–22 thousand taka a month... and even more... Often, for some months, the mill remained closed... he did not have work then. At that time, he used to do other things... He had farming... May be caught fish as most people did... So, [always] there was some sort of earning. But if I consider the 16,000 Taka I am getting now, this is an increased income for me. But why [consider] only earning? Why not the asset we had? *(Risalat, male 22, land-losing and employed)*

The loss of land caused damage to the income and permanent wealth of the household which they could not recover due to the compensation not being paid. He stressed that the compensation rates were already low and the land price was increasing every day. Delays in receiving the compensation and further eviction from the house to which his social identity was attached could make him both landless and homeless in the future, affecting his core capabilities of nourishment, income and wealth, accommodation, emotions, and personal identity.

Apart from waged employment, land-losing participants with networks and access to opportunities reported that the establishment of the coastal MEZ enhanced their ability to secure

income and wealth. A 55-year-old land-losing participant reported that dealing in the business of supplying construction materials to the MEZ increased his income and wealth significantly.

> It [income] is much more than I had from farming. I have done well with the business. I had to work hard. But I have the reward. I am using good [amount of] capital now. Supplying materials… This gives a good return. Say in some months it is one *lakh* (100,000)... in some others, it is 50,000 Taka. But it is good… it is changed for the better. If I had one Taka in the past, it is five Taka now. *(Shibul, 55-year-old land-losing male dealing in business in the coastal MEZ)*

As the quote demonstrates, his income and wealth increased and he was well known for his new fortune through the MEZ which he regards as his recreated personal identity and enhanced dignity. He also reported that he was called by the nickname "China" before his name as he made his fortune with the Chinese company. However, he was also unhappy with the recruitment policies of the MEZ where he found his son excluded from employment despite his good connection with some high officials.

Land-losing women from the coastal MEZ community had the worst impacts of land acquisition as they were removed from their land and houses without any compensation. Reduced economic activities of women restricting their core capabilities of nourishment, income, and wealth which is significant from the point of human diversity outlined in the capabilities approach. The women (total female participants 28) from the land-losing households (16) were found not to have received any compensation as per their share of the inheritance. Women, who are the providers for the members of female-headed households (total six across communities), failed to get compensation were found to be living wretched lives. Their daily activities such as agriculture, fishing, fry collection, aquaculture, cattle, and gathering were damaged as a consequence of land loss affecting their economic well-being. Box 5.2 demonstrates the situation of a land-losing and evicted participant of 38 from the coastal MEZ community.

Box 5.2:

The story of participant Sanwara

Sanwara is a 38-year-old widow and mother of three from the coastal MEZ community. In the pre-acquisition times, her husband had a large-hold land with a pond and a large house with several huts. She used to grow rice and vegetables in her land and keep cattle in the house. After meeting her household requirements, she could sell the crops and cattle which provided her with economic solvency. This was enough to maintain a

respectable life in the community with her widowed mother-in-law and three children in the household. Suddenly, the land acquisition brought in huge changes and all her land was taken including her house. She was on the streets overnight. As she had problems with the documents of ownership, she could not receive a single penny as monetary compensation. One of her neighbours offered a place free of cost to build a house to live in temporarily. Due to lack of space, she sold off all the cattle. As the household faced severe income loss, her 17-year-old son, who had just completed his secondary-level education, took up waged work in the MEZ instead of going to college. As her son is young and does not have any experience working in such a physically demanding construction work, he could not work every day. Failing to receive compensation, a resettlement house or a job, she neither has wealth and income nor a house of her own. Living on other's land was not only inconvenient for the family but also humiliating for her as she had everything just a few days back. She reported:

> Currently, I do not have any land, not even a house. This small house… I have managed to build with hardship. I have managed this land from the village… for building the house. And this is not our own land… I was living with respect [in the village]. The amount of land that I had… only a few households had that much land. Now I am struggling… worried about all these. I have to feed the children, an old mother-in-law and myself... My son could go to college… Now we have to work for money, for food to live on...

The lived experience depicted in the narrative of the participant sheds light on the amount of struggle women faced in order to survive. From a well-off respectable household in the community, they overnight became landless and homeless and sold off all their cattle to be able to be nourished. Being evicted and removed from the permanent abode and taking shelter in the neighbour's land was humiliating to her, depriving her of her capabilities of protecting her personal identity and self-respect. That her son left education to pursue the means of survival and fell occasionally ill due to overwork were incidences of deprivation of core capabilities of education and bodily health in the context of the household. Considering her situation, it appears unlikely that she would ever be able to recover the compensation money and normalise her life. Although she was promised a resettlement house, training, and a job in the MEZ, those happening positively at the earliest possible time would make her life difficult compared to the pre-acquisition times. Thus, the perennial struggle and irreparable damage to her capabilities severely affect the economic and personal (physio-psychological) aspects of her well-being.

The elderly participants over the age of 55 were severely affected by land loss; they lost their independent means of income and have become dependent on their children. Those failing to receive compensation had the worse of consequences. As depicted in Box 5.3, land loss affected the woman's ability to carry out agriculture which affected the food security of the household. She also reports that she could sell some of the rice or other crops which was her personal income to manage her own expenses. Although her two sons were working, they were able to manage the regular expenses but their income was not enough to buy land to build their own house. Due to the increase in land prices and failure to secure monetary compensation for several years, it was becoming impossible for her to fulfil the dream of buying land and building a house for her two sons. With a broken leg and other health conditions in her old age, she could not get proper treatment due to lack of money which affected her capability of bodily health. Her failure to get the compensation on time was also related to the deprivation of capability of her widowed daughter for whom she wanted to invest some money so that she could secure an income.

Box 5.3:

The story of Selina

Selina is a 65-year-old widow, mother of two sons and a widowed daughter from the coastal MEZ community. She was allotted a parcel of farmland 25–30 years ago in the coastal site where she lived with his family. After his husband's death, she moved with her sons near the subdistrict town where one of her sons was working at a college. Although they lived away from the land, it was used for growing rice that provided food for the household and some income of her own. As the land was acquired, she lost farming. She failed to receive monetary compensation as she did not have the land records updated and the land tax paid. Although they were willing to pay the land tax, they could not do that as the land was officially transferred to the MEZ, removing her details from the records as the owner. Failing to continue farming, her son started driving an auto to support the family. Despite the fact that the compensation rates were quite low, she expected that the money received soon would help her buy some land to build a house for her sons who were living in rented houses. She also had a plan for helping her widowed daughter who was living with her in the household. She had health conditions and a broken leg but could not get proper treatment for want of money. She reported:

> My sons are doing a lot for me... They have limited income… If I had the [compensation] money, it would be convenient for me. I have broken my leg. I need treatment. So, the money could really help my sons now.

Another 40-year-old displaced female participant, a mother of five from the coastal MEZ community, lost her land, de facto-held pond and most of the homestead with many trees. Although they resided in the house for many years, they did not have the legal documents of ownership and, consequently, were not compensated as many others were. Additionally, the loss of the pond and drying out of a canal adjacent to the house due to land conversion affected her ability to catch fish and make arrangements for the household by herself. The participant recounts her story:

> The pond was with us for many years. But we did not get a *paisa* [penny]. They did not pay us for the trees either. This is bad for me. I used to sit by the pond. With a *borshi* [hook]. I could get some fish. That was my own arrangement, when we did not have a curry in the house… Now, the *nala* [canal] is blocked from inside [the zone]. No water is here. They won't pay us for the pond too. We had fish all year round. *(Purubi, Female 40, evicted from house and land in the coastal MEZ).*

The displaced female participants in the coastal MEZ community were not provided with any resettlement house. Most female participants reported that, due to the decreased income of the households, they often repaired and rebuilt houses receiving microcredit from the NGOs working as microcredit organisations. Being the recipients of the loans, and remaining indoors, the female participants reported that they had to face the microcredit officials who used to collect the instalments. Although women mostly did not have any income, they were humiliated by the officials if they failed to pay an instalment. A female participant receiving microcredit for reconstructing her house shared her experiences with the humiliation:

> We took loans [microcredits]… And came [moved] here. Night after night we cannot sleep over thoughts of the instalments. They come and take the money… Sometimes, he [the husband] remains at work. They come to the house for the collection of instalments. If you do not have money in the house [for paying an instalment], they threaten us*. (Ameera, Female 28, evicted without compensation in the MEZ)*

The quoted speech illustrates that a lack of income, the burden of credit, and fear of humiliation affected their capability of self-respect which, in turn, affected their ability to protect themselves

from humiliation and mental stress which impacted their economic and personal (physio-psychological) well-being.

5.3.2 Impacts on the land-losing individuals from the agrarian SREZ community

Instead of resistance from the landowners, data from the agrarian SREZ suggest that land acquisition was invited by a particular type of landowner in the community. This phenomenon is associated with and triggered by disconnected legal ownership of the land. Data from the interviews with land-losing participants suggest that co-sharers, relatives, and possessors of the lands of the wealthy expatriates from the SREZ community were affected due to the willingness of the owners to let the land being acquired. The narratives of a male participant presented in Box 5.4 from the agrarian SREZ community unpack how land acquisition triggered by unrelated owners deprives people of the core capabilities of nourishment income and wealth, accommodation, identity, dignity and emotions.

Box 5.4:

The story of Jaheer, a land-losing and evicted male participant

Jaheer is a 33-year-old male from the agrarian SREZ community whose father lived in Germany and the Middle East for 23 years. They lived in a luxury house which was neither contiguous nor essential for the SREZ and was notified of the acquisition mistakenly. Only a portion of the house they resided in and the land they held was owned by his father. The rest of the property was owned by his father's cousins who resided in the UK. As they identified that the notification for the acquisition was a mistake of the officials, his family tried to make an application to the authorities to exclude their house and land from the acquisition. They were unsuccessful in making applications due to the other owners' willingness to give away the lands and the house. Due to a disagreement over the share of compensation with their co-sharers, they could not receive the compensation in over six years until the end of this field visit. Despite being acquired, they resided in their house for some time until the government officials evicted them forcefully. However, their house was not demolished and was used as accommodation for SEZ officials. Losing lands and income and being evicted, they were residing in a rented house. Meanwhile, his father became sick and returned from abroad which forced them to live on their savings causing economic and social damage to the household members. Being evicted from a luxury house without being compensated and renting a house was regarded as humiliating for his household members who long maintained a respectable social status in the community. Due to the delays in receiving the compensation, they can neither build a house nor buy land to pursue a means of income. He reported:

> We have no house… Those were such beautiful houses... We are living in a rented house now…. our house was not essential for acquisition... it was not inside the zone either... We haven't received the compensation yet. One year and six months earlier, we were forced out of the house. That is now used by the zone… as a residence of the officials. We were forced out... They are using our house now… Without paying the money.

The data presented in Box 5.4 show that the disconnected owners who barred them from making an application were at the root of all the perils of the household. It affected their ability to income and wealth and accommodation as they are currently living in a rented house without receiving compensation in six years. Leaving his favourite and permanent place of residence and people also caused emotional damage to him and his household members. This also annihilates his personal identity attached to his permanent address as it could no longer be used. That the officials evicted him in front of the neighbours and he became instantly homeless from a respectable position was a humiliation for him and his family.

Although the participants mostly settled in nearby places after eviction, the evidence shows that participants often could not afford to build their own houses. Data show that land acquisition restricts participants' identity related to citizenship and public services. A 30-year-old land-losing and evicted male participant from the agrarian SREZ community reported that he failed to receive compensation as his money was misappropriated by the person whom he bought the land from. As he trusted the former owner, he did not register the purchase documents to evade government taxes. When the land was acquired, the former owner who remained the official owner, got the notice of compensation and received the money, thereby breaching the social norms and the long-held trust of the participant. Being landless and homeless and failing to receive any resettlement house or monetary compensation meant that he could not afford to rent a house for his family. Although he was working as a construction worker in the SREZ and had more income than he had before the land acquisition, he was doubtful of ever owning a house with his small income. Having lost the last remaining land in Moulvibazar, the extent of his concern was expressed in his words regarding the removal of his official identity from the administrative district:

> We are in a strange situation. Where will we go? This is Nabiganj Upazila [by residential address]. And the land is under [within and managed by] Moulvibazar district. So, if we go for a citizenship certificate… birth registration, we have to go

> to Habiganj district. And for land purposes, we are to go to Moulvibazar. This [community] is at the back of the zone. This became ever more difficult… When the zone was established, they told us that the evicted will get their houses. But nothing is given to me. *(Miron, Male 30, land-losing and evicted, working as a construction worker in the SREZ)*

As this quote demonstrates, the land acquisition made the participant completely landless which annihilated his identity as a landowner from the Moulvibazar district. As he did not get a resettlement house from the land acquisition office, the participant would try to get other types of houses provided by the government. However, as the land of the *mouja* or village was managed by the Moulvibazar Revenue District, and their residence and citizenship matters were within the jurisdiction of the Habiganj administrative district, it was unlikely that he would get any government house in the same community. This corresponds to the eradication of placed-based identity suggested by Hirsh *et al.* (2020).

Nevertheless, there are also other land-losing and evicted households who received compensation in full and had access to paid work or other opportunities such as business with the SREZ. Those who received compensation in full and invested in constructing houses were seen to be living in much better accommodations than their former ones. Some participants reported that they were planning to make apartments available for renting out which would provide them with an income. Box 5.5 describes the stories of a 35-year-old male participant from the agrarian SREZ community.

Box 5.5:

The story of Shipon, a land-losing and evicted participant

Shipon is a 35-year-old male from the agrarian SREZ community. Before the land was acquired, he was living with his family which included his parents and three brothers and with their wives and children. They used to live in a one-storeyed concrete roofed house with a large yard, many trees, and a back house pond in the homestead. Two acres of his family lands including the entire house was acquired. He received his compensation and felt lucky that the payment was not delayed much through diverse issues such as *dalals* (brokers making unofficial land deals) and miscreants. However, he was not happy as the rates were as low as BDT 50,000 per decimal compared to BDT 250,000–812,000 paid for comparatively worse lands in another *mouja* (village). Due to the high prices of land, he failed to buy land in the village and bought 0.60 acres of farmlands far away. He also invested the money in constructing a five-storeyed house, three storeys of which were completed and inhabited by three brothers. He expects that,

on completion, the remaining two floors will be rented out. As farming has reduced, he used some of the money to open a coffee shop adjacent to the new house. Although the new house was much improved, it lacked space for planting trees and keeping cattle. His family is likely to be displaced once again from the new house due to the upgradation of the Dhaka–Sylhet Highway. This affects his life bringing instability and uncertainty. He reported:

> We had a roofed house [a house with a concrete roof], with a yard and many trees. Later we built this new house, here. This house has a five-storey-foundation... and we have already completed three floors. We … all three brothers are living here… in three apartments…

As seen in his narratives, despite wealth loss, the participant managed to construct a five-storey residential building for his own accommodation and probable renting, recovered farmlands for continuing agriculture, and opened a business which was an alternative income opportunity.

Participants who were unable to receive monetary compensation, however, were not in the same situation as seen in the case of participants receiving compensation. A land-losing male participant of 37 from the same agrarian community reported that, after losing his farmland, cattle, and a family pond formerly used for aquaculture, he sold his private car for survival as he failed to receive the compensation in over six years. To manage the family expenditures, he took up a precarious job in a construction firm that humiliated and sacked him for demanding his due wages that were unpaid for four months. However, his income from the waged job was negligible compared to what he received from agriculture, aquaculture, livestock rearing and car rents. A disagreement over the share of compensation also deteriorated his relationship with his cousin with whom a lawsuit was running. He reported:

> We’re in dispute with our cousin. We tried [to resolve it] both officially and unofficially. Our cousin did not agree with those. So, the money is still with the office. We can't do anything. We are in a deep problem. Now, my brothers say, if he [the cousin] does not need his three crores [30 million], we do not need our one crore [10 million] too. *(Rakibul, male 37, land-losing and employed in the agrarian SREZ)*

The evidence suggests that land acquisition has not only damaged his core capabilities of nourishment, income and wealth, and personal dignity but also damaged his social networks affecting his economic and social–affective well-being. A similar story is shared by another land-

losing participant of 38 as demonstrated in Box 5.6 who has a broken relationship with his brother following a disagreement over selling lands. This not only damaged his social–affective well-being but also caused economic damage as he no longer received money and assistance which was sent by his brother on a regular basis.

Box 5.6:

The story of Hannan, a land-losing participant

Hannan is a 38-year-old male participant from the agrarian SREZ community. Before the land acquisition, he depended on farming, some seasonal farm-based trading, and remittances sent by his brother from the UK. Most of his family lands were acquired. Out of BDT 42 million of their compensation they received BDT 16 million which his brother took to the UK promising him his share of the due amount. However, BDT 14 million of their compensation was misappropriated by miscreants (explained in sub-section 4.2.2 of chapter 4) which was not recovered by the office. Excluding the appropriated amount, he has BDT 12 million of compensation pending in the office for six years. His brother's proposal to sell his remaining land aroused disagreement among family members. Following this, his relationship with his brother deteriorated, who stopped sending money from the UK. This affected the pursuit of his dreams of settling in Europe due to his brother's refusal to help. Instead, he helped one of his brothers-in-law whom he took to the UK. This participant is currently renting out a car and cultivating some rice and reports that his wealth and income have significantly reduced.

Access to construction businesses as contractors or supplying materials to the SREZ requires power and influence. However, a land-losing participant of 36 reported that he received the compensation within the specified time and bought farmlands on profitable terms saving money from the compensation to invest in his business. He also realised significant profit from the construction project that he was engaged in the SREZ as a contractor. Narrating his profitability he reports:

> I have bought about two *cares* [0.60 acres] of land… More than what I lost in the zone. This [new land] is bought for about 11 lakhs [1 lakh BDT equals 100,000] per care. That means I spent Taka 22 lakhs on buying the land... And saved some of the money from the compensation. That I invested in my business. (*Rashidul, land-losing and running a construction business in the SREZ)*

Evidence also shows that the acquisition and relocation of social-cultural places e.g., graveyards and a mosque, affected the participants in the agrarian SREZ community. What Rao (2019) suggests for the Sherpa clan in Nepal with regards to place based identity is true for many as removal from burial places eradicates memories of the family lineage. A land-losing and displaced female participant reported that the acquisition of a graveyard affected their ability to be attached to a place of their emotions:

> As the zone has taken the lands and our house, we are still suffering from it. The zone wall is being built in a place where the graveyard was. How can we bury our people? That land is also gone. (*Jui, Female 42, evicted by the SREZ)*

Land acquisition affected the female participants' choice and core capabilities of nourishment, income, and wealth in the agrarian community due to failure to receive compensation after five or six years of land loss. Women who were unable to receive compensation were unsuccessful in recovering farmland or investing in any other activities which affected their ability to secure income and wealth. A land-losing widowed participant over 60 years from the agrarian SREZ community used to do farming before the land was taken. As she was living alone in the house, money sent by her sons living in the UK was also a support for her. The failure to receive the monetary compensation was stressing her in her old age and the uncertainty hampered her decision making as she reported:

> I don't know if I will get the money soon. If I get, I will invest it in some purpose. I can buy two cars to rent out to manage myself. I may try to buy some land. Or invest somewhere for some earnings. I have to do something to maintain my life.
>
> *(Lekha, a female over 60, lost land in the SREZ community)*

Not only did the participant lose her ability and freedom to attain income through the land, but she also became completely dependent on her sons after the land was acquired. This also affected their ability to take a decision regarding land matters as Rao (2018b) suggests. This loss of economic security affected the economic well-being of the participants. (Nuremowla, 2016)

Land-losing and displaced female participants who got access to paid employment or income through other investments such as new businesses in the community often had better income and improved houses compared to the pre-acquisition time. Despite this, participants reported that reduced spaces in the new houses affected their ability to do gardening, grow trees, and keep poultry which restricted their means for income and recreation. A 24-year-old land-losing and evicted female participant joined a company in the SREZ as an Office Assistant and Computer Operator. She reported that her father recovered land and built a new house with the

money he received as compensation and continued a business he owned for many years. Apart from her salary, the household also had income from land and her father's business. However, she was not happy with the land acquisition which was likely to displace her for a second time:

> In the previous house, I had gardening. I love gardening… And I had many trees. I used to plant flower trees. They grew fast. We could plant fruit trees... Now it takes time in a new house. I heard [that] the road project will displace us once again… In my memory, I always see the old house... But again, this will be taken. If it is taken yet, we will have no mental peace. At least, I will have a hard time coping with that. I hate moving to new places. If the zone was not established here, we would not need to move to the roadside. I blame the first eviction.
>
> *(Dristy, land-losing and evicted female working in the SREZ.)*

The quote illustrates that moving to a new house affected the ability of the participant to do gardening, affecting her emotions and means of recreation. As the first eviction took place, they built a new house near the highway. Due to the extension of the road, they were likely to be evicted from the newly built house. This affected the core capabilities of accommodation, emotions, and play affecting the economic, social-affective, and personal well-being of the participant.

5.3.3 Impacts on core capabilities of land-losing individuals from the transitioning MIEZ community

Land acquisition in the transitioning MIEZ community damaged some farmlands and fruit orchards as the participants reported. It also had some aquaculture and fishing in the lowlands. The loss of land and farming did not affect the capabilities, e.g., nourishment and income of participants much, as they had other sources of income. However, coercion and physical attack by goons for eviction and removal from houses and means of income and wealth such as fruit gardens that they developed with passion had adverse effects on their capabilities of emotions, life and life security and personal dignity. The story of a 75-year-old land-losing and displaced participant demonstrated in Box 5.7 narrates his changed situations, coping strategy and impact on the core capabilities.

Box 5.7:

The story of Motaleb, a land-losing and evicted elderly male

Motaleb is a 75-year-old male from the transitioning MIEZ community. He was living with his wife, two sons, their wives, and children in a newly built house near the MIEZ. His other five brothers were also living with their families in the same place. Before the land acquisition, he used to grow rice in his farmlands. He also had a pond where he did aquaculture for household consumption. One of his two sons, who worked abroad and earned about BDT 70–80 thousand (approximately GBP 550–650) a month, had an accident and returned home losing his physical ability to work. His other son was working as a cutting master at a local tailor shop. As the MIEZ started purchasing land, all the land around his house was bought and developed. Finding it difficult to live in a place that was cut out from the surroundings, he contacted a high official of MIEZ from the same village about selling his land. On an agreed term, they sold the land with his house and moved out of the house with his brothers and his family. He reported:

> They [MIEZ officials] said that they didn't need our land. But the land fell in the middle of their [acquired] land. They wanted to resolve that... Wanted that to end with a good solution. So, it all ended, and we are finally here [in the new place].

Although they tried to purchase land at the same place to build houses, they could not find the right amount of land together. Consequently, four brothers remained in the same place while the other two brothers had to build their houses separately. Despite being slightly away, he reported that the newly constructed roads made communications easier as the former houses, although together, often did not have road connectivity and had difficulty going to neighbours' houses during the rainy season. Losing all his farmland he managed to buy only 10.5 decimals (0.105 acres) which was fully used for constructing the house. Although the house lacked an open place, this was an improved house compared to his former one. Capitalising on the opportunities, he invested some money to open a grocery and tea shop adjacent to his house for his injured son.

It is seen from his narrative that he was unhappy with the process that led them to a situation of in situ displacement forcing them to sell off their land and leave their house. Despite the inability to work in outdoor conditions, the shop provided his son with an income to support his family. Although he personally did not have any income or farmland, he identifies himself in a

better situation as the income of the household increased from the farming time and he had enhanced capability of accommodation. He expected that, with more development happening in the community, his son's business would grow in the future.

Being engaged in off-farm income-generating activities from the pre-acquisition time, members from the land-losing households in the transitioning MIEZ community did not find paid work lucrative due to their nature of work, low salary, and other job conditions. However, evidence suggests that young members of the land-losing households who otherwise either remained unemployed or travelled to other places for a job found it helpful for them to join paid work. A 22-year-old male participant reported that his family used to grow rice on a little amount of land which was acquired in the MIEZ. The rice produced on the land did not provide food for the entire year. His father still had some farming on a parcel of land that was not acquired. Additionally, he joined the MIEZ and rented out a room in the house which adds to the income of the household. He reported his situation after taking up paid work:

> We lost very little farmland… We produced rice on it and took some land from my aunt… That [rice] could not always provide food for the year… The thing is, I was doing nothing. [But] now doing something… This makes the difference. I depend on my income… help my family… This is the key. But I am not quite happy with the [low] salary and the [fewer] leaves. Yet, after all, I have something to do. I would do this [job] maybe in another place or could be sitting idly in the house [if the MIEZ was not here]. That is good in the long run. (*Zahirul, a land-losing male of 22 employed in the MIEZ)*

Paid employment, as the quote illustrates, made him self-dependent and enabled him to help his household which increased his personal dignity. Thus, the enhanced ability to be employed within a convenient distance from the residence and be self-reliant advances his economic as well as personal well-being.

Opportunities beyond paid work provided an enhanced choice for the land-losing community members regarding their ability to choose the most suitable type of income-generating activity. Land-losing participants reported that the opportunities for renting their houses (8 out of 12 land-losing participants rented out houses) often increased their income manyfold beyond their expectations. A male participant over 50 years old reported that he used to do farming in the pre-acquisition time. After the land farmlands are sold and the factories started production, there was increased demand for accommodation in the community. As his

house adjacent to the MIEZ boundary was not removed, it created scopes for income through renting out rooms. He stated how the opportunity of rent changed his situation:

> My family benefited much from that. All my brothers benefited. We got the money for the land. We have extended our houses. Developed the lands and rented out the house to earn money. For myself, I am renting out 28 rooms and earning an amount that I really could not imagine before... So, the zone has benefited us. This can be a day–night difference. (*Zilkad, Male 50+, land-losing from MIEZ)*

The quote illustrates that all his brothers gained access to income and wealth by renting out their houses. He further reported that his 28 rooms provided a monthly income of BDT 70,000–80,000 (GBP 550–650) by which he did other improvements to his land and house and was educating two of his children including a son at a university in Dhaka. This enhanced his core capabilities of income and wealth, accommodation, and education which advanced his economic and personal well-being in the context of the household.

Evidence also suggests that land-losing individuals often opted for business over low-paying factory work which enhanced their means, choice, and core capabilities of income and wealth, personal identity, and dignity. A land-losing young participant of 22 with secondary-level education reported that his father had farming on their own land which was acquired for the MIEZ. His father received compensation for the land which he used for renovating the house and buying an auto rickshaw to rent out. As opportunities arrived, they rented out several rooms which was providing regular income for the household. Instead of joining low-profile factory work, he opened two shops, one providing Internet and cable TV connection and the other a tea stall adjacent to his house which he jointly managed with his father. Compared to the pre-acquisition time, they have increased income and wealth which is expected to grow further. To justify his choice for business over waged work, he reports:

> I am running this [tea] shop… This [shop], I have opened recently. I also have other businesses. I provide Wi-Fi and dish [cable TV] connection in the village… We bought an autorickshaw. I cannot work there [in the MIEZ], as I need to look after my own business. And the zone does not pay good salaries… These activities [that] I am engaged in, already give a good income. And [the income] will increase in the future. This is changing every day. *(Suman, male 22, MIEZ)*

As demonstrated by the quote, his income was already higher compared to the factory jobs. Not only did he have better income and accommodation, but he also gained exposure in the community through his business as a Wi-Fi and cable TV provider which he deems as a recreated identity in the community and enhanced self-respect. These, together, enhanced his capabilities of income and wealth, accommodation, self-dignity, and personal identity, thus advancing economic and personal (physio-psychological) well-being.

Displacement in the transitioning MIEZ was found to affect some capabilities of the female participant more severely than the male participants. Despite the female participants reporting better income and accommodation, and often being better connected with their neighbours, they had reduced social–affective and personal well-being. As stated in Box 5.8, a 55-year-old land-losing and evicted female participant reported that the death of a son and sudden eviction from houses brought abrupt changes affecting the stability of her life and life security, affecting young female members and children. As a female member, she had to find out a suitable way to cope with the changed situations for herself, her son's wife, and her grandchildren during the time of shifting home.

Box 5.8:

The narrative of Sharmin, a land-losing and evicted female participant

Sharmin is a 55-year-old land-losing and evicted female participant from the transitioning MIEZ community. One of her two sons died after being stabbed allegedly by other community members over a clash relating to the land deals. The other son, who previously worked as a boiler engineer, left his job and opened a shop in the community. In the pre-acquisition time, the household had farming. The MIEZ took all the farmlands of the household and evicted them from their former house. During the shifting time, she had significant difficulty coping with the situation. However, after the land acquisition, she rented out eight rooms in the new house and her son's business had grown which together gave her a good income. She also has a better house to live in with better roads in the community. She has emotional damage due to the loss of her son and the loss of the former house; however, she seemed to have settled into the new place well and was financially better off. She reported:

> My son had a clean image. Everyone in the community trusted him. The zone people wanted my son to take the responsibility for persuading the people [to sell their land]. And manage the process. Some people didn't like this. I suspect, that could be the reason. He was called to the clubhouse... and was stabbed…

It can be better understood through her own recounting of why it was more difficult for the women to cope with changes caused by eviction:

> That was not like a normal moving of the house. They gave us time. But it was not enough… to complete the new house. So, we initially had problems. I remained here… to look after the house. To oversee… to support my child. My daughter-in-law [son's wife] was sent to her sister's house. For three months… With her children. Then we used to be there in the former house. After this house was built, we moved in here. (*Sharmin, Female 55, MIEZ, land-losing, evicted).*

Another land-losing female participant shared that her husband was working as a marketing supervisor at a company and was severely injured by an accident. He was hospitalised for several months and lost his job as he was incapable of working. She deposited the compensation money in a post office saving scheme and was spending it on her children's education. The rest of the money was used to build rooms for renting out and open a shop adjacent to her house considering her husband's inability to pursue any employment outside. Despite her enhanced income through suitable means, prospects of which were increasing, her narratives reverberated with the traumatic coerced eviction:

> Hundreds of people came to evict us from the house. The policemen were there… They also helped criminals. I think that was a bad experience… We have to bear this in memory all our life. My husband was in tears, I was in tears… But nobody helped us. We have had hardships and lost the property at a low value. When we were forced out of our land, you cannot imagine how difficult it was. But we are doing much better now. *(Jesmin, female 48, land-losing, evicted, running a shop).*

The narrative and the quotes recollecting the hardships of participants reveal that female members had significant deprivation of capabilities due to displacement. Elderly women willingly endured hardships after the eviction from their houses which is an adaptive preference as stated by Nussbaum (2003). However, the younger female members with their young children were sent to some other places considering their comfort and security. Although land-losing women often reported increased economic well-being in the post-acquisition times, being attacked, getting evicted forcefully, and taking refuge in someone else's house also affected their capabilities of safe accommodation, personal dignity, and life security.

5.4 Conclusion

From the displacement perspective, the findings of this chapter reveal that land acquisition in SEZs causes both direct and indirect displacement as suggested by Feldman and Geisler (2012) and Gardner and Gerharz (2016,p.7). However, the incidence of coercive or forced displacement by a private agency is identified in the direct purchase system which is novel in land acquisition as earlier studies such as Adnan (2016) and Nuremowla (2016) in Bangladesh and Cook *et al.* (2013) and Cross (2014), among others, in the SEZs in India reported the application of coercive means with government-run compulsory land acquisition. Considering dispossession, both de jure and de facto dispossession are also identified in the SEZs. This provides a novel insight into the concept of displacement that legal owners disconnected from their land tend to give away their land causing dispossession of the de facto owners which shows that capitalist accumulation and the neo-liberal government intents as suggested in the literature (Levien, 2011; 2012; 2013) are not only the causes of dispossession.

With multiple forms of displacement and dispossession, the compensation and resettlement are inadequate, faulty, and provided considering legal entitlement. These cause the failure of many landowners to receive monetary compensation and resettlement houses in five-six years after land acquisition as they fail to produce updated documents of evidence of entitlement. Besides, land acquisition in the SEZs causes loss of farmlands, community fishing areas, grazing lands and forests which triggers a decrease in or loss of agriculture, fishing, livestock rearing and collection of the community members which is consistent with the findings of the studies such as Mahmud *et al.* (2020) , Nuremowla (2016) and Smyth and Vanclay (2018). Findings also show that the implemented projects with compensation for land, improved infrastructure and diverse economic opportunities provide enhanced means for land-losing community members which advances the findings of earlier studies such as Nuremowla (2016).

Land acquisition with reduced natural resources and improper resettlement services is seen to affect the land-losing community members immediately depriving them of their core capabilities of income, wealth and nourishment, employment, accommodation, bodily health, education, personal identity and self-dignity affecting their economic, personal (physio-psychological), and social-affective well-being. It is also seen that land-losing individuals who received compensation for land and gained access to new economic opportunities through added infrastructure and newly created employment enhanced their core capabilities of nourishment, income and wealth, accommodation, education, personal identity and self-respect. This chapter reveals that land-losing individuals including women with compensation and access to employment, business, and other means of income like rent manage to enhance their core capabilities and thereby advance the findings of Rao (2019). Land acquisition, as Levien (2015)

Jaysawal and Saha (2016) and Mahapatra *et al.* (2015) suggested in the Indian case, also affects the social fabric in Bangladesh through relocation of community members, enmity among land-owners, mistrust among family members and relatives and clashes over power and control or resources. This often leads to murdering fellow community members affecting their personal as well as social-affective well-being.

Chapter 6: Employment and Infrastructural Development Impacting Capabilities of Individuals Without Land Loss

6.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the impact of employment and infrastructural development on the individuals who did not experience any land loss including those who were landless during the land acquisition in the SEZ communities. Drawing on the concerns over the failure of the social–ecological systems in meeting the necessities of the rural communities and the need for paid employment to uplift communities from grave poverty situations, this chapter addresses the question: *How do the opportunities of the SEZs impact the capabilities of members without facing land loss in the rural communities?* As outlined in the Methodology Section (Chapter 3), three case studies for this study were identified as the coastal Mirsharai Economic Zone (MEZ), the agrarian Srihatta Economic Zone (SREZ), and the transitioning Meghna Industrial Economic Zone (MIEZ). Following Brenner's (2020) classification of cases, the coastal Mirsharai Economic Zone (MEZ) is identified as an unconventional or archetypical case study, the agrarian Srihatta Economic Zone (SREZ) is the common or stereotypical case study, and the transitioning Meghna Industrial Economic Zone (MIEZ) is the prototypical case study of all SEZ communities considering their type and advancement. Using the conceptual and analytical framework presented in Figure 2.1 and Table 2.3 in Chapter 2, the current chapter investigates the changes in the means and capabilities of the community members without land loss. Positioning with the basic needs of Maslow (1943) and the Central Human Capabilities of Nussbaum (2003), the core capabilities of the individuals were derived. To investigate the core capabilities the topic guide attached in Appendix F was applied to conduct semi-structured interviews with participants. These core capabilities were positioned to understand the impacts on three aspects of the well-being of the community members; economic well-being, social–affective well-being, and personal (physio-psychological) well-being. All comments of the participants are written up from their own perceptions and narratives.

To relate to the social–geographical context, sub-section 6.2 of this chapter explores the necessity of alternative means of living and the opportunities arriving through the SEZs with the anticipation for the development of the members in diverse communities. Subsection 6.3 presents the findings relating to impacts on the core capabilities of individuals from households without experiencing land loss, including those who were previously landless in three SEZ communities. In the context of landlessness, depleted natural resources, and underdeveloped

paid sectors in the coastal area, first, the coping strategies of the individuals from the coastal MEZ community are examined. As seen in Chapter 4, employment created in the agrarian SREZ remains mainly limited to the construction sector and there was no infrastructural development outside of the SREZ to affect the members of the community. This sub-section, hence, investigates the impacts of these opportunities on the core capabilities of individuals outside of the land-losing domain in the agrarian SREZ community. This subsection also explores the core capabilities of individuals in the transitioning MIEZ community in the context of diverse paid work created and other income and livelihood opportunities arriving in the community. Exclusion from paid work or other means of occupation can significantly restrict individuals' capabilities. Sub-section 6.4 explores accessibility issues that cause capability deprivation for community members, thereby affecting their well-being. Sub-section 6.5 discusses the findings of the chapter in light of the existing literature and draws the conclusions of the chapter.

6.2 The necessity and anticipation for enhanced means in the SEZs in diverse social–geographical contexts

The demographic description of the sample, as depicted in Table 6.1, shows that 35 participants were interviewed who neither experienced any land loss nor were evicted from their places of residence. Out of the 35 participants, 11 (nine male, two female) were from the coastal MEZ community, nine (six male, three female) were from the agrarian SREZ community, and 15 (nine male, six female) were from the transitioning MIEZ community. Considering ownership of land, 19 participants owned land and 16 participants were previously landless in the context of the household. However, analysis suggests that about 65% participants (five participants from the coastal MEZ community, six participants from the SREZ community, and 12 participants from the transitioning MIEZ community) did not have any operational farmland or pond to use for farming or aquaculture. This suggests that the availability of natural resources, community land, or alternative off-farm means of occupation was a necessity for the landless population. However, natural resources being affected, reduced, and lost and the arrival of new infrastructure and employment in the communities are two considerable factors that affect the lives of the participants in these social–demographic circumstances. Considering educational qualification, 34% of the participants without losing land have primary level, 37% have below secondary level, and the rest 29% have secondary and above education.

Table 6.1:

Sample demographic description of the participants who did not face loss of land or were previously landless

Sl. No., Participant Code & pseudonym	Participant Type	Case Location	Male/ Female	Age	Education	Occupation/ income source
01: PI07AM Shamsuddin	Without land loss	MEZ	Male	44	Secondary	Business in zone (supply of materials)

The full table is attached in Appendix B

Evidence shows that agriculture as a traditional means of livelihood cannot provide for all the community member as the households are getting new expenses every day. Household expenses to meet basic needs and maintain lifestyle (e.g., mobile phone and cable television) are factors that put a strain on the income of households. The basic subsistence farming is not enough to provide for all household expenditures. As a result, farming with low profitability is deemed to be a provider of the means of subsistence only. An elderly male participant from the agrarian SREZ community commented:

> The land is expensive. Costs are high. And no guarantee of a good harvest. There are many expenses. We cannot do with rice [food] and clothes only. We have mobile phones, motorbikes in the house… educational and medical expenses… Some have dish TV [cable television] and may be Wi-fi. And if you have 10 decimals [0.10 acre] land for all these, is that possible? Some doing business… or those who could not engage in business are doing whatever they got. Now almost every poor house has one person working in the zone. *(Rishad, male 64 from the agrarian SREZ community)*

This illustrates that the reduced profitability and the diversified household expenditure made many households pursue off-farm economic means.

In the context of the necessity of alternative means of living which, in the literature, is suggested as off-farm paid work (Adams *et al.*, 2018), the SEZs with their anticipated benefit created aspirations in the landless members in the community. The anticipated benefits were not only promoted by the government authorities to rationalise the policy goals of setting up 100 SEZs through the acquisition of rural lands but were accepted by community members from all corners. A landless participant from the transitioning MIEZ community reported:

> I think there will be many more changes soon. More plants are being constructed... They will need more people and more people means more economic facilities [in the community] … more business. That's how there will be greater facilities... The people who are still doing some farming will not do that anymore. *(Sharon, a male participant employed in the MIEZ)*

Another participant who did not lose land from the coastal MEZ community commented:

> This is a zone with over 30,000 acres of land. So, there are many big companies coming, investing here. They need thousands of people already. This is [just] the development phase. The people are working as construction workers. But this is soon going to open and several hundred thousand people will be recruited. There will be no one unemployed in these villages, as I see this [the zone] growing. *(Shamsuddin, male 44, dealing in business in the coastal MEZ)*

The quotes illustrate that the participants without land or without losing any land were optimistic about the development happening in the SEZs in all communities.

6.3 Impacts of employment and improved infrastructure on the core capabilities of individuals

It is generally through the employment and added infrastructure that the SEZs impact the core capabilities of the individuals without experiencing land loss concerning their economic, social–affective, and personal (physio-psychological) well-being. However, land development and infrastructural improvement came at the expense of some capabilities of individuals, the intensity of which was no less than what was seen with the land-losing individuals. Alongside the negative impacts, the establishment of the SEZs also brought new opportunities in the community for both who did not lose land and who were without land from the pre-acquisition time. Table 6.2 illustrates the involvement of participants without land loss and without ownership of land in the new means of living arriving in the three SEZ communities. Evidence from the three communities suggests that participants without land loss were mostly without any operational farmland which made paid employment the most attractive means of living for them.

Table 6.2:

Engagement in new means of income by participants without land loss

Case study	New means of Income and living	Engaged participants without land loss
Coastal MEZ	Paid employment (offices, banks, and factories)	45%
	Waged work outside the MEZ	9%
	Business/ small enterprises	27%
	Construction business/supply of material	9%
	Transportation (driving auto rickshaws, cars)	9%
Agrarian SREZ	Paid employment (office, factories, construction sites)	44%
	Business/small enterprises	33%
	Construction business/supply of materials	11%
Transitioning MIEZ	Paid employment (offices, factories)	66%
	Business/ small enterprises	33%
	Renting out house	7%
	Land deal	7%

Source: Sample demographic data analysed from interviews with 35 participants who did not experience land loss or were previously landless

6.3.1 Impacts of SEZs on capabilities of individuals without land loss and previously landless in the coastal MEZ community

Land conversion, delineation of the coastal MEZ, and separating the community from the sea, mangroves, canals, and grazing land were found to have adverse effects on the means of income and livelihoods of individuals from household without experiencing land loss. Evidence shows that land reduction and reduced access to the sea resulted in unemployment and damage to the income of the previously landless participants who either were engaged in farm-based waged work or on the fishing boats. In Box 6.1, the narrative of a 29-year-old male participant shows that he lost his work on the fishing boats, as a waged farmworker, undertaking artisanal fishing and fry collection, which deprived him of his core capabilities of employment and nourishment, income, and wealth loss.

Box 6.1:

The narrative of participant Hamid

Hamid is a 29-year-old male from the coastal MEZ community who neither had farmland nor farming since the pre-acquisition time. He used to work as an occasional farm-based waged labourer in the community. However, his main job was working on commercial fishing boats on the sea with artisanal fishing and fry collection for subsistence. After the land acquisition, he lost his former job and, recently, he started a small business selling vegetables in a paddle rickshaw van. Although his current job is often less challenging, he reports that he is affected by income decrease. His wife has higher secondary-level education which he thinks would help her get recruited in the MEZ. He is also waiting for a job in the coastal MEZ; however, he was dubious about whether he would be able to manage one. Drawing a comparison between his life before and after land acquisition, he reflects:

> I think this [business] is less challenging and less profitable too. Formerly, I used to work on the boats. Those were often in the deep sea. So, that was challenging, required staying long hours, often days... And [consequently] the wages were slightly higher. As this is a small business with a van [paddle-rickshaw van] low capital, and little profit. I do this within the village. It is safe and convenient but the income is too little.

As depicted in the story in Box 6.1, the participant lost his job on the fishing boats and other livelihood opportunities which affected his capabilities of income and nourishment. However, the jobs on the fishing boats were risky as there were threats of storm which could be life threatening. Besides, the fishermen need to stay at sea for several days at a stretch. This was a matter of anxiety for their family members and for themselves. As he was engaged in selling vegetables within the community, this is less challenging work. However, his income has dropped from BDT 600 a day as a wage to BDT 300–500 as profit. However, despite the reduced income, he has enhanced core capabilities of bodily health, life security, and emotions which advance his personal (physio-psychological) well-being.

Land acquisition affected the landless female members who were also dependent on the natural resources in the coastal community. The other story of a 45-year-old previously landless female participant in Box 6.2 shows that she had significant difficulties in feeding herself and six children after losing her waged work in the rice fields, fishing, fry-collection, and gathering after land acquisition. Financing herself through microcredit to cope with the changed situations

increased her economic and mental stress. Sending one of her daughters to work as a housemaid in a city to support the household with the changed economic scenario deprived her capability of emotions. Land acquisition, thus, affected her core capabilities of employment, income, accommodation, and emotions, which in turn affected her economic and social–affective well-being, which was the case with all female participants in the coastal community who did not own land previously.

Box 6.2:

The story of Golapi from the coastal MEZ community

Golapi is a 45-year-old female, separated from her husband and managing the household of herself with six children in the coastal MEZ community. Although she did not lose land and was not evicted by the MEZ, she had to move from the relative's land where she lived to make room for some evicted family members of the landowner. She took microcredit from an NGO to move the house. Yet her fear was that her house would be removed by the road project. Land acquisition damaged her ability to be recruited as a farmworker and affected her fishing and gathering. She works as a housemaid and occasionally at a new poultry farm to feed herself and the children. She was raising a cow owned by another person of which the profit would be shared between her and the owner equally. One of her daughters was working as a domestic aid in Chattogram. She expected to secure jobs for herself and her daughter in the MEZ but could not work as the factories had not opened yet and construction farms only recruit male workers. She reported:

> I am not [doing] well for sure. My situation has worsened… If you consider the poultry farm, [where] I am working in, that is new. But that is not everything. I had many things, with the sea and the forest. We had a different life. And that has changed. We women, without an income, could collect the fries. Firewood, cow dung, we cannot collect those [now]. Cannot graze the only cow. [Now] I want a job in the zone... But they are not taking us, all men are working... The factories are going to open soon. [So, the change of] our situation depends on when we will be recruited, [including] my daughters there.

Although deprivation of income and employment was related to the exhaustion of natural resources, employment created in the coastal MEZ headquarters, the bank inside the MEZ, and

the construction sites were found to have enhanced employment, employability, and income of the community members without facing land loss. A 22-year-old male participant with higher secondary-level education joined an office in the coastal MEZ on a salary of BDT 16,000 per month. Without experiencing any land loss, his father was continuing his farming as in the pre-acquisition time while his brother was working as a boiler engineer. Being appointed at an office, he regarded his job to be better than a job in a factory both in terms of salary and working environment. In the context of the community, he assumed that his job was coveted by many in the community and he was esteemed for being able to secure that. Increased land prices also increased his unearned income and wealth in the context of the household. He reports his situation:

> The same amount of land we have now [as was before acquisition]. The price [of land] has increased. This is good for us. I am earning my living from this job. That is also good... Let me explain, there are many who want a job, and I have got one. This is better… that I am doing something for myself and my family. The others in the society [community] think that I am doing a good job. (*Farhanul, male 22, employed in the coastal MEZ)*

With enhanced income, the participant identifies his enhanced self-respect as he was able to do something for the family and be respected by others.

Business opportunities such as construction business and supply of materials to the construction sites in the coastal MEZ also enhanced the core capabilities of income and wealth, self-identity, and personal dignity, thus advancing the economic and personal well-being of participants without land loss. A 44-year-old participant without land loss from the coastal MEZ community, who was formerly unemployed and dependent on other household members, was found to have enhanced his income and wealth through engagement in the supplying of construction materials to the firms working in the MEZ. Through his success with his business in the MEZ, he gained tremendous exposure in the community as he made a good fortune and bought a new car for his personal use. Banking on the growth of his business he was confident in pursuing the dream of establishing a construction firm of his own, buying land for a housing project, and extending his business outside the MEZ.

> I was dependent on my brother's income. Even my pocket money [personal expenses] was given by my brother. Considering that, I have a better situation. My family and people around me… have good opinions [of me]. I have my

business and a car... But these are earned by my own income. (*Shamsuddin, male 44, did not lose land, dealing in business in the coastal MEZ)*

The participant, as the quoted evidence shows, was able to recreate his new personal identity in the community through his engagement in business. The establishment of the MEZ and improved infrastructure, thus, advanced his core capabilities of personal dignity as he became self-dependent compared to the sense of humiliation he had as he was dependent on his brother's income.

Box 6.3:

The narrative of Alal, a previously landless male participant

Alal is a 55-year-old male from the coastal MEZ who did not face any land loss as he was previously landless. He has two sons—one was working at a security service living away from home and the other son opened a hardware workshop in the community. He used to drive a CNG auto rickshaw for maintaining the household. Although he was not affected by land loss, he identified that keeping cattle without grazing lands and agriculture became difficult and he could keep only two of his pre-acquisition six cows. Recently, he had a stroke and became incapable of working. Losing his means of income, he became completely dependent on his children. He needed regular medication and his sons were providing the expenses for him and his wife. Although his son's shop saved him from marginalisation, he reported that it helped him more socially and emotionally as he needed a son around him in his difficult times as much as he needed his income. He narrated his situation:

> Another [considerable] thing is, I fell sick... Still sick to be frank, as I am under regular medication. I need my son around… One son is already outside. He cannot stay home with us. What if he went somewhere to work [outside the community]? This is already a result. And money is not always everything. This zone will grow for sure. That won't [readily] change my scenario. That would mean nothing to me. I need my son's income to increase. As he's on track, I hope that will.

Evidence from the coastal MEZ community suggests that increased economic activity and infrastructural improvement had positive effects on landless individuals from households who were in old age and on the brink of economic marginalisation. Electrification and improved road communication created scopes for business allowing some community members to engage in

small enterprises instead of migrating in pursuit of work and income. Box 6.3 demonstrates the story of a participant who became incapable of working due to being physically sick. Being ill and losing the ability to work, he realised that the arrival of the coastal MEZ would not mean anything to him if his son did not open his business. Although he identified indirect damage of household wealth through reduced cattle, to him, the income of his son from his newly opened shop was crucial for saving them from enduring humiliating lives. The fact that his son settled in the community with his business instead of migrating in pursuit of employment like his other son was a great support for him considering his bodily health, emotions, and nourishment and income. This not only advances his economic well-being but has huge positive impacts on his social–affective well-being and personal (physio-psychological) well-being.

6.3.2 Impacts of SEZs on core capabilities of individuals without land loss and previously landless in the agrarian SREZ community

Land acquisition in the agrarian SREZ resulted in some changes to have community-wide impacts affecting the core capabilities of individuals, irrespective of their status of land loss. Despite their land not being acquired, some participants from the agrarian SREZ community reported that the utility and quality of their land were damaged by the act of land development in the SREZ. Land degradation and damages to their agriculture, which were in the aftermath of the establishment of the SREZ, were beyond the scope and consideration of the compensation framework discussed in Chapter 4. The story of a participant demonstrated in Box 6.4, depicts that the establishment of the SREZ was beneficial to him considering his primary occupation and income. However, the reporting of his sorrows was drawn on the point that the establishment of the economic zone depleted his farmland, making it in-arable, which deprived his capabilities of nourishment and income.

Box 6.4:

The story of participant Haripada

Haripada is a 50-year-old male from the agrarian SREZ community whose land was not acquired in the SREZ. His family consists of his wife, a son, and three daughters. The son is being sent to Dubai, the UAE, on a work permit visa while the three daughters are all going to school. He owns a house and some farmland. Before the SREZ was established, he used to do farming and run a hardware shop in the Sherpur Bazar (a marketplace close to the SREZ). Although his land was not acquired, he reported that the establishment of the SREZ created waterlogging in the community and his farmland became unusable. In recent times, many new houses are built in the community and people were moving to this side of the village. As his

hardware shop was not profitable, he closed that shop and opened a new grocery adjacent to his house. His income from the new shop has increased compared to the former shop. He had two rooms ready to be rented out. He also did not need to pay rent for the shop as before, could always be available at home, and was supported by the household members, and the shop adjacent to his house had enhanced security. Despite increased income, he was unhappy about the damaged roads and degraded lands as he reported:

> I think everything [that has happened in the community] is not good. Our lands are damaged. Everyone will tell you. I guess, thousands of plots are wet... very wet all the year. And the field is vacant. Some [plots] have hyacinths and weeds. Though I had a little farming, I cannot do it now.

In situ or indirect displacement by cutting off from the surrounding environment was also reported by interviewed individuals who did not lose land directly to the SREZ. This resulted in reduced accessibility to highways and commuter transports, reduced availability of community playgrounds, and loss of a community graveyard. An elderly male participant from the same agrarian community reported that, although land acquisition has not significantly reduced his means of income as his household is primarily dependent on foreign remittances, it damaged his accessibility to the highway which he could do through the open land and field which is acquired and walled. Additionally, the land acquisition affected him by causing waterlogging, reducing the land used as community playgrounds after harvest and disappearing graveyards as he reported:

> They will complete [erecting] the wall. The graveyard will go inside. That will be lost, [with] the graves… As the land is taken, young people cannot play. The farmlands after harvest were used as playgrounds. This is what is absent now… No place to play football or cricket… As I told you, [construction of] the zone wall has made the highway distant for us. We could easily go [to the highway] from this side (he points)… That is now closed. We have to go all the way around the village… [And] if you go out [of the house] during the night… There can be snakes in high places. So, there is already a fear of this. My wife is old. She often needs to go to the toilet by night. Believe me, she is scared to go there after it gets dark.
>
> *(Rishad, 64-year-old male from the SREZ community)*

Waterlogging caused insecurity and threat to the physical health and safety of elderly people who did not use toilets by night in the fear of snakes. Land acquisition can have lasting impacts on the community members due to the obliteration of the community graveyard where people both with and without farmland have their ancestors buried in. As this is concerning emotions and identity this has an adverse impact on the social-affective and personal well-being of the community members.

Taking up waged employment in the construction sites was mainly a strategy for survival of the landless community members without choice in the agrarian SREZ. Evidence shows that participants often engaged in sharecropping and farm-based waged work did not find the construction sector work worthwhile as the wages were low compared to the amount of working hours and intensity of labour required. However, those who were already engaged in similar waged works in the community found the construction sites to be providing more consistent income and employment of a semi-permanent nature. A participant, who worked as a construction worker in diverse places and often as a freelance day labourer on the sand and earth trucks, reported that, after joining at a project in the SREZ, he did not need to look for work every day. The fact that he had a job close to the place of his residence meant that he was saving time and it was convenient for him. Being recruited on a monthly basis, he had the certitude of a consistent income over the month and even longer. Moreover, he managed to establish a network by which he believed that he would be able to work in the SREZ even after the end of the construction work. He reported:

> Now, I am working near my house. I don't need to look for work every day, [or] need any transport. Only a few minutes [walk]. It is better working here than on the earth or sand trucks… And [better than] going to new people every day [for work]… There will always be some work [going on in the zone]. One of my relatives gave me this job. He has connections with high officials here. I can manage another job on another building if this [building] is completed. And I can also work in the factories. I know some people who can help. So, once you are here, you won't need to go. *(Baharul, male, 27, construction worker in the SREZ)*

Waged employment in the agrarian SREZ was, thus, regarded as a gateway to the formal sector by participants which enhanced their core capabilities for employment, nourishment and income, and affiliation enhancing their economic and social–affective well-being.

Participants taking up paid employment not only enhanced their core capabilities of nourishment, income, and wealth, but this made way for other members of the household into

the means of living that the participants were formerly engaged in. A 24-year-old participant from the agrarian SREZ community formerly owned and managed a shop in the community. After he took up paid work in the SREZ, he handed the shop over to his brother who was unemployed. This enhanced income in the context of the household and they had the ability to spend on purposes that could enhance core capabilities of all household members. He narrated the scenario:

> I am working here [in the zone]. I used to run a [grocery and convenience] shop. My brother was unemployed. He is running my shop now. In recent times, I think we have increased income. […] That is the same house [we are living in]. But that is better now. We have reconstructed. Recently, we renovated the house jointly… *(Shepur, male, 37, employed in SREZ)*

The reconstruction of the house denotes their enhanced income in the context of the household. This reflected in enhancing their capability of accommodation.

The incidence of establishment of the SREZ facilitated the growth of business in the agrarian community and community members with stores in other parts of the community often shifted their business to their own lands. The story of the participant in Box 6.4 demonstrates that the SREZ in the agrarian community brought increased income opportunities and the participant closed his low-profitable hardware shop to open a new grocery adjacent to his house. He narrated the situations of his convenience:

> This store is on my own land. No rent is needed [to be paid]. That saves money. I don't need to travel now. That's easy and timesaving. I am always available at the house [as the shop is adjacent]. This [shop] is also safe here [as adjacent to the house]. If I am out, often my children or my wife can sit here for some time. So, these are not all monetary benefits. *(Haripada, male 50+, running a shop near the SREZ)*

This not only enhanced his income, but he was also able to run his business conveniently and with enhanced security. As the shop was constructed on his own land, this did not require him to pay monthly rents which saved his money, thus increasing the real profit. That his shop was adjacent to the house made it this possible for him to be more attached to his family despite being at work in the store.

However, evidence suggests that the landless female participants in the agrarian SREZ community often failed to ensure economic security. Land acquisition and establishment of the

SREZ caused more damages than could be compensated for in monetary terms as was learned from the story of a female participant presented in Box 6.5.

Box 6.5:

The narrative of Deepali, a landless female participant

Deepali, a 32-year-old landless widow from the agrarian SREZ community. She neither lost her land nor her house, however, experienced the worst of impacts. She is a member of the Sutradhar caste where male members traditionally worked as carpenters. However, her husband, like others in the community, used to work as a farm-based waged worker and often sharecropper in the pre-acquisition times. Her children used the acquired land as playgrounds which was developed by the SREZ. One day the ball fell in the water and her elder son went to collect it as no caution mark or fencing was in the area. He was stuck in the muddy water like quicksand and drowned. He was dead by the time the villagers rescued him. After her son died, her husband became depressed and fell seriously ill. He was treated, spending most of BDT 100,000 (about GBP 800–900) received as assistance from the SREZ but he also died after some days. Losing her son and her husband, the earning person in the household, she was psychologically broken. Without any income to support herself and her only son, she lived literally on charities. She is in search of a job and waits for the factories in the SREZ to be operational. The SREZ blocked a water channel creating waterlogging in the community and flooding her house and the surrounding environment. As his son is all she had, she always panicked about him being harmed by anything. She reported:

> We cannot use the [good] toilet… That is outside the house. The toilet inside the house is damaged. But the water made the one outside useless. And for the water… that I have lost my elder son, I am very careful about this son. And I always have to be alert, so he does not have any problem. There can be snakes around the house, as there is water. I am afraid, there are ponds everywhere.

The story of this female participant in Box 6.5 shows that land acquisition affected participants beyond the direct loss of land and houses. Although in situ displacement by waterlogging affected her capabilities of nourishment, income, and accommodation, this was also linked with risking her bodily health by refraining from using the toilet by night when that was necessary. Besides, her apprehensions for herself and her son's life being harmed by bites of venomous snakes or drowning in the water affected the core capability of life and life security. Furthermore, the loss of lives of her son and her husband not only forced her into marginalisation

but also deprived her core capabilities of emotions, life, and life security of her household members affecting her economic, social–affective, and personal well-being.

6.3.3 Impacts of SEZs on individuals without land loss and previously landless in the transitioning MIEZ community

Being located in proximity to the capital city of Dhaka and the city of Narayanganj, which was already a business conglomerate, the transitioning MIEZ community provided participants with greater access to paid work compared to the other two case studies. Apart from this, with its operational firms, the transitioning MIEZ created more employment, business, and renting opportunities compared to the other two case studies. This created more scopes for the landless and unemployed members of the community to secure employment and means of income. As Table 6.2 demonstrates, several new opportunities were adopted as coping strategies by the participants who did not lose their land. Data suggest that these contributed to the advancing of core capabilities, e.g., nourishment, income and wealth, employment, accommodation, self-identity, personal dignity, and emotions and affiliations of the individuals and thus advanced their economic, social–affective, and personal (physio-psychological) well-being.

Box 6.6:

The story of Hafizul, a male participant without land loss

Hafizul is a male of 37 working in the transitioning MIEZ, living with his wife and two children in the household. His two brothers were also living in the same place: 10–12 years ago, he was dependent on farm-based waged work and some sharecropping. As he had no land, he hired land from a rich person in the village who was like a patron to him. Later, he left farming and relied solely on waged work in different places including in a small factory owned by the person whom he hired land from. Most of the time, he was without work particularly when there was no farming. After the MIEZ was established, he took up paid work with his limited education and was liked by his managers. He recruited a brother to the same unit and his wife to another firm in the MIEZ. He is trying to bring his other brother to the MIEZ from another factory. He reports increased income, employment, and career prospects and was trusted by his employer. To narrate his situation, he reported:

> …[I] worked in the farms. And often we had work. But most of the time we did not have anything to do. We could not work, even if we needed to. Between the sowing time and harvest of the paddy rice, there was a long gap. Back then,

there was no other work… to earn for the family. Now, most of us in the village can work. Even from being at home. [Being] In the same village, same house...

Box 6.6 demonstrates the narratives of a participant from the transitioning MIEZ community suggesting that employment of individuals outside the domain of land loss enhanced their core capabilities. This assisted participants to get rid of their pseudo-unemployment, low-paid, and precarious waged work often with the threat to life and life security. Availing themselves of the opportunities of the MIEZ—e.g., waged employment and self-employment in their small enterprises—enhanced their capabilities of nourishment, income, and wealth enabling them to protect life and life security.

Box 6.7:

The narratives of Altaf, a landless participant

Altaf is a 32-year-old landless male from the transitioning MIEZ community. He lived in the community for many years with his parents, a brother, his wife, and a baby boy. He has two other brothers who were living in Dhaka and Habiganj. He and his brother are running two shops near to the entrance of the transitioning MIEZ. Before the MIEZ was established, he worked in the Maldives for about three years where he went through hardships. In order to save the fees, he got free from the agent through whom he was employed. That, however, resulted in the withdrawal of his visa which made his life even more difficult, insecure, and vulnerable as he was always in fear of the police. Failing to make a career, he returned to Bangladesh thinking that he would try his fortune at home. As the MIEZ was operational, he started two shops, one for himself and another for his brother, and was earning about BDT 30,000 (about GPB 250) a month. However, after the COVID-19 outbreak, things changed and his income slid. His brother who was living in Habiganj secured a university postgraduate degree for whom he was trying for a job in the MIEZ. However, he was not getting a proper link (network) to employ him as he reported:

We two brothers are trying [to establish the business] together. I think we are doing good, except for this shop… This is not that busy... As [it was] two years ago. As the zone is here, I thought, we wouldn't have to worry. And there would always be people [for commodities] here. The shops would be busy again after the coronavirus. But what affects us is, they have shops inside the zone now. And they made the wall here. That put [these] shops at the back.

> And overall, I am better, compared to my life abroad. I don't want to remember [those days]. If I can settle here... like before the lockdown, I will be more than happy.

Participants who were without land previously are positively impacted in the transitioning MIEZ community. The landless male participant formerly working abroad, as seen in Box 6.7, reported having a very insecure life as he was without a visa and was always under the threat of police arrest. Failing to cope with the situations of intense psychological stress, he returned home and afterwards opened two shops adjacent to the MIEZ. Narrating his difficulties abroad and life after returning home he reported-

> I was also without visa. You cannot imagine how difficult that was. I returned home only with three pages of my passport. That was a nightmarish time. I could not make a fortune… I am free now. There's nobody to interfere. I can do whatever I wish to... If I close the shop, go for some other work… nobody can complain, [or] stop me. But in the past, I had no control over my life. (*Altaf, male 32, impacted by business in the MIEZ)*

The hardships in life abroad depicted in the quoted speech were also experienced by others. Another male participant without land loss from the transitioning MIEZ community, who used to work in the palm gardens in Malaysia, reported that he was required to climb high trees and faced the threats of falling and snake bites, affecting his capabilities of life and life security. Returning home, his efforts to establish a business also proved a failure and he had significant financial difficulties. He finally managed to join the MIEZ and was living with his family adjacent to the MIEZ. Infrastructural development and creation of employment, thus, enhanced the capabilities of income, employment, emotions, and life and life security for some community members.

Evidence shows that the transitioning MIEZ provided convenient work, better salaries, and a better work environment, thus enhancing participants' capabilities of income, employment, and bodily health. A 28-year-old participant reported that before joining the MIEZ, he had worked at another factory that was noisy and dusty and paid only BDT 4500 a month. In his current job, which is just 10 minutes' walk from home, he was getting BDT 9500 a month. Comparing his situations before and after joining the MIEZ he reported:

> Before joining this job, I used to work in a factory [outside the MIEZ]. That was not a good job. They used to pay very low. And the problem was, the salary was

> given after a month. They always kept one month's salary in hand. That was stressful. I wasn't free to move to a new job for that. (*Sharon, male 28, employed in the MIEZ)*

In the new job, he was paid his salary on the first or second day of a month and had sufficient breaks at work which put him in a better situation when considered his capabilities of income and bodily health. However, he was rarely allowed weekly leave which was stressful and the salary of BDT 9500 was quite low considering the amount of experience he has gathered. He reported that he would use his skills as a tool for negotiation for a salary rise and, if the employers did not agree, he would take up a better job somewhere else. Apart from income and bodily health, experiences allow participants to enhance their self-respect protecting them from humiliation and exploitation.

Advanced infrastructure and increased income of participants jointly catalyse the enhancement of education as a core capability of individuals in the transitioning community. Increased population with financial ability in the communities brought in better educational institutions such as kindergarten schools in the communities. The access to improved means of education, e.g., the use of multimedia classrooms, was enhanced by the electrification in the communities. A participant from the transitioning MIEZ had a daughter who stopped education after secondary level as she was married off. Being unemployed and without an income, his opinion of educating the daughter instead of marrying her off at young age was not valued by his wife. The daughter did not have a happy marriage and he brought her back to the house. As he was working in the MIEZ with a permanent income, he was trying to educate the daughter considering her future:

> I have got her admitted to computer training. After she gets trained, I will appoint her to any of the jobs. She can try in this zone. Or [she] will work in any of the private clinics. This is a time for education. There was a time, if you did not have education, you could still do something to manage yourself. Now it is not possible. I know some people here [in the zone]. I will get my daughter to pass her Intermediate [higher secondary]. And then she will work in an office or company. This will help her and help her raise the child. (*Ferdous, male 50, employed in the MIEZ)*

The quote illustrates that the arrival of paid work in the community enhanced the aspirations of the members to educate their children. This also enhanced their capability to gain other skills

such as computer skills. Therefore, the evidence suggests that joining in paid work enhanced the capability of the community member for education.

Economic means beyond self-employment and businesses enhanced the economic capabilities of the community members. The increased population in the community created a high demand for houses. This enhanced demand appeared as a blessing as this enhanced the ability of individuals without land loss to secure income through rent. Amir, a 65-year-old participant who constructed two new residential buildings adjacent to the MIEZ site, reported:

> I have transformed the lower floor. Made apartments of small size, like studios. The bigger rooms are made smaller… allowing an attached kitchen and bathroom for each. I am renting out each of the single rooms now. The demand for single rooms is astonishing. This is really a good opportunity for us. (*Amir, male 65, business and renting out houses in the MIEZ)*

Evidence suggests that the participant, despite his old age, was driven by the increased demand for housing to adopt suitable strategies to enhance their ability to increase income and wealth. However, the ability to avail themselves of this opportunity was seen to be much higher among land-losing participants compared to those without land loss. This could be because the land losing households got compensation and had more lands to extend their house for renting out and opening shops and businesses. This differs from what Parwez and Sen (2016) suggest in the Indian case that community members cannot avail themselves of the opportunities of the SEZs.

Apart from being able to live in the preferred place with preferred people, evidence shows that the landless community members including women joining in paid work were able to enhance their network and trust through this. Community members already working at the factories or for any company in the MIEZ identified themselves to be acquainted with people of higher positions and were hopeful of being secure in their current roles. The participant, as seen in Box 6.6, reported that he brought his family members to the paid jobs and was looking to bring others:

> I brought my brother and my wife [to the jobs]. This is because they [company people] trust me. And I have a good relationship with them. Currently, my brother and I work alternative shifts. In the same role. This is because they want us [members of the same family] to supervise the work. You see their trust... and their reliance on us. (*Hafizul, male 37, was engaged in low-paid waged works, now employed in the MIEZ)*

Not only did he manage jobs for his wife and brother but, along with his brother, he gained his employer's trust. He and his brother were entrusted with the same role of the quality controller on alternative shifts so that the work is supervised by the employer's trusted people. The participant also was keen to bring another brother to the same company who was working away from home. It is also found that the households renting out houses were on good terms with tenants which enhanced their ability to socialise. Thus, employment and infrastructural improvement enhanced their core capabilities of emotions and affiliation, advancing their social–affective well-being.

Evidence suggests that participants often left paid employment in the MIEZ to pursue independent means of income through self-employment which enhanced their core capabilities of income, accommodation, self-respect, and personal identity. A previously landless participant from the transitioning MIEZ community left the job from a MIEZ company where he was paid BDT 21,000 (GBP 190–200) a month. After he started a catering service it kept growing and, by December 2021 (during this field visit), he was providing lunch and dinner to over 150 employees which increased his income several times higher than the amount he earned with his job. The participant also reported that engagement in self-employment helped enhance his self-respect by protecting himself from humiliation and exploitation. Because he was not in the rigid office environment and timetable, he identified himself with reduced mental stress. Independent means of his income allowed him to integrate his wife into his job and hire two women from the community to support him which had positive impacts on employment and income on the other individuals. He also funded his four sons to set up their business as he reported:

> …[O]verall, I am doing well. I am happy as there is no hard and fast rule… No office hours to maintain. No tension of being scolded [by managers]. I have much better earnings. And I am my own boss here… I have a goal. I want to build my own house, [make] an address. I have planned already. I helped my sons start a business. Otherwise, I could build the house [by now]. I hope that I can do that soon. (*Kamran, 50+ landless male left paid work for self-employment in the MIEZ)*

The quote demonstrates that the landless individuals find new means of income to upgrade their status from landless and homeless to land and house owners. This is not only evidence of creating a pathway to income and wealth but also of advancing core capabilities such as identity and dignity for the individuals who were previously landless. This advanced their economic as well as personal (physio-psychological) well-being.

6.4 Restricted access to paid work and social issues depriving the core capabilities

Despite enhancing capabilities through employment and infrastructural development, data suggest that the SEZs created new geographies of recruitment excluding the locals from employment and discriminating against them in diverse ways. Despite high promises of recruiting each and every one from the land-acquired communities, data suggest that the recruitment policies were often exclusionary towards the locals, restricting their access to the jobs. Due to the exclusionary measures, locals often hide their identity as a local community member in fear of being rejected for recruitment. Some participants were utterly frustrated as they found that the official positions were not being offered to the community members. Although six years had passed since land acquisition, as seen in the coastal MEZ, most of the positions that were open for the locals were often the low-profile and physically demanding construction works. This was the reason why it was perceived by some participants that they would no longer be offered good positions in the coastal SEZ. Besides, the enhanced capabilities coming through construction business and supply of materials were not achievable by most coastal community members as only a few with access to the opportunities through networks, social-political influence, and capital could benefit from those.

Data in the agrarian SREZ case study also provides similar evidence as frustration was evident among the community participants regarding the discrimination by the factories. However, this time, the exclusionary activities were found to be linked with the intention for exploitation of the labourers. It was found that representation of the community members was low compared to the positions held by the people from outside the community. A participant from the community reported:

> They made many promises. They told us that each and every one will get a job. You can see, how many people are working? They are just a few hundreds… And these are not permanent jobs. We are 10 here [in the office]. Out of the 10 in the Public Health Department, only three are from the community. The rest are from outside. (*Shepur, male 37, working in the SREZ)*

The workers were exploited by the recruiting authorities for which they did not like any protest from the workers' side. The community members, being the locals, had greater voices compared to those who were from distant places or other districts. However, the Public Health Department was a government department and it was expected that they would prioritise recruiting members from the community which did not happen. This was the reason why they excluded the locals as

they could exploit the outsiders without any protests or 'collectivisation' as seen in Dutta (2016,p.46). These discriminations against and deprivations of the community members affect the ability of the members to earn income and be nourished, thus affecting their economic and personal well-being capabilities.

The perceived collective protest was not the only reason behind the exclusions and discriminations; rather, the male members were also responsible for these in some cases. The male members of the communities recruited to the firms often lacked professionalism in performing their assigned duties. Data suggest that they were often contravening the rules of the companies and spoiled the working environment. A participant of the transitioning MIEZ community commented:

> But there are social problems... I've noticed some. There are incidences of powerplay in the area. This happens as everybody is the king in his own place. That's what happens in this case. There are issues… almost every day. Some [working] people collide with others to clash with some other. Today this guy has a fight with that guy and the other day the other guy fights with another. So, this is happening so frequently. (*Altaf, male 32, dealing in business in the transitioning MIEZ community)*

The quote illustrates that recruiting the locals often created problems for the company people as they were involved in clashes. The firms continued recruiting workers from distant places, the locals were excluded not only for preventing potential 'collectivisation' but with more reasons (e.g., for being indiscipline spoiling work environment and engaging in clashes) than Dutta (2016) suggests. These exclusion policies, however, destroyed the future of most male community members in general.

Even community members who identify themselves to have benefited from the establishment of the SEZs in terms of income and wealth were dubious of their ability to continue living the same life in the future. There were apprehensions that their core capabilities or their ability to live the same lives are dependent on some external issues which can degrade to bring perils in their lives. A participant reported:

> [Some] people are disturbing… And if you talk about this, that is going to create problems. There are diverse problems. One thing I can tell you, there is nothing for free. You have to pay something [making reference to unofficial rent-seeking]

if you want to do business here. So, you understand what I mean. (*Kamran, male over 50, dealing in business in the MIEZ community)*

The MIEZ was still buying new lands at the back to expand its investment facilities further. The new sand filling in the newly acquired lands created waterlogging during the rainy season. This also threatened to limit the accessibility of some community members through their traditionally used passages as they can be blocked by new lands walled within the MIEZ. If this happened in the future, not only would the businesses at the back of the MIEZ become non-functional, but they would also lose income from the rent they were receiving. This could resemble the economy of disappearance seen in Dutta (2016) although not by closure of plants but by in situ displacement and restricted accessibility.

6.5 Conclusion

With the view to addressing part of the second objective of the study—i.e., to examine the impacts of change in resources on the capabilities of the community members in the SEZs within the dynamics of rural livelihoods—this chapter investigates how opportunities brought about by the SEZs impact the capabilities of the members both who did not own or loss land in three rural communities. Findings show that in the occupational and livelihood dynamics, the community members often found farming and other subsistence means unable to enhance their capabilities. In the context of the depleted natural resources in the rural communities, the SEZs also induced anticipation and aspirations for employment and other expected development benefits as seen in Cross (2014) in India. Exploring the core capabilities derived from the Central Human Capabilities of Nussbaum (2003) and aligned with the Hierarchy of Needs of Maslow (1943), this study suggests that the necessity of alternative means in the rural communities identified by Adams *et al.* (2018) in Bangladesh and Ellis (2000) in other contexts was being provided by the SEZs creating capabilities for the community members. However, those are often inadequate as the coastal and agrarian community members who were dependent on natural resources and could not find jobs in the SEZs are deprived of their core capabilities.

This chapter also shows that despite facing exclusions from employment imposed by factories, individuals from landless households were significantly integrated into the benefits of SEZs and often had the choice to leave paid employment to pursue better available means. This is a novel finding in Bangladesh as earlier studies such as Gardner (2018), Mahmud *et al.* (2020) and Nuremowla (2016) did not report the impacts of development projects established on the acquired land. The evidence from all three communities shows that the local males were often excluded by the companies from paid employment which corresponds to what Dutta (2009; 2016) suggests for India. The exclusion of some willing community members from employment in the

SEZs, similar to what Gardner (2018) suggests, deprived them of their core capabilities. Despite being unable to join, being excluded from SEZ recruitment or leaving paid employment willingly, some community members in the SEZs reported having enhanced economic and personal (social–affective) well-being. The prototypical case study, namely, the transitioning MIEZ, with several thousand employments created and significant economic opportunities brought beyond employment foreshadows that the other SEZ communities will witness better situations as those SEZs grow.

This chapter, thus, contributes to knowledge from the perspectives of dispossession and displacement, resettlement, and the capabilities approach. The SEZs' indirect benefits, such as engagement in small enterprises, self-employment, and rent, were often more impactful than their direct benefits, e.g., employment created in the SEZs. This advances the findings of dispossession literature, e.g., Levien (2012) and Parwez and Sen (2016), that reports the impacts of SEZs in negative terms only. This also contributes to the resettlement perspectives suggesting that infrastructural development and employment can supplement or replace the conventional resettlement measures suggested in Zaman and Khatun (2017) or Cernea (1997) for enhancing the capabilities of the dispossessed and displaced. Despite the slower pace of employment generation, paid employment and other income-generating opportunities in the SEZs provided choice and created core capabilities for the community members who did not lose land or were previously landless which advances the findings of Rao (2019) and Naz and Bögenhold (2018) from the capabilities approach.

Chapter 7: Special Economic Zones and Aspirations and Capabilities of Women in the Communities

7.1 Introduction

This chapter, drawing on the low participation and necessity of paid work and other means of income for female members in rural communities and the availability of those at hand, intends to examine the integration of women into the opportunities of the SEZs and its impacts on the core capabilities of women. With this intent, this addresses three questions: *How do the SEZs generate aspirations for women's employment and other economic activities? How does integration into these opportunities impact the core capabilities of women? And how does women's participation in the economic domain contribute to social development?* Conversion factors, e.g., social, personal, or environmental factors facilitating or restraining individuals from converting their means (land, paid work, self-employment, renting out property) to achieve their core capabilities and human diversity, e.g., differences among individuals, are crucial for enhancing the capabilities of women. This chapter, thus, considers the barriers or restraining factors experienced by women and explores how they transition following the establishment of SEZs. The impacts of SEZs on women's core capabilities outlined in Figure 2.1 and Table 2.3 in Chapter 2 and in the Methodology Chapter are examined with a focus on their contribution to social development. The interview questions were asked to the participants following the topic guide for the semi-structured interview attached in Appendix F.

The prospects of employment without having to migrate from rural communities can have positive impacts on women in Bangladesh which is not adequately addressed in the literature (Akhter *et al.*, 2017; Kabeer *et al.*, 2011). Apart from employment, SEZs in different communities and at different stages of development can generate significantly different potentials for women of all ages. As the access to paid work in the SEZs can have a critical association with the enhancement of core capabilities of women, other opportunities such as renting out houses and engaging in small enterprises can also contribute to social development with women's active and meaningful participation in the economic domain of the household. Providing a demographic description of the sample of 28 female participants, sub-section 7.2 briefly relates the geographical and social–economic contexts of female work in the SEZs in Bangladesh. Sub-section 7.3 explores the barriers and aspirations of women that includes an account of the restraining factors of women's participation in paid employment and other economic activities showing how the SEZs make a difference by infusing aspirations among women across communities. Sub-section 7.4 examines the core capabilities, e.g., nourishment,

income and wealth, accommodation, emotions, life and life security, bodily health, self-respect, and personal identity to know the impacts of the SEZs on economic, social–affective, and personal (physio-psychological) well-being of women. How the changes in the core capabilities of women contribute to social development is also explored in this sub-section with a focus on women's strategies to cope with the changed situations in the households. Sub-section 7.5 draws the conclusions of the chapter. All comments of the participants are written up from their own perceptions and narratives.

7.2 The geographical and social–economic contexts of female work in the SEZs

7.2.1 Sample demographic features

To describe the sample of women by age, out of the 28 female participants, four participants were within the age group of 56–65 years, five within 46–55, seven within 36–45, and 12 within 18–35. When considering the educational status of the participants, over half of the participants had primary level education, over one-third had below secondary (grades 6–10), and the rest had secondary-level and Bachelor-level qualifications. Considering occupational status, one-third of the participants were employed in the SEZs, five participants were engaged in business or other waged work, and the rest were working as homemakers. With one exception, all participants were previously outside the domain of paid employment. Participants employed in the SEZs were mostly within the age group of 18–35. Considering SEZ employment, most of the participants were employed in the transitioning MIEZ case study and the rest in the agrarian SREZ case study with no female participants being employed in paid work in the coastal MEZ case study. Table 7.1 illustrates the demographic features of the sample.

Table 7.1:

Sample demographic features of the female participants

Sl. No., Participant Code & pseudonym	Case Location	Age Range	Education	Occupation
1 : PI11AW, Selina	MEZ	56-65	Below Secondary	Homemaker

The full table is attached in Appendix C

7.2.2 Geographical and social–economic contexts

In the context of the arrival of waged work and other opportunities in the communities, the SEZs can operate in either way; facilitating women to paid work without having to migrate to cities leaving their children and families behind or restricting women in their pursuit of paid work in the interplay of diverse social–personal and policy factors determining their access. The SEZs inspiring women with diverse economic opportunities is, thus, connected to human diversity and personal, social, and geographical conversion factors (Robeyns, 2016). Differential needs of humans are determined by human diversity or personal differences that require different levels of means to achieve the same level of functioning or well-being. The environmental conversion factors (e.g., geographical location, distance), social conversion factors (e.g., policies, norms, gender) or personal conversion factors (e.g., education and skills) help individuals convert the means (e.g., paid work, rent, shopkeeping) to achievements or core capabilities (e.g., income, bodily health, self-respect).

Female work in the rural Bangladesh context, as seen in the literature, is characterised by a disproportionate burden of unpaid care work. The pursuit of paid work and means of income by women has a correlation with the geographical location of work considering the distance from home (Akhter *et al.*, 2017; Heintz *et al.*, 2017), the personal, social and institutional barriers, and access to resources and property (Mansoor, 1999; Sultana, 2010). Transcending the barriers to economic activities by constant negotiation between the conversion factors such as geographical location, assigned home roles, and societal expectations mediated by other personal factors is a gigantic task which many women fail to achieve. Considering their relevance in Bangladesh, this chapter crucially links how the SEZs are providing dividends for surpassing numerous obstacles of female work suggesting that this enhances the core capabilities of women relating to their economic, social–affective, and personal (physio-psychological) well-being.

In the policy and social–geographical contexts, as seen in Chapter 4, the three case studies display significant differences regarding how they offer a favourable ecosystem to women for income and outdoor employment within the community. In all three cases, the social norms are seen to allow women limited access to outdoor paid work. The women in the coastal MEZ community had access to occupations such as fishing, fry-collection, and gathering before land acquisition which was mostly absent in the agrarian SREZ community. However, the transitioning MIEZ is way more advanced both in terms of being the least affected by land loss due to the low dependence of households on natural resource-based living and the availability of paid work in the operational MIEZ. With this, the absence of resettlement for the evicted house and failure to receive monetary compensation can compel women to pursue precarious forms of living. Women without any land and means of income may feel the necessity of pursuing paid work. The

availability of employment with diverse economic opportunities within women's reach can induce aspirations in them. Thus, the SEZs integrating women into economic opportunities is crucial for their capabilities as well as for social development in the broader context of the rural communities in Bangladesh.

7.3 Restraining factors of female work and aspirations in the SEZ communities

7.3.1 Social–personal factors restraining women's participation to paid work

Societal norms and expectations play a crucial role in determining the participation of female members in paid work in SEZ communities in the context of rural Bangladesh. The social personal factors impacting women's participation to work are explored to have a nuanced view of the impacts. As seen in the literature, the dual legal system (based on religious Sharia law and general law) operational in Bangladesh, a Sharia-based inheritance system allows women lower access to land and property (Mansoor, 1999). Besides, the social norms forbid them to claim the share of inherited property as seen in the literature. In addition, the societal norms as seen in Chapter 4, confining women to the indoor setting, prohibit them from pursuing waged work outdoors. The interview data suggest that women's participation in paid work can be significantly affected by the social norms keeping them within the household. A female participant from the coastal MEZ community expresses her concerns:

> My husband is working. I can also work... So, this can be good for us. This might not have happened for many... Maybe, not many village women are employed yet. This can be because [the inhabitants of] this place is conservative. People do not like women to go out… And work outside their houses. (*Rubaiya, Female 36-38, evicted in the coastal MEZ)*

The general social expectations in the coastal community, as the quote shows, are against female work which might keep them out of the mass employment being created in the MEZ. In the context of land dispossession women who generally do not claim or take the portion of the inherited property or share of compensation that they are legally entitled can have significant deprivation being out of income generating activities.

Evidence of internalised societal norms is prevalent in the female members who regenerate the general societal expectation to confine women to the indoor conditions. The emergence of paid work often failed to induce aspirations in elderly women, especially those

from socially reputed and financially well-off households, as they expressed no intention to join in paid work in their older ages. Even the perception of such participants was that their female members were unable to work in outdoor conditions which can also affect the employability of women in the work domain. Women's restricted participation in paid work can, thus, be a reproduced societal expectation embedded in women themselves. Despite their ability to be employed, some women cannot work outside as for generations they have been experiencing the same reality of adhering to the social norms to resonate in their personal spheres. To narrate how her failure to receive compensation affects her and her daughter's ability to pursue a means of income within the societal expectations, a female participant from the coastal MEZ community reported:

> I can do something for my daughter, that is also necessary. She is a female and cannot go out to work. I want to do something so that she has some earning source or some asset. This is very important for her. Her daughter is also growing up. *(Selina, female 60+, lost land to the MEZ)*

However, from a different perspective, this corresponds to women's labour market behaviour suggested by Heintz *et al.* (2017).

Not only at the personal and household level, but restrictions are also imposed from the institutional level excluding the female workers from male-dominated occupations. This exclusion is related to the recruitment policies of the implementers. As land acquisition occurred, the landless women who previously worked as occasional farm workers were in search of alternative paid work. A female participant from the coastal MEZ who required an occupation to earn a living could not join in paid work due to limited female employment created in the SEZs. She reported:

> The zone can change the lives of all… Of those who are without a job or farming. I do not think I can work soon. My husband says that they are all male workers [working in the zone now]. Though there are really many people… They are working in different companies. All are doing construction work. *(Ameera, female 28, evicted in the coastal MEZ)*

Exclusion of the female members from construction work is an institutional barrier erected by the companies investing in the SEZs resulting in the recruitment of all male workers. In the coastal MEZ and the agrarian SREZ where about 95% of employed people are working as construction workers, there is no evidence of female workers employed in such work. Besides, the SEZ offices have recruited some personnel for assistance in office work as well as keeping the utility services

up and running for the investors. Those technical (mechanics) and non-technical (assistants) positions are seen to be held by male workers. The SEZs promised to recruit members from the land-losing or affected families. In such a case, with only one exception, all such posts were also held by male participants.

Females were not only excluded from male-dominated occupations, but the SEZs were often seen to offer low-waged works in the roles which can be regarded as extended domestic roles of the female. A female participant was recruited to cook for about 300 male workers in a company in the agrarian SREZ and received only BDT 7000 a month which was almost half the wages of BDT 12,000 that the male participants received from the same SEZ in the lowest case. Another participant who was looking for a work was promised a job as a cook for the security personnel who were to arrive in the SREZ in the next few days. These narratives show that the SEZ jobs that women took or were promised were often available in the informal sector as this participant was already working. Recruitment of women to positions or roles that they traditionally play at home while restricting them from taking up the roles held by men, therefore, can be an institutional stereotyping of female work and extension of the patriarchal constructs, norms, and structures by which they received discriminatory salaries. The fact that the participant often felt better even in conditions of deprivation can be an incidence of adaptive preference as she reported:

> If I get this [promised] job in the zone, that will [make] feel better. Here all people are working, both male and female. I will get an environment to work with safety. They promised me a job as a cook for the Ansar men. *(Majira, female 32, engaged in informal waged work in the agrarian SREZ community)*

7.3.2 The SEZs and aspirations of women for participation in paid work

Despite the obstacles identified in joining some works, this analysis suggests that the prospects both for employment and participation of women in paid work in the factories or other outdoor places and within the home are enhanced by the arrival of the SEZs. About one-third of the female participants were employed in the SEZs, which was often facilitated by the restricted access of local males as seen in Chapter 6 and in Dutta (2016). Women were even engaged in waged work or playing roles in business (small enterprises) with their husbands outside the SEZs employment. Although some others were working in the home domain, they gained significant access to income through the rents received from houses. Participants in the transitioning MIEZ case reported that there was an increasing demand for accommodation where the female participants were able to rent out houses and have access to income. Data suggest that 25% of female participants were receiving income either from business or rent who were not engaged in

those economic activities prior to the establishment of the SEZs. Considering the involvement of other members of their households, as data suggest, more female members benefited from paid work and other benefits with another well-being effect, as stated by Sen (2008).

The SEZs induced aspirations among the female members in the communities assisting them to transcend the geographical barriers of paid work. Households that did not want their female members to travel or migrate to other places to pursue paid work were able to let them work in the SEZs at their doorsteps. This also allowed them to engage in waged work with little education and no skill as female members with elementary level education were found to be engaged in the factory works. A female participant who was a homemaker and never worked in the outdoor conditions commented on the availability of jobs at the coastal MEZ:

> …when there are convenient jobs in the community. Things will change, at least for me… As I want to work… My husband also wants me to work. Women can truly go to work in front of their houses. They can contribute to their families… and raise their children well. I am not telling you that I will be working [sooner]. But who knows, I may need to [take up a] work... So, this zone will give women option… Without going to Dhaka or another place. *(Rubaiya, female, 36–38, land-losing and evicted in the coastal MEZ)*

This quote provides clear evidence that those who regarded social norms and expectations and geographical distance as barriers to employment found it easier to work within the community. This links to the conversion factors (Robeyns, 2016,p.406) e.g., geographical location of work where women can better transform the opportunity of paid work by joining it. The SEZs clearly arrived as a reserve pool of jobs for women who were willing to work and provided bargaining positions for women as suggested by Nussbaum (2000).

Evidence from the coastal MEZ community shows that participants also gained access to paid work outside the MEZ which are influenced by the infrastructural development. Developed infrastructure like roads and electricity established connectivity and an improved environment for investment in the coastal community. This facilitated the growth of businesses where women also got access to work. A female member from the coastal MEZ community reported:

> There are some shops. There is electricity in the village. This helped many... So, there are poultry farms in the villages. I told you that I work in the poultry farm… The road is recently built. More people are driving now. You will always find an auto. *(Golapi, landless female of 45 from the coastal MEZ)*

The arrival of mass recruitment is suggestive of the fact that many more women are likely to pursue paid work as an occupation. Young female members from households who were already working in different places in the informal sector were willing to work in the coastal MEZ. Another female participant had several daughters with one working in a city as housemaid. She shared her plans regarding bringing her daughter home to be sent to the MEZ with her other daughters instead of sending them away if there was availability of work for them. She reported:

> My daughters are growing up. Rather than sending them to the cities… If they can work here, being at home with me, that would be better… I think there still needs time… for the zone to open its work. Particularly, [before] the factories [open].
>
> *(Purubi, female 40, evicted in the coastal MEZ)*

The coastal MEZ, thus, not only creates scopes for female employment but is likely to reduce migration in the future, which is also a barrier to female work in Bangladesh as seen in Heintz *et al.* (2017). With this, the female members employed in the informal sector are likely to be pulled back to their community by the SEZs.

With almost a similar social setting to the coastal MEZ and low exposure of women to the economic arena, the arrival of paid work in the agrarian SREZ also infuses aspirations and changes the perceptions of the female members of the community towards participation of women in paid work. Another female participant from the agrarian SREZ community expressed her expectations:

> Not only the boys but the girls can work here now. This is a zone in the village itself. If they cannot work here, they cannot work anywhere. So, this has created an opportunity for the girls too. Not for me of course… At this age. [She smiles].
>
> *(Lekha, female over 60, lost land to the agrarian SREZ)*

This also indicates a change in the social expectations as the male as well as female members are more willing to allow women to join in paid work. However, human diversity remains critical as the elderly women thought that paid work was helpful for young women, not for themselves.

There is more evidence from the transitioning MIEZ as all the female members reported that they were directly impacted by increased economic activities. The fact that almost 80% of the female participants were engaged in paid employment in the MIEZ and the rest were impacted by business and rental facilities denotes the extent of impact that the MIEZ has on the female members of the transitioning community. A female participant working in the transitioning MIEZ shared:

> I am already working in a good environment. And foreign companies are here. So, if my sisters can educate themselves, they can take good positions... I am helping them, with their education. I don't want them to work just as waged labourers. Our managers are getting a huge salary. My dream is… they can get such a good job… *(Mostari, aged 25–26, on her sisters' prospects to be employed in the MIEZ)*

Another female participant who was working with her husband in the MIEZ reported:

> The zone was established at our village, [that's] why I am [working] here. This is a different life, working in the factories is different... different from working at home. When you need money, you have to work outside. This is why... I think, I can help my family now… I have a big contribution in the family... My husband and others [in the village] value this. I do not have to depend on my husband's income. And I have the confidence. I can do something for myself, my children and my family. *(Bina, female 35, employed in the MIEZ)*

7.4 The SEZs, core capabilities of women, and social changes across communities

7.4.1 The core capabilities of women relating to their economic well-being

As demonstrated in Table 7.1, the female members with little education and no skills were able to be employed after the arrival of the SEZs which advances the core capabilities of women. The engagement of women with paid employment was interlinked with the other capabilities such as nourishment, income and wealth and accommodation. Not only paid employment but the availability of other opportunities also provided women with access to income and wealth. The growth of businesses within the communities or increased number of shops adjacent to houses also allowed the female members access to the economic arena where they shared the ownership of and responsibility for the business. Female participants were also found to be engaged in the shops where they used to sit during the absence of their male members.

Box 7.1:

The story of Neela, a landless female employed in the transitioning MIEZ

Neela is a 24-year-old female from the transitioning MIEZ community. She was married and was living in Dhaka with her husband. Following a bad relationship with her husband, she returned to her father's house. His father was the main earning person and was engaged in driving. His brother, who used to work for Unilever, was also living with his wife and child. After she returned, her brother had a road accident and lost his job due to his inability to work. Her father, who inspired her to take up a job anywhere, also died a few days after she took a job. With the death and inability of two male earning members the household was in severe economic crisis. Her job at a foreign company in the MIEZ was providing a salary to support her family. She became the main earning person in the household where she was just a dependent a few days back. Narrating her plans for her life after taking up paid work, she reported:

> If this (job) was not here [in the community], I would stay at home, doing nothing. That would really be hard. That I am earning… [and] the family needs money, I cannot think of anything else. [Now] I have skills and [this is why] they will also keep me [employed], I believe.

Availability of employment in the transitioning MIEZ community resulted in participation of women in the community which enhanced their capabilities of nourishment and income in the context of the household. The story narrated in Box 7.1 depicts that the female participant from the transitioning MIEZ community experienced a sudden income loss in the household. Joining in paid work enhanced her ability to earn a living for herself and her family as she reported:

> After my brother lost his job, my father advised me to find a job… if I could anywhere. At that time, he was maintaining the family. After I joined the job, my father left the world… We were yet again in a huge crisis. It was my job that actually rescued us… (*Neela, a landless female employed in the MIEZ*)

Another participant from the transitioning MIEZ community reported:

> My husband had loans… I have helped him get rid of them. So, this has increased my prestige in the family and, if you tell, to the neighbours… This is needed. When your family is in crisis. I think this is good. Another thing, you can consider

> this for the community as a whole. There are more services. I work in the zone, I can get the [services from the] bank in the zone. (*Tasnuva, female 32, employed in the MIEZ)*

The quotes illustrate that the female members stepped up to rescue their households from marginalisation enabling them to maintain an income for the sake of nourishment. The arrival of the SEZs was found to have changed the perception of the female members as well as the male members of the household towards their participation in paid work. These social changes allowed women to be the bread earners' role, getting services by themselves and protecting the families from starvation and economic downfall.

Box 7.2:

The story of Mostari, a landless female employed in the transitioning MIEZ

Mostari is a 26-year-old female, separated from her husband after three years of marriage. To escape abuse, humiliation, and violence, she left her husband and returned to her parents where she was neither welcomed by her family nor the neighbours. Her father told her that he was already in financial problems and had two other daughters to be married off. Her separation from her husband and staying with them would affect the household including her other sisters both financially and socially. Neighbours also told that it was normal for the married women to remain in the husband's house. As she was under tremendous psychological pressure, she discussed her situations with a friend who was working in the MIEZ. Her friend helped her join in the MIEZ about in a month where she was working at the time of this interview. After she took up paid work, her situation in the household changed and the neighbours threated her with respect. She was able to maintain her own expenses, help her family, and was thinking of the future of her sisters. Her job also helped her get rid of her personal anguishes and psychological stresses as she reported:

> Life goes on. I told you I have a different life. This is a place [where] I can remain busy. I like my job and want to continue this so long as I can. This is all I need now. For my sisters, for myself. I have to. Now, my father is looking after them. Now I am earning too. So, I have to take care of them. I am good here. Environment is good. The salary, I would not say bad. So, these are my plans.

The female members got access to the income not only through paid employment and self-employment, rather being at home considering their ability to secure income through the opportunity of renting out houses. The growing demand for accommodation in the MIEZ community triggered the increased availability of houses. Access to income through the rent earned at home allowed female members access to the household resources which was long absent in the earlier mode of living such as farming before the arrival of the SEZs. A female participant reported-

> Income also has increased... My son is really doing good. So am I. The rooms are giving me money. I regard this as my money. They [tenants] hand the money to me. I give it to my husband, though. The money remains mostly with me. When we had farming, I hardly had money with me. I can spend [the money now]… So, this… has happened to me and my household. *(Sharmin, female 55, land-losing in the MIEZ)*

Evidence shows that the collected rent was kept with the female members which they were able to spend at their liberty. This increased their ability to own money which they could not do in the past when the households depended on farming. Another participant from the same community reported that, whenever their children needed money, they usually shared that with her as a mother. She needed to discuss that with her husband and collected the money for the children. After renting out rooms, the money collected as rent was in her possession as her own income. She was more able to spend it on her necessities and provide her children when they needed. This was an instance of her recreated self-identity as a mother to provide the necessities to the children. The female members who were without access to the household property all their lives suddenly had improved houses yielding income for themselves and discovered their own house not just as a life-time residence but rather as wealth for themselves. This sense of ownership of money is similar to what Kabeer (2021) sees in Gilardone, Guérin and Palier (2014) as enhanced agency of women with microcredit in India.

The informal sector workers in SEZ employment enhanced the ability of the women to raise their income significantly. A land-losing female participant from the agrarian SREZ community had family farming on their own land as well as sharecropping on others' land. Her husband became mentally ill and was incapable of working. Consequently, they did not have any farming or sharecropping which was the only source of income in the past. As all her six children were minors, they also were incapable of working. She shared her stories of struggles and immeasurable hardships:

> I was looking for something for months… I just could not manage anything. I decided to work in another's house. They do not pay much... Just one to two thousand a month. [With such a little income] You cannot manage so large a family. I failed to manage a work. At last… I took this job just two months back. So, this is something I do now... *(Amina, female, 48, land losing and employed in the SREZ)*

Failing to take up a work as housemaid that yields roughly one to two thousand Taka a month, the participant was at a loss. After securing a job at the SEZ, she was able to earn wages worth BDT 7000 a month which was higher than what she would get working as a domestic aid. This was also much higher compared to the agricultural produce they had earlier. In addition to her salary, she used to get food for herself and her children from the workplace which allows herself and her family to be nourished.

As stated above, the evidence of enhanced core capabilities—e.g., income, employment, and accommodation—was mostly found in the fully functional MIEZ where employment and other opportunities provided better accommodation for women. However, the female participants from other communities were also found to have enhanced their economic capabilities such as being able to own or manage better accommodation. A female participant who was employed in the SREZ commented that she had better economic conditions with her ability to live in a better residence.

> To be honest, I have a better life… in the sense that I have an improved house now. And I am doing something from being at home… without having to travel. Despite the things that happened to us… with displacement from our land, I am doing good. And so is my family. *(Dristy, land-losing female, 24, employed in the SREZ)*

Female participants were not only being able to secure employment, income, and accommodation; rather, they were often providing for the whole household after they faced loss of farming and income by land acquisition. The data show that, previously, the women had to rely on the male members for everything they needed. Their salary, income from business, or wages earned enabled them to meet their own needs by themselves.

Participation in paid work visibly ameliorated the economic condition of women irrespective of the marital status. Married female participants working with their husbands gained an equal share of income in the households leading to a positive social change. They were also

found to have increased skills and were promoted to better positions at work which enables them to secure their positions at work. Young women starting work as unskilled helpers have gained skills to be promoted to the position of operator which increased their income, the value of work, and their prospects of a career.

> This is because, despite my little education, I have worked in the factory for about three years already. I started as a helper. I didn't have any fixed work [job description]. Now I have gained my skill… And have got the position of an operator. I have the required experience. That's why I am confident that I will not lose the job [all on a sudden]. *(Mishty, female employed in the MIEZ)*

Not only in respect of the current job and position, but participation in paid work also brought prospects for a better career and some participant expected to be in better positions in the future. They had a sense of job security as they often were confident enough to secure a replacement job if they lose the current job anytime in the future. Thus, as a facilitator of the work domain transition, the SEZs enable the female members to secure their employment and income. This advances the findings of Heintz *et al.* (2017) who claim in the Bangladesh context that married women are less likely to pursue paid work. The fact that all women, including the married ones, are working side by side with their husbands in the workplace is foreshadowing a change in the social norms in the SEZs communities. Although there was already evidence in the SREZ, greater changes in the prototypical case study, e.g., the transitioning MIEZ community, are suggestive of the similar outcome in the other two case studies, e.g., archetypical coastal MEZ and stereotypical agrarian SREZ, when those become fully operational.

7.4.2 The core capabilities of women relating to social–affective well-being

Land acquisition and displacement immediately broke down social networks, affecting the life and life security of household members which impacted the emotions of women as seen in Chapter 5. However, findings suggest that the evicted participants mostly did not move out; rather, they remained in the community. Although they were often living in separate houses, the female participants identify themselves as conveniently closer to each other and more accessible in the new place with better connectivity coming through infrastructural development. A land-losing and displaced female participant from the transitioning MIEZ community commented:

> Previously we had to use boats. We rarely went to our neighbours' houses. When there was water. Almost the whole of the wet season… Now roads are better.

> Most families formerly living inside the *beel* [swamp] have moved here together.
>
> You see the road. We have more communications… *(Sharmin, female, 55, MIEZ)*

The quoted evidence shows that developed roads enhanced connectivity among family members, neighbours, and relatives who were living in a swamp-like place without road connectivity and disconnected from one another throughout the wet season. The evicted female members in the transitioning MEZ community also reported that they were settled in nearby places in order to be close to their families and relatives.

Evidence also shows that infrastructural development in the coastal MEZ community resulted in increased mobility of the female participants. The developed roads and availability of transportation enhanced the freedom of the female members to be connected to their near ones. This also resulted in enhanced communication of the female members with their family members as they were free to take public transport which was available making commuting safe and faster. This is evidence of enhanced ability to maintain networks advancing their capability of emotions. A female participant from the coastal MEZ commented:

> If we need to go to the town, we can go anytime… almost anytime. I can go anywhere easily. I can go to my father's house alone and on my own. I feel that I can meet them more often now. Besides, I am sitting in the shop… I also have this opportunity… To earn money with my husband. My husband can be outside, I can go to see the doctor. *(Marzana, female, homemaker and family business MEZ)*

Evidence from the agrarian SREZ and transitioning MIEZ shows that employment of the female participants was facilitated by their existing social networks what they utilised for securing jobs for themselves. As seen in the story in Box 7.2, the female participant was unemployed and was in need of a job. She was assisted by a friend of hers making connections with a company and getting recruited in the MIEZ. Expressing her necessity for a job she reported how she was helped by a friend to engage in the work domain-

> I was completely frustrated… And discussed this with my friends. One of my friends said that she could help me get a job. Within a month… after I returned from my husband, I took this job… This was really something [that was] very necessary. *(Mostari, female, employed in the MIEZ)*

It was not just the existing social networks that facilitated the employability of the female members; rather, they were enhanced by their appearance in outside paid work. Those who were working in the SEZs got the opportunity to socialise with other colleagues which enabled them to exchange views, share personal issues for a decision, and build networks and trust. This enabled the female members to enhance their capabilities of emotions and affiliation. Another female participant from the transitioning MIEZ community reported:

> I can do something by myself now. I can decide… For what to do and where to spend. This really makes me. Previously I could not give anything to my relatives. My younger sisters wanted gifts at different times. Now I can buy them gifts on Eid and other occasions. I can send them money if they need… (*Tasnuva, female, employed in the MIEZ)*

7.4.3 The core capabilities of women relating to their personal well-being

Participation in paid work with improved infrastructure broadened women's visibility in the social sphere which also enhanced their core capabilities relating to personal (physio-psychological) well-being. They gained the ability to reduce micro-level dependence on the male members with respect to getting their outdoor things done. The female participants reported that increased availability of services in the community enabled them to visit doctors, get banking services, transfer funds through mobile banking, and get balances for their mobile phones conveniently by themselves. After the arrival of the SEZs, infrastructural development increased the mobility of female members by which they were more able to establish networks. Increased availability of transport enabled them to seek health services and education for themselves and their children.

Access to paid work appeared as the removal of the long-standing domestic confinement of female members in the communities. Female participants from land-losing households as well as landless households found that taking up paid work or economic activities enhanced their capabilities or personal identity and self-respect. Paid employment was found to have created capabilities for the women in the land-acquired communities which go beyond the economic capabilities such as nourishment and income:

> A job gives salary… But it is not all about money. I am here, free in my work. I can do something on my own. This is my identity. This is what I think is the greatest change [that has happened]. Imagine there was no zone, no factory... I have studied till SSC [secondary]. What could I do in the village? I would just be a

> burden on my husband. He would earn, while I sit idly in the house. *(Hena, female 23, employed in the MIEZ)*

The non-monetary benefits of paid employment involved enhanced and recreated personal identity of the female members in their own perceptions. A sense of self-reliance among the female members emerged to liberate them against the backdrop of a perennial economic dependence which is seen among women in the study of Dutta (2019) in India.

Apart from the urge to play a meaningful financial role in the household, paid work was often desired by the female participants to protect themselves from humiliation in life as seen in the stories in Box 7.1 and Box 7.2. Not only were they able to protect their families from humiliation in the community by securing an income to provide for all, but they also discovered themselves as responsible and confident individuals recognised in the outside world. The participants from the transitioning MIEZ community, in both cases, returned to their families after separation from their husbands. The shock of their return to the family was aggravated within days by the incidents of injury and death of family members and often the unwelcome behaviour of relatives and neighbours. Even with such adversities, they managed to join paid work often as a 'helper' and were promoted to the position of 'operator'. A participant regarded her promotion as enhanced identity as she reported:

> This job was of unimaginable resort for me. If the zone was not here, what would I do? Now I have skills… I have got promotion as an operator... This gives me confidence. I can take responsibility… And running my family. This was all possible because the jobs came here. *(Neela, female, MIEZ)*

With the changes in the income and occupational identity, paid work has increased self-dignity of women enabling them to protect themselves from violence, abuses, and exploitations. This also helps women get rid of the "fear and hierarchy" that Nussbaum (2000, p.298) suggests exists to thwart their sociability. The story of the 26-year-old female participant from Box 7.2 demonstrates that escaping the violence and humiliations of her husband was the first step of protecting life and life security and self-dignity. However, being able to regain her position in the household and community in the face of criticism from the family and neighbours was ever challenging as she explained:

> I do not know how to tell you… He was abusive… He used to be violent to me. Many things happened… And I decided to come back to my father's house. That [return] was not welcomed by my family. My neighbours also told me to go back…

> But that was not possible. My father told me that he was a poor person. [And that] a married daughter returning home would increase his pressure... He has two more daughters. So, he told me to take a decision [that would be] good for the family. *(Mostari, female, working in the MIEZ)*

Taking up paid work not only saved her from precarious conditions rather made her able to enhance self-dignity among the family members and the neighbours. She narrated the change in her situation after she engaged herself in paid employment:

> I have a [respectable] position in the family [now]. The neighbours, who told me to return to my husband, are supportive. And are looking through different eyes... They also show respect [for me] now. This is because I have a job. *(Mostari, female, MIEZ)*

The quoted speech illustrates that the participant was able not only to protect herself from violence protecting her life-security, but this also enabled her to protect her self-dignity. She was able to regain and enhance her respectable position in the household and society through securing an income and employment. What Dutta (2019) suggests as women getting rid of the house by factory work has a similarity with this finding, although this re-establishes dignity within their place of preference.

The female participants from the agrarian SREZ also reported that paid employment enhanced their personal well-being. The participation in paid work impacted the personal lives of the female members by enhancing their confidence, inducing aspirations for career development, and protecting themselves with their families from humiliation. Women both with higher and little education found it possible to work as the SEZs were established. Banking on the personal skills gained, some female members expected to be placed in higher positions in the organisation. A female participation from the agrarian community with a university degree not only took the job as a present source of income; she was also enthusiastic about the prospects of a successful career in the SEZ:

> I've learnt how to work in an office environment. Gained work skills and some interpersonal skills. I've received training on how to work with people of different types. That is my confidence now… And most importantly, I've started dreaming of a better, a successful professional life. *(Dristy, female 24, SREZ)*

Data for interviews also suggest that participants would feel safer working in the agrarian SREZ compared to their current work in the informal sector with low personal and job security. For example, a participant from the agrarian SREZ community was engaged in cooking for male officers where she felt awkward as all residents in the house were male officers. Although she preferred the job of a cook over other forms of waged work including factory work as it would not require any new skills, she had the sense of lack of personal security in the domestic setting. The SEZs could provide her a similar job of her preference but in a much securer workplace where both males and females would be working. This would enhance her personal well-being as she perceived she could protect herself from potential humiliation and insecurity as a woman at work. A job in the official setting rather than in the current domestic one is also socially more respectable. Therefore, the SEZs not only removed the social–geographical obstacles and allowed space for women to engage in paid work on the doorstep but also brought increased self-respect and social dignity to the women. Not only in advancing the personal (physio-psychological) well-being, but paid work was also of immense significance considering the social development it brought through enhanced economic roles of the women.

7.4.4 Strategy of working women to cope with the changed situations

Although income and economic roles have often changed for the better, the home roles of the women are completely unchanged, which often put strain on capabilities of the women. Increased participation in paid work did not always translate into improving their situations when considering their traditionally assigned roles. Although data suggest that decreased farming or lack of farming in the household reduced the burden with domestic work as, in the time of farming, some participants used to be busy with diverse work round the year. Having their male members engaged in non-farm activities made their lives easier in the post land acquisition times. This, however, was not the case with women who worked in the SEZs. Participation in paid work often made female members the main earners in the households which is a major development in financial role in the social context. Despite this, their previous role as homemakers and childcare largely remained unchanged. Female participants also reported other roles such as cooking and washing activities unchanged despite their being employed in the outdoor activities which imposed additional pressure on them. A female participant from the transitioning MIEZ who was engaged in paid work commented:

> I really don't do anything else. After office time, I have to take care of my family. I need to do cooking for us. These are some household chores that every girl does. I don't have much time to do anything else. *(Hena, female 23, employed in the MIEZ)*

This illustrates that paid work can be an additional responsibility for the women without being able to reduce their traditional role requirements. These have reduced time for herself and reduced her ability to engage in recreational means.

Interview data also suggest that the working women often had their household responsibility as homemakers and childcare unchanged which imposed considerable strain them, e.g., keeping the child safe during working hours. A female member who was employed in the MIEZ and found it difficult to take care of her children commented:

> I have two children. I need to take care of them. For the job, I cannot give much time [to the children]. My mother stays here. As I found it difficult to look after them. One of my children started going to school. The other is not yet admitted. They are looked after by my mother while I am out. *(Tasnuva, female, employed in the transitioning MIEZ)*

The quote demonstrates that continuing the job by bringing her mother to stay with her for childcare reasons was only a makeshift solution. She was also worried for the future thinking that the failure of her mother to be with her anytime later would affect her ability to look after her children. This caused significant psychological stress for the working mothers affecting their personal well-being capability.

The working female participants often encountered humiliation in the workplace due to some unavoidable situations such as burden of childcare. This also caused deprivation of capabilities such as life and life-security of the children. A participant from the agrarian SREZ case study shared her story that her husband had mental health issues and needed care when he got worse. She also had six children with one about four-year-old daughter to take care of. Although she needed to do the regular household chores after her duty in the SREZ, the toughest thing for her was taking care of her youngest child while she was at work:

> I am having some problems. I have this child (shows her child). I need to take her to work with me. They [the security personnel] are not allowing this. They tell me, there can be accidents… They don't allow anyone under 18 here. Nobody is allowed without proper safety measures too. But, I have to take her with me. Or else, where will I keep her? *(Amina, female 48, employed in SREZ)*

The excerpt illustrates that the precautionary policies of the company did not allow children on construction sites which stressed the female participant at work. She reported going through

difficulties in passing the security check in the entrance every day and was humiliated by the guards. As she took her daughter to work at her own risk, this is also affecting the life security of the child. Despite the SEZs helping women to get rid of the geographical barriers, as seen in Akhter *et al.* (2017) which enhanced their income situations, due to other social–institutional norms and unchanged care works, their personal (physio-psychological) well-being was often affected.

7.5 Conclusion

The findings of this study show that the SEZs in rural communities induce aspirations enhancing the participation of women in paid work despite some social–personal and policy factors restraining women's ability and access to the economic domain. The assigned roles of women and societal expectations as Andrew (2009) suggests for the UK are identified to be internalised within women to reproduce the barriers restricting women within the home domain in Bangladesh. The pursuit of income-generating activities is possible only within the domestic setting in Bangladesh which is consistent with barriers identified by Heintz *et al.* (2017). These restrict women's choices for their employability similar to the pre-acquisition farming times which resulted in their adaptive preference as indicated in Nussbaum (2000). Despite little education and no skill women's participation in paid work has enhanced their core capabilities such as nourishment, income and wealth, accommodation, life and life security, emotions, self-respect, and personal identity thereby enhancing their economic, social–affective, and personal (physio-psychological) well-being. Although working women faced some difficulties regarding their home roles, they managed to enhance their capabilities which is found to have resulted in social development considering women's greater roles in the economic domain of the household. This chapter shows that not only divorced, single, and destitute women pursue paid work but married women with their husbands present in the households and women without household poverty are employed in the SEZs. This signifies that the arrival of a paid job of a preferable type and at a preferred location can induce the participation of women beyond their poverty and financial needs, thus advancing the findings of Kabeer *et al.* (2011).

That the arrival of paid work in the land-acquired SEZs in Bangladesh enhanced the core capabilities of women is consistent with what Dutta (2019) from a different perspective suggests for women in India. Naz and Bögenhold (2018) taking the capabilities lens suggest similar positive impacts for home-based female workers in Pakistan. However, this was different from Dutta (2019) and Naz and Bögenhold (2018) as it focused on women in the land-losing SEZ communities and considered other benefits from a broader perspective beyond paid work that the SEZs brought for women. This also provides new insight and differs from the findings of existing displacement literature e.g., Nuremowla (2016) in Bangladesh and shows that displacement not

only results in the breaking down of social networks but also can enhance those through infrastructural development. Exploring three case studies of three distinct types and at different stages of development following the case classification of Brenner (2020) not only helps understand the changes in the present context but also compares findings across case studies which helps foreshadow the probable impacts on less advanced cases in the future. This chapter suggests that the less developed SEZs like the coastal MEZ and the agrarian SREZ are likely to have similar positive impacts on women as the developed MIEZ, thus, advancing the findings of Pham Thi *et al.* (2019) who conclude on a single peri-urban context.

Chapter 8: Discussion and Conclusions

8.1 Introduction

With the broader aim of exploring the impacts of land acquisition and development in the newly established SEZs in diverse communities in Bangladesh, this research takes the lens of the capabilities approach and qualitatively addresses three specific objectives. The first objective of this research is to understand the geographical, social, and policy contexts of land acquisition in the SEZ communities in Bangladesh. The second objective is to examine the impacts of resource change on the capabilities of the community members in the SEZs within the dynamics of rural livelihoods. Two aspects are explored to achieve the second objective: first, the impacts on land-losing individuals in the context of land acquisition, resettlement, and infrastructural development and, second, the opportunities coming through paid employment and infrastructural development. The second part includes looking at the changes in the capabilities of the community members who did not lose land including those who did not own land in the pre-acquisition period. The third objective is to assess the development effects of SEZs on women in respect of their aspirations and capabilities across communities.

To understand the impacts, the core capabilities are derived from the Central Human Capabilities of Nussbaum (2003) aligning with Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs and the fundamental functionings of Rao (2019) to understand three aspects of well-being—namely, economic well-being, social–affective well-being, and personal (physio-psychological) well-being. This study selects three SEZs from three different communities in different stages of development to understand the differentiated impacts on individuals across communities. Following the case classification by Brenner (2020), this identifies the coastal MEZ, the largest SEZ with the most diversified livelihoods types as the stereotypical case study, the agrarian SREZ common with most community types as the archetypical case study, and the transitioning MIEZ as the most developed of SEZs as the prototypical case study. This classification helps achieve a systematic understanding of their impacts and interpret those relating to all communities beyond the selected three case studies.

This chapter discusses the key aspects of the thesis and draws the conclusions of the study. In line with the aim and objectives of this study, this chapter illustrates the significance of the findings for Bangladesh as well as for other countries with similar land-livelihood relationships. This also shows why the findings of this study in diverse contexts can be significant in a country like Bangladesh where the land is reducing at a great pace and the number of landless people is growing in the coastal, agrarian, and transitioning rural contexts. Recalling findings across communities, this seeks to discuss that when a significant number of community

members no longer have meaningful access and attachment to the land and natural resources, the SEZs bring in new means of achievement and create capabilities for them. This discussion on the learnings has great significance for policy practitioners as well as for academia. This chapter also puts together the contributions of the study with three specific areas e.g., dispossession and displacement theory, capabilities approach, and gender and SEZs.

8.2 Lessons for Bangladesh

Looking at three case studies in three different communities with completely different features of livelihoods, this study brings up novel findings that can have huge implications for Bangladesh as well as for the implementation of SEZs. Three SEZs at three different stages of development also relate to the social–economic conditions of the community members in the land-acquired communities and help understand the effects of land loss in diverse rural contexts and the meaning of paid work and other opportunities coming through the SEZs.

8.2.1 Lessons from the policy perspectives

The first objective of the study is achieved through the identification of several issues in land acquisition and implementation of resettlement activities that adversely affect the community members. The land acquisition and resettlement policy considerations beyond monetary compensation were inadequate and often absent and did not meet the resettlement needs of the affected community members in Bangladesh. The policies also barely relate to the geographical, social and livelihood arrangements of the communities in which SEZs are implemented as there are no notable separate measures taken in any specific case study to safeguard the members from adverse impacts of land acquisition.

The issues identified in the process of implementing the policies effectively have immense implications in the context of land acquisition and implementation of SEZs and other infrastructure projects. That land-losing participants do not receive monetary compensation for many years after land acquisition is found to be impacting many adversely and requires a proper mechanism to address. Due to miscreants' misappropriation of monetary compensation by impersonating real landowners and fraudulently producing ownership documents, the landowners lost a significant amount of money. When considering the implementation of resettlement projects, no case study was seen to have taken any plausible measures. The two case studies e.g., the agrarian SREZ and the transitioning MIEZ did not have any resettlement projects at all. Although the coastal MEZ had its resettlement housing project, this did not begin its implementation till this field study was carried out. This signifies that not only the implementing bodies should take appropriate measures to transcend the barriers to payment of

monetary compensation, but also they should take measures to expedite the process of implementation of the resettlement projects.

Incidents like the application of unofficial coercion to evict landowners and the absence of a comprehensive resettlement policy deprive the capabilities of the affected individuals. Even in the case of privately acquired lands, as seen in the transitioning MIEZ case study, unofficial physical coercion is applied to evict the landowners. To protect the landowners' interest this should be stopped by proper government intervention. Most importantly, as there is no policy for resettlement in Bangladesh, a dedicated policy for the purpose should be formulated immediately. Besides, considering the appreciating land values and the land-losing individuals failing to receive compensation, policy initiatives such as benefit sharing can be considered to advance the capabilities of the community members in the long term. This equally applies to countries lacking a dedicated resettlement policy as without a comprehensive resettlement policy it is not possible to safeguard the affected community members from capability deprivation.

8.2.2 Learnings from the context of natural resource-related livelihoods and SEZs in Bangladesh

The findings, which addressed the second objective of the study, show that the diverse forms of displacement and dispossession experienced by community members had significantly different impacts on individuals with and without land loss. Apart from the damages caused due to loss of compensation and lack of resettlement housing, the other reason for capability deprivation of the individuals in three case studies was a significant erosion of natural resources by land acquisition which provided a living for many in the pre-acquisition time. The impacts were worst in the coastal MEZ which was an archetypical case study of SEZ communities with a distinct type of coastal livelihoods. The adverse impacts were because of the communities' significant dependence on the sea, canals, grazing lands and the forest for their living. Besides, the coastal MEZ, which is situated between the sea and the community, is so large that it separates the community permanently from the sea leaving no scope for most members to be engaged in traditional fishing as in the preacquisition times. The acquired land of the seashores was developed by the MEZ detaching the communities from the seas which had the worst impacts as the communities had no alternative to the seas. Moreover, the coastal lands with numerous canals and low inundated lands were the fish stocks which cannot be replaced by merely providing access to water of any depth.

Several measures can be taken to minimize the adverse impacts of land acquisition in the coastal areas of Bangladesh. The natural fish stocks, mangroves, natural canals and grazing lands should be protected allowing access of the community members to these natural resources like the pre-acquisition times. Rather than acquiring large tracks of coastal land such as 30 thousand

acres of land together as was done in the coastal MEZ, land can be acquired in several units keeping sufficient open lands for the communities to access the sea, the forests and the grazing lands. The community members' failure to receive compensation was another key reason why they could not manage their own land or start-up alternative means of income. This could be addressed by compensating them through livelihood support as part of the social safety net programme and prioritizing the most affected members for immediate employment in the MEZ. Although some community members from the impacted households are employed in some positions in the SEZs, this should be done on a much wider scale considering all on a priority basis who lost land and livelihoods and were evicted from their residences.

Similarly, the SEZ established on the acquired lands in the agrarian SREZ community deprives the capabilities of the community members who fail to engage in farming. The agrarian community, as it matches most SEZ communities concerning its livelihood types, was selected as a stereotypical case study to relate or predict the impacts on other communities of similar types. Many land-losing community members fail to regain land due to a lack of available suitable land and cannot receive monetary compensation. These require policy attention as these deprive them of being engaged in farming as before. Loss of house, cattle and fishing also deprives the capabilities of accommodation and nourishment, income and wealth and affects the personal identity and dignity of those forced out of their houses and compelled to engage in low-profile paid work. However, those who did not have their farmland in the community and relied on sharecropping or other informal waged work found the SEZ as a blessing as they could manage semi-permanent work and did not need to be in search of new work every day. However, ensuring several things by the implementing bodies can enhance the core capabilities of the affected community members. These include making payment for compensation to the real landowners within the specified time frame and protecting the interests of the landowners through preventing misappropriation of compensation money, recovering the money that was appropriated by the miscreants, increasing security of the land offices and government record rooms where the land records are stored. Apart from these, making the SEZs operational at a faster pace can help to integrate the land-losing and affected community members to diverse benefits and thereby create their core capabilities.

The smallest of the three SEZs and the most advanced was the transitioning MIEZ which was in proximity of the Narayanganj and Dhaka city and also a prototypical case study of the SEZ communities. The assumption is that when the other cases grow at a similar level, those will also look like the prototypical MIEZ case. Another key feature of this SEZ was that it was privately managed, and land was acquired through a direct purchase method rather than acquired by law as was done in the other two SEZs. The fast growth of this SEZ could be propelled by its location in an advanced rural area which is in proximity to large cities and with a favourable business

environment. However, the size of the SEZ being small and the land being acquired through a direct purchase method could be the other reasons why this could start operation within a short time compared to the other two cases. When considering the impacts from the community perspective, the transitioning MIEZ positively impacted the community members as diverse opportunities created and enhanced their core capabilities such as nourishment, income and wealth, accommodation, employment, bodily health and education. The members of the MIEZ community also were less dependent on natural resources and farming compared to the other two case studies. The paid employment and other economic activities enhancing core capabilities such as personal identity and dignity for women were significant. Women often identify themselves in far better situations after engaging in such activities compared to the pre-acquisition farming time when they did not have access to or possession of household money. However, the SEZ acquiring land through direct purchase applied unofficial coercive measures to evict landowners. This deprived core capabilities of personal identity and self-dignity of some community members affecting their personal (physio-psychological) well-being. This finding can have implications for government offices in Bangladesh such as district administration and BEZA as preventing such incidents can enhance the core capabilities of the community members and advance different aspects of their well-being.

8.3 Significance and contributions of the research

This study, identifying the impacts of land acquisition on the community members in three SEZ communities, represents a significant work in the context of land acquisition and development in Bangladesh. As the first original academic project, this explores the impacts from the perspectives of both resource loss and development opportunities in Bangladesh. The case classification and selection of three case studies of three distinct types also help not only to understand the current or immediate impacts but also to predict the likely impacts of other SEZs not fully developed or beyond the scope of this research. This has practical implications for the policy and implementation bodies as well as academic researchers.

To understand the social–geographical and policy contexts, this study examined the policies in light of resettlement frameworks and global best practices identified in the literature and their implementation practices across geographies. The geographical and social features are significantly different across rural communities in Bangladesh, which necessitates different measures to be taken in different community contexts. This study contributes by showing that the current policies, particularly the national law in Bangladesh, fail to consider resettlement aspects beyond monetary compensation and are focused on legal entitlement only which is consistent with most other cases in the land acquisition perspective as suggested by Murali and Vikram (2016) and Cernea and Maldonado (2018). This research also found that the proper

implementation of policies is equally important as wider considerations. Poor implementation practices such as weaknesses and delays in providing compensation and resettlement houses can thwart the wider considerations in the policies. Compensation loss faced by the landowners are seen to be caused by miscreant groups from outside the office often colliding with corrupt government officials. As the latest policies—e.g., the Act of 2017 and RPF 2020—are analysed in the current and ongoing SEZ contexts, these findings also advance the understanding from earlier studies such as Zaman (1996), (Atahar, 2013; 2020), and Zaman and Khatun (2017). The findings demonstrating the delayed implementation of resettlement activities and often absence of those in the SEZs also differ from earlier studies which suggest some more positive outcomes of resettlement implemented in Bangladesh.

8.3.1 Contributions to the concept of dispossession and displacement

This research, providing new understanding, contributes to the knowledge in diverse ways. A significant contribution of the research is that this provides novel perspectives about the drivers of land dispossession. The accumulation by dispossession literature hitherto showed that land dispossession is triggered by capitalist accumulation where the problems of over-accumulated capital are shifted to new territories as a 'spacio-temporal fixes' as is seen in (Harvey, 2003; 2004). This research also contributes to the dispossession literature showing that land acquisition does not only feature resistance and conflicts (Hirsh *et al.*, 2020; Bedi, 2015), rather can be welcomed or even invited by the community members.

This analysis shows that dispossession is triggered by landowners who are disconnected from the lands and do not reap the direct benefits from it. The de-facto possessors and the legal owners have contrasting roles in the process of this dispossession. Although the de-facto users of those lands can often be unwilling and may try to resist the procedures of land acquisition causing their displacement, they can be unsuccessful due to the legal owners and co-sharers with larger shares opposing such drives. In contrast to the de facto possessors, the findings, the legal owners submitted applications to the land acquisition authorities requesting to acquire more land from the SREZ community which was assumed to benefit them through the payment of compensation at a rate of three times the documented market price. Such drives by the legal landowners can dispossess the de-facto users who often use the land on fixed terms, cultivate it as sharecroppers or use the houses built on the land for residential purposes. This differs from the earlier findings of Levien (2011; 2012; 2013) and shows that land dispossession can have different meanings to people relating to it causing capability deprivation for the de facto possessors while enhancing capabilities for the legal owners. When considering the impacts of land acquisition together with the implemented SEZs, this study shows that land dispossession not only is associated with

deprivation but also brings in new opportunities enhancing the well-being of community members.

The novel phenomenon of dispossession of the legal owners as well as the de-facto users in the SREZ also differs from earlier concepts such as land dispossession, land grab and land alienation. That the landowners make applications to the government to acquire more land for which the government does not have any plan fits neither in the lens of 'accumulation by dispossession' nor in the concept of 'regimes of dispossession' as suggested by Levien (2011; 2012; 2013). This also differs from the analytical concept of land grab (Hall, 2013) and land alienation (Adnan, 2013) as land is not only being given willingly but the government authorities are being requested to take the land. This phenomenon of land dispossession shows that neither the market nor capital plays a direct role as the landowners are inviting the government to acquire land by law rather than selling it directly to any government or private entity.

The application of coercion for displacement in the process of the direct purchase of land is also a novel finding as coercive means do not go with the economic process as the market is playing a role here. Coercion applied in the case of legally notified lands can be seen in the literature such as Cross, 2014 and Nuremawla, 2016. This research shows that even if the market plays a role and the government does not acquire land through official notification under the land acquisition law, private companies can forcefully evict people by applying force unofficially. This is often executed by cutting off the residences from the surrounding environment and attacking the landowners physically using unofficial force.

8.3.2 Contributions to the Capabilities Approach

The findings of this study depict new phenomena that advance the understanding of land acquisition and infrastructural development seen through the lens of the capabilities approach. Applying coercive means of land acquisition deprives the core capabilities of individuals e.g., accommodation, personal identity, and self-dignity. The loss of monetary compensation and lack of resettlement also deprive the community members of their nourishment, income, and wealth, accommodation and employment which reflects in their economic well-being. The existing literature from the capabilities approach suggests that land acquisition restricts human functionings which is seen in Rao (2018b) and Rao (2019). The conclusions of Rao (2018b; 2019) are drawn with the understanding of impacts from the land acquisition perspective only which does not show the entire phenomenon of overall impacts as land is acquired for implementing development projects. When considering the land-losing context only, many of the capability deprivations suggested by Rao (2018b) are also identified in all three communities. However, when seen together with the compensation that was received by the land-losing community members and the opportunities such as employment, business opportunity and earning rents, the

SEZs established through land acquisition created or advanced many capabilities to enhance the economic, social-affective and personal (physio-psychological) well-being of the community members. This study, thus, advances Rao's findings unpacking that the opportunities brought by the implemented projects, namely the SEZs in this study, create core capabilities for the land-losing community members as well as those who are without any land loss.

As aligned with the hierarchy of needs of Maslow (1943) it is also a crucial revelation that some core capabilities are more important for individuals than others. Unlike Rao (2019), who focused on functionings, this study identifies the impacts on the core capabilities and shows that the core capabilities such as nourishment, income and wealth, accommodation and employment are more important for the community members as the attainment of these can often advance other core capabilities such as education, bodily health, personal identity and self-dignity. As seen in all three case studies, displacement from residences and subsequent deprivation of the core capability of accommodation lead to deprivation of personal identity, self-dignity and often life and life security. There is evidence that participants who became landless and homeless as a consequence of land acquisition and took land from others free of cost to build makeshift houses had a sense of deprivation of personal identity and self-respect. However, the establishment of the SEZs worked positively for those who did not lose land and were unemployed or lacked income in the pre-acquisition time. Access to employment and income often created their identity and enhanced their self-dignity as they were able to escape their humiliating lives. This advances the findings of Rao (2018b; 2019) who did not consider the effects of the implemented projects on the land-losing communities.

8.3.3 Contributions to the understanding of gender and the SEZs

The third objective of the study was achieved by assessing the development effects of SEZs on women in respect of their aspirations and capabilities across communities. From the land acquisition perspective, women with no access to income and failing to receive compensation and rehabilitation were found to be deprived of their core capabilities. This corresponds to many studies in the Bangladesh context e.g., Nuremowla (2016) and Gardner (2018) as well as in the global context such as Agarwal (1995) and Levien (2017). The first reason why women are so badly affected by land acquisition and displacement can be related to their lower share in the inheritance of property by law as Mansoor (1999) shows. The second reason can be linked to the reality that female members rarely claim a share of their inherited property as Nazneen (2017) and Sultana (2010) suggest which is why they fail to receive compensation. This affects the female-headed households the worst as seen in the current study. Due to social reasons, as Kabeer (2011) shows, women are less able to engage in the outside world which also affects their ability to visit offices frequently to pursue monetary compensation. The female-headed

households both with or without experiencing land loss were seen to be affected by the loss of resources and often were leading humiliating lives taking shelter on neighbour's land or living on charities due to the severe damage of income or loss of their earning household members.

Although some women experienced capability deprivation due to the negative impacts of land acquisition, the SEZs on the land-acquired communities differently impacted the women who often lacked meaningful access to land and property as suggested by Mansoor (1999) and Nazneen (2017). The SEZs in the communities open scopes for women in diverse ways which reverse the consequences of land acquisition suggested by Nuremowla (2016) in Bangladesh and Levien (2017) and Mehta (2009) in India. In the broader spectrum, women with access to paid work and other economic activities were positively impacted which is missing in the land acquisition literature in the Bangladesh context. Those who had never been engaged in paid work before the SEZs were established were able to work without having to travel outside the community which, as seen in Heintz *et al.* (2017), was priorly a barrier to the participation of women in the waged sector in Bangladesh. Apart from this, female members who did not have an orientation with cash in the household in the pre-acquisition farming time now can receive that through rent and running small enterprises which facilitates the female members to fulfil their children's needs without having to persuade their male members. With infrastructural development, women are better able to connect to their relatives and families without having to depend on the male members of the households. These empower the female members of the community financially and provide them a voice at the household and community levels. Women pursuing economic activities and protecting themselves and their male-headed households from economic downfall and humiliation are the best examples of their enhanced position in society.

Despite women's active participation in the paid sector contributing to social development through their meaningful economic contribution to the household, the additional work of women on top of their regular household work often adversely affected their well-being. Although women's financial empowerment, enhanced voice and better ability to make decisions relating to their children's needs are positive for them, some women due to increased responsibilities and workload are worse off in terms of personal well-being which advanced the findings of Heintz *et al.* (2017) and Kabeer (2011; 2021). The traditional roles of housekeeping and childcare often overburdened women and made it difficult for them to manage the work-home domains. However, when considering the overall impacts, the SEZs situate women in a better position in the communities considering their enhanced roles and enhanced core capabilities of nourishment income and wealth, employment, accommodation, education, personal identity and self-dignity which reflects on their enhanced economic, social-affective and personal well-being and leads to social development.

8.4 Reflections on methodological aspects and scopes for future research

8.4.1 Strengths of the research

As stated above, to the best of the researcher's knowledge this study is the first comprehensive initiative to explore the impacts of land acquisition and development in the SEZs in Bangladesh which, in many ways, carries significance in the academic domain. This took a qualitative approach to examine the impacts on the core capabilities of the individuals through the lens of the capabilities approach which allowed us to understand the nuances of impacts in the context of human diversity and social–environmental conversion factors. A semi-structured interview method helped to cover all necessary topics and allowed the researcher to delve into specific aspects that required additional insight.

The main strength of this study is that it explored impacts on diverse community contexts selecting case studies of distinct characteristics following the case classification of Brenner (2020). Identifying three different SEZ communities—the coastal MEZ as the archetypical case study (the largest SEZ of the country with diversified livelihood types), the agrarian SREZ as the stereotypical case study, and the comparatively fully functional transitioning MIEZ as the prototypical case study—helped to highlight and predict the impacts that all 100 SEZs are likely to make. Although the findings may not be readily transferable to other SEZ cases that are not included in the research, this classification of cases and the findings in respect of the prototypical MIEZ case study can help predict that, when other SEZs grow with opportunities for employment, business, and rents, they are likely to have similar impacts on the capabilities of the community members.

Another strength of the research is that it includes not only the impacted community members as interview respondents, but also interviews the government experts from the policy and implementation sides and community-level experts such as NGO workers and schoolteachers to gain the best possible accurate information and unbiased understanding of the changes. Moreover, the policy documents are reviewed to gain an understanding of the impact contexts relating to resettlement policy provisions, new inclusions and limitations in order to be able to understand their impacts on the affected community members.

The current research analyses the land acquisition and resettlement policies of Bangladesh in light of criteria developed from the resettlement frameworks and global best practices. These findings aid in providing practical policy suggestions for the practitioners to improve the policies towards attaining practical goals and efficacy. The empirical evidence of implementation flaws and malpractices in Bangladesh and relevant recommendations can be crucial for overcoming those issues.

8.4.2 Limitations of the research

Although this research has some strong features, it is also not without limitations. Despite providing an understanding of the changes from the interviews with 80 participants from three different communities, the number of participants from each case was not equal. Moreover, due to the difficulty the researcher as an outsider encountered in reaching some groups of participants such as women, the participation of female participants was lower compared to the male participants. Furthermore, identifying impacts on all social groups in a community, required investigating participants from each group— land-losing, without land loss, and landless— in depth which could be captured inadequately due to the disproportionate availability of participants from all social, occupational and age groups. However, to overcome these limitations, gatekeepers were recruited to help the researcher gain easy access as an outsider, and purposive sampling helped focus the target population.

From the perspective of land acquisition, five to six years can be regarded as a fairly long time for understanding the impacts on land-losing members of the communities. Nevertheless, this study was conducted at an early stage when considering the implementation of the SEZs. Two of the case studies i.e., the coastal MEZ and the agrarian SREZ were still developing where employment opportunities were yet to arrive fully. Therefore, despite the impacts of land acquisition being understood and the development effects being valuable in the short term, the findings concerning development in the SEZs may differ in the longer term. Any unforeseen policy or social—geographical change in the communities may cause significant changes in the capabilities of the community members which might not be predicted upfront.

In the COVID-19 situation, the field visit was slightly delayed and the researcher had numerous challenges with recruiting and interviewing community members which affected the research. Due to COVID-19 regulations such as wearing facemasks, sanitising hands, maintaining social distances and, more importantly, organising interviews outdoors and in well-ventilated rooms, the spontaneity of the participants was often hampered. Although adequate precautions were taken, these might have affected observing and capturing the qualitative cues, thus affecting the scope for more robust data.

A limitation of the study is related to one of its strengths that, despite selecting three communities of different types hosting three SEZs at different levels of development, the findings may not be transferable to other SEZs as every community and every individual can have different experiences of life which may not match with any other case elsewhere. Although the case study areas were selected considering their location and the time of acquisition of land, the pace at which SEZs grew significantly differ, which could affect the understanding of the transition of the livelihoods and capabilities of the community members.

8.4.3 Suggestions for future research

This research is the pioneering comprehensive initiative to understand the impacts of land acquisition and development in SEZs in Bangladesh through the capabilities approach. However, this is drawn in the shorter term and many of the aspects of this research can be advanced with future studies. This study can also serve as a baseline for future research to explore diverse aspects of the lives of the community members in the SEZ communities. The findings of this research may differ in the long term which can be understood, supplemented, and advanced by further research. Employment and work environment, environmental crisis, and labour aspects relating to female work can be further explored which may not be fully affected in the earlier stages of SEZ establishment. Some of the issues such as waterlogging and depletion of community lands are found to affect the core capabilities of individuals. However, environmental changes through pollution and social changes after population growth in the communities may aggravate the situations which can have different impacts on the well-being of the community members. Migration and changes in employability prospects can also change the labour market behaviour in the future.

The policy and implementation issues can further be explored, particularly with the upgrades in the provisions. Comparative studies can be brought out with SEZs and other land-acquired projects implemented in Bangladesh and other countries with similar policy arrangements to know the differences in the challenges and outcomes.

8.5 Conclusion

This study, as the pioneering research work covering land acquisition and development together in the newly established SEZs, brought in many new findings and contributed to academia in diverse ways. Taking the analytical lens of the capabilities approach, the current research qualitatively explores the impacts of land acquisition and development on the core capabilities of employment, nourishment, income and wealth, accommodation, emotions, personal identity, self-dignity, education, bodily health, life and life security, and play of individuals in three distinct SEZ communities to understand the economic, social–affective, and personal (physio-psychological) aspects of well-being. Achieving its aim and objectives, this chapter answered the questions explicitly about how land acquisition policies in Bangladesh meet the resettlement needs of the impacted community members depicting a significant policy deficit and implementation gap in the SEZs. This also sought to understand how land acquisition in the SEZs impacts the land-losing community members, members who did not lose land and those who were landless from the pre-acquisition time.

In the absence of a dedicated resettlement policy and due to poor implementation of the existing policies land acquisition immediately causes capability deprivation of the community members. However, findings from three case studies of distinct types show that the impacts are significantly varied across communities. The fully developed SEZ has mostly positive impacts enhancing capabilities compared to the developing ones where loss of land and natural resources cause negative impacts depriving capabilities. The opportunities—e.g., employment, business opportunities and renting opportunities—brought about by the SEZs enhance the core capabilities of individuals irrespective of their status of land ownership. This study also argues that land acquisition and development can have completely different meanings for women in countries where the land is unequally distributed and discriminatory access to land is prevalent through inheritance rights. Despite some women being negatively affected by land and natural resource loss, women's participation in paid employment, self-employment, and access to income through renting out houses enhances their core capabilities and advances their economic, social–affective, and personal well-being, thereby, contributing to social development. The key policy recommendations are that barriers to payment of compensation should be removed and a dedicated resettlement policy should be formulated to ensure the well-being of the land-losing and impacted community members. While this study can serve as a baseline, further research can be carried out to determine land acquisition's long-term impacts on the SEZ communities.

Appendix A : Sample demographic descriptions of the land-losing and evicted participants

Sl. No., Participant Code & pseudonym	Participant Type	Case Location	Male/ Female	Age	Education	Occupation/ Income source
01: PI01AM Faijul	Land-losing, Evicted	MEZ	Male	52	Below Secondary	Unemployed, savings from remittance
02: PI02AM Mohir	Land-losing, Evicted	MEZ	Male	55	Below Secondary	Waged work outside zone
03: PI03AM Iman	Land-losing	MEZ	Male	48	Below Secondary	Business (Shopkeeping)
04: PI04AM Zeabul	Land-losing, Evicted	MEZ	Male	65	Primary	Agriculture, livestock rearing
05: PI05AM Upol	Land-losing, Evicted	MEZ	Male	40	Below Secondary	Transportation, sharecropping
06: PI06AM Nazrul	Land-losing	MEZ	Male	50	Secondary	Zone Employment, supply of material
07: PI71AM Risalat	Land-losing	MEZ	Male	22	Below Secondary	Zone Employment
08: PI74AM Shibul	Land-losing	MEZ	Male	55	Primary	Business, (supply of materials in zone)
09: PI75AM Zakirul	Land-losing	MEZ	Male	27	Postgraduate	Zone Employment
10: PI76AM Ali	Land-losing	MEZ	Male	33	Below Secondary	Zone Employment
11: PI78AM Hamim	Land-losing	MEZ	Male	22	Higher Secondary	Business (shopkeeping)
12: PI79AM Miton	Land-losing	MEZ	Male	40	Below Secondary	Agriculture
13: PI80AM Pramanik	Land-losing	MEZ	Male	33	Higher Secondary	Agr. Sharecropping
14: PI11AW Selina	Land-losing	MEZ	Female	65	Below Secondary	Unemployed, son salaried work, transportation
15: PI12AW Purubi	Land-losing, Evicted	MEZ	Female	40	Primary	Homemaker, husband's transportation
16: PI13AW Ankara	Land-losing, Evicted	MEZ	Female	55	Primary	Homemaker
17: PI14AW Ameera	Land-losing, Evicted	MEZ	Female	28	Primary	Homemaker, husband zone worker
18: PI15AW Rubaiya	Land-losing, Evicted	MEZ	Female	36	Primary	Homemaker, husband zone worker
19: PI16AW Sanwara	Land-losing, Evicted	MEZ	Female	38	Below Secondary	Homemaker, son zone worker
20: PI18AW Marzana	Land-losing	MEZ	Female	28	Below Secondary	Homemaker+ Business
21: PI21BM Shipon	Land-losing, Evicted	SREZ	Male	35	Secondary	Business (Shopkeeping), agriculture
22: PI22BM Rumman	Land-losing, Evicted	SREZ	Male	28	Secondary	Business, remittance
23: PI23BM Jaheer	Land-losing, Evicted	SREZ	Male	34	Secondary	Business (construction)

24: PI25BM Golab	Land-losing	SREZ	Male	50	Below Secondary	Zone Employment
25: PI26BM Rakibul	Land-losing	SREZ	Male	37	Below Secondary	Zone Employment
26: PI28BM Rashidul	Land-losing	SREZ	Male	35	Below Secondary	Business, (construction)
27: PI67BM Hannan	Land-losing	SREZ	Male	38	Secondary	Farming, business, remittance
28: PI70BM Miron	Land-losing, Evicted	SREZ	Male	30	Primary	Zone Employment
29: PI31BW Dristy	Land-losing, Evicted	SREZ	Female	24	Bachelor	Zone Employment, business and farming (father)
30: PI32BW Lekha	Land-losing	SREZ	Female	60+	Primary	Homemaker, remittance
31: PI33BW Joba	Land-losing	SREZ	Female	60+	Primary	Homemaker, remittance, business (sons)
32: PI34BW Jui	Land-losing, Evicted	SREZ	Female	42	Primary	Homemaker, household construction business
33: PI35BW Samiron	Land-losing	SREZ	Female	60	Primary	Homemaker, remittance
34: PI37BW Majira	Land-losing	SREZ	Female	48	Primary	Zone Employment
35: PI42CM Ashfaque	Land-losing	MIEZ	Male	40	Secondary	Rent, remittance, business
36: PI43CM Suman	Land-losing	MIEZ	Male	22	Secondary	Business, rent, transportation
37: PI46CM Motaleb	Land-losing, Evicted	MIEZ	Male	75	Primary	Unemployed, family business (son)
38: PI47CM Zahirul	Land-losing	MIEZ	Male	23	Higher Secondary	Zone Employment, rent
39: PI51CW Jesmin	Land-losing, Evicted	MIEZ	Female	48	Primary	Homemaker, business, rent
40: PI52CW Sharmin	Land losing, Evicted	MIEZ	Female	53	Primary	Homemaker, business (son), rent
41: PI53CW Hena	Land-losing	MIEZ	Female	23	Secondary	Zone Employment, husband business
42: PI58CW Rina	Land-losing	MIEZ	Female	48	Primary	Homemaker, husband's business
43: PI61CM Alif	Land-losing	MIEZ	Male	26	Higher Secondary	Business (shopkeeping), Zone employment (wife)
44: PI63CM Zilkad	Land-losing	MIEZ	Male	55	Below Secondary	Rent, Agriculture, (gardening)
45: PI64CM Karim	Land-losing, Evicted	MIEZ	Male	55	Bachelor	Business, rent

Appendix B : Sample demographic description of the participants who did not face loss of land or were previously landless

Sl. No., Participant Code & pseudonym	Participant Type	Case Location	Male/ Female	ge	Education	Occupation/ income source
01: PI07AM Shamsuddin	Without land loss	MEZ	Male	44	Secondary	Business in zone (supply of materials)
02: PI08AM Prakash	Without land loss	MEZ	Male	36	Primary	Agriculture
03: PI09AM Farhanul	Without land loss	MEZ	Male	22	Higher Secondary	Zone employment
04: PI72AM Pallab	Without land loss	MEZ	Male	23	Bachelor	Zone employment
05: PI73AM Tuslim	Without land loss	MEZ	Male	20	Below Secondary	Zone employment
06: PI81AM Birbal	Without land loss	MEZ	Male	48	Secondary	Agriculture
07: PI77AM Alal	Previously landless	MEZ	Male	55	Bachelor	Unemployed, son's business
08: PI10AM Rehanuddin	Previously landless	MEZ	Male	21	Higher Secondary	Zone employment
09: PI17AW Golapi	Previously landless, displaced	MEZ	Female	45	Primary	Housemaid, waged work
10: PI19AW Ruhena	Previously landless	MEZ	Female	36	Below Secondary	Homemaker+ household business
11: PI20AM Hamid	Previously landless	MEZ	Male	29	Below Secondary	Veg. business
12: PI24BM Shepur	Without land loss	SREZ	Male	37	Primary	Zone employment, business (shop)
13: PI68BM Haripada	Without land loss	SREZ	Male	55	Below Secondary	Business, (shopkeeping)
14: PI69BM Rishad	Without land loss	SREZ	Male	64	Primary	Unemployed, remittance
15: PI38BW Papri	Without land loss	SREZ	Female	45	Below Secondary	Homemaker (husband's business)
16: PI27BM Baharul	Previously landless	SREZ	Male	23	Primary	Zone employment
17: PI29BM Kamrul	Previously landless	SREZ	Male	73	Primary	Unemployed, son employed in SEZ
18: PI30BM Barkat	Previously landless	SREZ	Male	35	Primary	Sharecropping
19: PI36BW Majira	Previously landless	SREZ	Female	35	Primary	Other waged work
20: PI39BW Deepali	Previously landless	SREZ	Female	32	Primary	Unemployed, charities
21: PI41CM Ferdous	Without land loss	MIEZ	Male	53	Below Secondary	Zone employment
22: PI48CM Amir	Without land loss	MIEZ	Male	60+	Bachelor	Business, rents, fruit gardening
23: PI49CM Rajibul	Without land loss	MIEZ	Male	23	Higher Secondary	Zone employment
24: PI50CM Sharon	Without land loss	MIEZ	Male	28	Below Secondary	Zone employment
25: PI57CW	Without land	MIEZ	Female	35	Below Secondary	Zone employment

Bina	loss					
26: PI60CW Mostari	Without land loss	MIEZ	Female	26	Secondary	Zone employment
27: PI62CM Hafizul	Without land loss	MIEZ	Male	37	Primary	Zone employment
28: PI65CM Jamal	Without land loss	MIEZ	Male	55	Primary	Business (restaurant)
29: PI66CM Hasibul	Without land loss	MIEZ	Male	22	Higher Secondary	Business (shopkeeping)
30: PI44CM Kamran	Previously landless	MIEZ	Male	50	Primary	Business (catering)
31: PI45CM Altaf	Previously landless	MIEZ	Male	32	Below Secondary	Business (shopkeeping)
32: PI54CW Neela	Previously landless	MIEZ	Female	24	Below Secondary	Zone employment
33: PI55CW Marjan	Previously landless	MIEZ	Female	26	Below Secondary	Zone employment
34: PI56CW Mishty	Previously landless	MIEZ	Female	23	Below Secondary	Zone employment
35: PI59CW Tasnuva	Previously landless	MIEZ	Female	32	Below Secondary	Zone employment

Appendix C : Sample demographic features of the female participants

Sl. No., Participant Code & pseudonym	Case Location	Age Range	Education	Occupation
1 : PI11AW, Selina	MEZ	56-65	Below Secondary	Homemaker
2 : PI12AW, Purubi	MEZ	36-45	Primary	Homemaker
3 : PI13AW, Ankara	MEZ	46-55	Primary	Homemaker
4 : PI14AW, Ameera	MEZ	18-35	Primary	Homemaker
5 : PI15AW, Rubaiya	MEZ	36-45	Primary	Homemaker
6 : PI16AW,Sanwara	MEZ	36-45	Below Secondary	Homemaker
7 : PI17AW, Golapi	MEZ	36-45	Primary	Other waged work
8 : PI18AW, Marzana	MEZ	18-35	Below Secondary	Homemaker+ Business
9 : PI19AW, Ruhena	MEZ	36-45	Below Secondary	Homemaker
10 : PI31BW, Dristy	SREZ	18-35	Bachelor	SEZ employment
11 : PI32BW, Lekha	SREZ	56-65	Primary	Homemaker
12 : PI33BW, Joba	SREZ	56-65	Primary	Homemaker
13 : PI34BW, Jui	SREZ	36-45	Primary	Homemaker
14 : PI35BW, Samiron	SREZ	56-65	Primary	Homemaker
15 : PI36BW, Majira	SREZ	18-35	Primary	Other waged work
16 : PI37BW, Amina	SREZ	46-55	Primary	SEZ employment
17 : PI38BW, Papri	SREZ	36-45	Below Secondary	Homemaker
18 : PI39BW, Deepali	SREZ	18-35	Primary	Homemaker
19 : PI51CW, Jesmin	MIEZ	46-55	Primary	Home+ Business + Rent
20 : PI52CW, Sharmin	MIEZ	46-55	Primary	Home + Rent
21: PI53CW, Hena	MIEZ	18-35	Secondary	SEZ employment
22 : PI54CW, Neela	MIEZ	18-35	Below Secondary	SEZ employment
23 : PI55CW, Marjan	MIEZ	18-35	Below Secondary	SEZ employment
24 : PI56CW, Mishty	MIEZ	18-35	Below Secondary	SEZ employment
25 : PI57CW, Bina	MIEZ	18-35	Below Secondary	SEZ employment
26 : PI58CW, Rina	MIEZ	46-55	Primary	Homemaker
27 : PI59CW, Tasnuva	MIEZ	18-35	Below Secondary	SEZ employment
28 : PI60CW, Mostari	MIEZ	18-35	Secondary	SEZ employment

Appendix D : Semi-structured interview guide for policy expert interviews

A semi-structured interview guide with topic details/ questions for policy expert interview.

Name of the Researcher: Md. Moniruzzaman (Student ID 31370764)

University of Southampton

ERGO No. **62264**

Probable questions/topic guide for interviewing the experts:

A. General Information:

1. Length of experience of the expert in land acquisition / SEZ implementation.

2. General issues in the land acquisition implementation process.

3. Key challenges that are generally experienced.

B. Monetary Compensation:

4. Compensation rates and policy considerations/entitlement/ time

5. Initiatives taken to bridge the gap between compensation rates (old vs new) / policy differences.

6. How to compensate those who are taking compensation at older rate after the new law in operation.

7. Basis of the rates for the house, trees, other properties and crops.

8. View on the different compensation rates for government and private purpose of acquisition?

9. Initiatives taken to ensure handing over the compensation money on time.

C. Participatory policy process:

10. What roles do the community people have in preparing the joint list for compensation? Or any other roles played in the process.

D. Resettlement/rehabilitation:

11. The measures taken by the government about replacement house/ land for those losing land. (details)

12. The measures taken to rehabilitate those without legal rights. (details on the policies)

E. Rehabilitation / social safety-net:

13. Any measures taken favouring the vulnerable (disabled people or physically / mentally incapable) people.

14. What portion of the people especially the evicted are resettled/rehabilitated? (Detail activities and plans)

F. Protecting/ enhancing livelihoods/ capabilities:

15. What other livelihood-enhancing activities are taken?/ (to know how opportunities created to enhance capabilities)

16. Initiatives to protect natural resources (grazing lands, water bodies, forests, resource pools)/social cultural places (community places, religious places, health/educational places)

G. SEZs and development:

17. What potential changes do you expect the SEZ to bring to the lives of the impacted communities people?

18. Initiatives taken/ being taken to improve capabilities, (skills to integrate the impacted people to alternative livelihoods such as formal employment)

19. If there is any different measure taken for people considering livelihoods any specific regions?

20. Initiatives are taken to ensure employment of the affected people to the SEZs. (any priority list)?

21. What portion of the affected people is employed and expected to get employed in the SEZs?

H. Benefit sharing:

22. The measures taken to share the benefit of the SEZs with the impacted communities/ community members.

23. The possibility of/ plan for sharing a portion of the revenue to the land-losing/impacted members.

24. (And any other relevant question arising in the course of the conversations).

Appendix E : Semi-structured interview guide for community expert interview

A semi-structured interview guide for community expert interview (NGO officials/School teachers)

Name of the Researcher: Md. Moniruzzaman (Student ID 31370764)

University of Southampton

ERGO number: 67184

Interview topic guide/ questions for community experts:

A. Introduction and general information:

Where do you live currently and how long are you living here. (to know about the living experiences in the community)

Current occupation/ type of work (to know relation with the community)

The changes noticed in the community since land was acquired physical/economic/infrastructural/natural. (Exploring details)

B. Land Acquisition/ Eviction/ Displacement:

An account of the number of people evicted/as experienced/ any data.

Have you noticed any other kind of change.

Any social/cultural/environmental changes noticed. Any social crimes/ issues.

C. Livelihood types/ activities:

Can you tell me what the members in the community did in different times of the year? (all activities and types of occupations noticed).

D. Compensation programmes:

What have you known about the compensation programme of the government.

If people received the money/ any problem issue experienced. Details of the issues noticed/ learned/heard).

Why the problem can possibly happen?

Comments on the compensation rates versus actual market price. (to know the policy and its impacts)

If any problem is reported what can be done to resolve that?

What do you know about housing services, are there any promise or initiative taken.

The land price in general before/after (currently). (To compare the situation and know the possibility of land recovery)

E. Rehabilitation/ resettlement programme/policy and implementation issues:

Any house given to the evicted people. How many given how many not and what could be the issues. (Exploring in details.)

Any change noticed in the living/ lifestyle of the community people after the zone was established.

F. Knowing the livelihood changes: opportunities/ deprivations:

About economic activities in general/investment as the exert observed in the community./ any new occupation/ activity that the members are getting engaged. NGO experts will be asked about any microcredit taken by the impacted community members and on what purpose they are taking. (housing/ small enterprises).

G. Environmental changes and impacts on livelihood activities:

Any environmental change noticed in the community after the SEZ is established affecting (or may affect) the communities.

H. Physical changes:

How have your institution (school/NGO) been impacted by the establishment of the economic zone.

Any such eviction / displacement noticed?

I. SEZs and Development:

Expectation from the special economic zones for the development of the community. What are/ can be the impacts on the members?

How do you think community members are in their current occupation and living compared to their life before land acquisition as you saw. Income dropped/ increased/ why/ why not.

Health services/people's ability before and after land acquisition in the community (NGO experts/school teachers as they see in the community).

Education before and after land acquisition in the community (particularly school teachers experience/ attendance at school/any school/ communication damaged by land acquisition)

J. Overall opinion:

Why land is important for the community members. Comparing land with the SEZs for people with and without land ownership.

Remarks on the differentiated impact on women/ benefit/ problems as the experts see (NGO people working with women can provide details)

Do you think the SEZs are sharing any benefits with the community members? (In what ways? If not how can that be done?)

Any other question arising from the discussion/ interview conversation.

Appendix F : Semi-structured interview guide for community participant interview

A semi-structured interview guide for community participant interview

Name of the Researcher: Md. Moniruzzaman (Student ID 31370764)

University of Southampton

ERGO number: 67184

Interview topic guide/ questions for community participants:

A. Introduction and general information in brief:

Please tell me where you live and how long you are living here.

How old are you now?

Please tell me about your education (level of education completed)

What are you doing currently as an occupation?

Please tell me about yourself and your household members and what each of them do.

Can you tell me about your approximate monthly income.

Please tell me about the other supporting income/livelihood activities (at a different time of the year).

B. Information about land acquisition and compensation: (nourishment, income & wealth)

How much land do you have now?

Was any land acquired from you?

If Yes: Did you get any compensation? If yes/ when/ full or partial/ any issues/ delayed or any other problem/

If did not get, the reason for that/ how much money is due/ how much do you expect to get?

What you did/plan to do with the compensation money received

Could you buy any land after the land was acquired? (Or do you think you can buy land later, particularly with the money received from the government, probing details

C. Information about dispossession/displacement (accommodation/identity/dignity):

Was your house acquired?/ how much land was/is in the homestead.

Description of the house acquired (structure, number of rooms, homestead/ trees/garden/ ponds)

Experience at the time when dislocated/ evicted. Any problem faced/ any coercion/force applied by authorities. Situation after dislocation.

D. Information about resettlement (accommodation):

Did you apply for/get any house from the government?/ Description of the house.

If evicted and did not get any house/ where living/ how they manage the accommodation/ if promised of/going to get any house. Location/distance from current place, describe.

Comparing the current place of living/house (structure, number of rooms, homestead/ trees/ ponds) difference between the former and the current house.

E. Changes in the community (infrastructure/development):

(Can you) Describe the changes happened to the community in recent times. (After land acquisition)

Acquisition of natural resources: water, common lands, forests acquired/

Physical resources: any community place/playground/ school, college/ mosques, temple evicted.

Any infrastructural development happened to the community (road/buildings/factories/ electricity).

Description of occupational change in the community.

F. Changes in personal/household income and employment:

What are recent changes in income (personal or household)? Describe.

How land acquisition/ SEZ caused any change in your occupation/life. Can you describe?

The opportunity to familiarize with people/ (probing about networks and familiarity/ new identity through occupation, in the SEZs, or comparing with the former).

Anybody else in the household working in the SEZ? Description. Probing details of the opportunity/ exclusion. About required skills and possibility for joining paid work in the SEZs?

If not working, why not? Probing accessibility issues.

G. Changes in the community (social life):

(Approx.) How many people were displaced from the community? Any of your family/relatives/friends? Where they live now. (to identify alienation/ affective impacts)

How has that affected/ How do you meet/communicate now?

H. Changes in education and health:

Education of family members/children (current status). Can they go to school/ take education/ can you afford? Describe.

Health condition of the family members. Any change in the health services after the land acquisition/ Change in affordability of regular/ required medication/Why, Describe.

I. Changes in other aspects of personal life:

Changed life situation. With income/wealth /employment/accommodation change how do you feel/ better off/ worse off/

Position in the household/community. How may others think of/evaluate you/ perceptions of family, friends, relatives.

Do you face any difficulty in your current life/work/? Describe.

What is your plan for the future? (regarding job, family, place of living)

Do you think you can live in the community as before of anything changed? What is that/How?

Appendix G : Coding framework for understanding social–geographical and policy contexts

(CH4) Broader Area: Contexts	This category contains data /codes relating to Social Geographical Livelihood and policy contexts
01 MEZ description	This code includes the geographical features, social features, livelihoods, and other social norms in the MEZ
Livelihood types MEZ	Applied when a livelihood archetype is suggested or identified
Social hierarchy MEZ	Applied when social hierarchy is reported
Scale and timeline MEZ	This code is applied when the scale of land acquisition or the timeline is suggested
Women's occupation MEZ	Applied when women's occupation is reported
02 SREZ Description	This code describes the case study of SREZ
Livelihood types SREZ	This code is applied when an occupation is suggested for SREZ
Scale or timeline SREZ	This code is applied when the scale of land acquisition or timeline of the SREZ is suggested or revealed
Women occupation SREZ	Applied when women's occupation is reported
03 MIEZ Description	This code describes the case of SREZ
Impacts on women MIEZ	Applied when women's occupation is reported
Livelihood archetypes MIEZ	This code is suggested when a livelihood type or occupation is suggested in the MIEZ case study
Scale and timeline of the MIEZ	This code is applied for any scale of land acquisition or timeline is suggested for the MIEZ case study
EXPERT OPINION	This category compiles expert opinion
COMPENSATION IMPLEMENTATION POSITIVE	
Compen. others n innovation	This code is applied when an innovative approach to/initiative for paying compensation on time is reported
Compen. policies improved (rates, reforms)	This code shows that the compensation rates are improved historically
Compensation on time	This code is applied when paying compensation on time is reported
Employment Happened	This code is applied when experts report about employment to be happening in the SEZs
Infrastructure Developed	This code is applied when experts report about any infrastructural development
Locals are excluded	This code is applied when a suggestion is made that the locals are excluded from jobs
POLICY CHALLENGES	Compiles all policy challenges suggested by experts
Challenge (administrative)	Applied when an administrative challenge is reported
Challenge (document)	Applied when documentation/ updating and bookkeeping-related challenges are reported

Challenge (identifying land)	Applied when the challenge of identifying suitable land is reported
Challenge (protest, unwillingness)	Applied when land-owners protest and unwillingness to give land is reported
Challenge (rates)	Applied when compensation rate-related challenge is reported
Challenge Manpower shortage	Applied when an expert reports about manpower shortage for delivering quality service
Challenge Minimizing Social Impacts	Applied when a challenge about minimizing social impact is reported
Implementer's own issue	Applied when implementing experts' internal challenges are reported
Rehabilitation	This category combines codes relating to rehabilitation or resettlement aspects
Protect N resource or Provide land	Applied when measures of protection of natural resources is reported / land is provided to affected community member
Protecting physical infrastructure or enhancing	Applied when protection or enhancement of physical infrastructure is reported
Rehab Challenge	Applied when any rehabilitation challenge is reported
Rehab House provided or planned	Applied when a rehabilitation/resettlement house is provided or a plan is reported
Rehab livelihoods supports provided	Applied when rehabilitation or livelihoods support is provided
Rehab mandatory	Applied when a suggestion is made that rehabilitation is mandatory by law for the land-acquiring bodies.
Rehab Transition allowance	Applied when a transition allowance is suggested to be provided
Safety nets	Applied when an expert reports that a safety net is provided to impacted community members
Safety net absent	Applied when an absence of safety-net is reported
Policy analysis Resettlement Development	
Benefit sharing needed but absent	Applied when reported that benefit sharing is needed but absent
Benefits Method and challenges	Applied when benefits method and challenges suggested
Resettlement Action Plan	Protecting cultural Institutions means minimizing cultural impacts

Appendix H : Coding framework for analysing impacts on individuals

(CH5) Impacts on Land losing Evict	
1.1 MEZ land-losing evict	This category includes data/codes that state impacts in the context of land-lose in the Coastal MEZ
Aquaculture loss	This code is applied when aquaculture loss is reported
Cannot recover land	Applied when participants reports that they could not recover land
Cattle loss	This code is applied when a participant reports that lost cattle after land acquisition
Compensation delayed, not received or lost	Applied when participants reports that compensation is received delayed, could not receive yet, or was lost
Compensation Litigation and Disputes	Applied when litigation or dispute is reported to affect compensation
Compensation low rates	Applied when a low rate of compensation is reported
Compensation not received by female members	Applied when reported that compensation was not received by female members in the households
Could recover land	Applied when one reports about recovery of land
De-facto and Disconnected de-jure possession	Applied when it is reported that disconnected de-jure possession of land trigger dispossession of others/ de-facto users
De-jure	This code is applied when any reference is made or participant reports about any de-jure dispossession of house/land
Displacement for second time	This code is applied when a participant reports about a displacement for a second time
Displacement in situ	This code is applied when a participant reports about or makes a reference to displacement in situ meaning that he might not be affected directly by land acquisition but can be affected by the aftermaths and/or indirectly
Displacement Livelihoods Social Cultural issues	This code is applied when a participant reports about displacement causing livelihood problem/ affects social or cultural aspects of their lives.
Ex situ	
Dispute social trust relations networks broken	This code is applied when a reference is made as to disputes triggered by land acquisition/ compensation or anything relating to the consequences in the communities affecting social relations and networks
Farming became secondary	Applied when reported that farming became secondary
Farming for subsistence	Applied when reported that farming is practised for subsistence only
Farming loss affected	Applied when reported that participants are affected by farming loss
Fishing loss	Applied when fishing loss is reported

Forced eviction	Applied when coercive eviction is reported/experienced
Gathering or collection loss women	Applied when gathering or collection loss is reported
Government lands are unofficially held and sold	
Relocation of business	Applied when eviction/ relocation of business is reported
WE Accommodation	This code is applied when a reference is made about a participant's achievement of core functioning of being able to have accommodation
WE Employment	This code is applied when a participant reports or makes suggestions about being able to be employed
WE Nourishment, Income, Wealth	This code is applied when a participant reports about the attainment of the core functioning of being able to be nourished have income and secure wealth to ensure economic security through these.
WP Bodily Health	This code is applied when a participant reports about the core functioning of being able to get health service and be physically well
WP Dignity	This code is applied when a participant reports about the achievement of core functioning being able to protect oneself from humiliation, discrimination
WP Education	This code is applied when a participant reports about his core functioning of being able to get education/anything relating to education affecting an individual life/ any household member.
WP Identity	This code is applied when a participant reports about the core functioning of being able to enhance or protect self-identity
WP Life and Life security	This code is applied when a participant reports about his core functioning of being able to live one's normal life without the mental stress and fear of violence and attack. Being able to live a life of normal length, in the context of the household.
WP Play	This code is applied when a participant reports about the core functioning of Being able to play and achieve recreational goals
WS Affiliation	This code is applied to understand the core functioning of being able to maintain networks, trust and social places and enhance them to accomplish personal and familial goals through those. being able to express concerns for others.
WS Emotions	This code is applied when a reference is made or reported about the core functioning of being able to be attached to the place of choice, live with families, meet near ones and provide care work.
1.2 SREZ land losing	This category includes data/codes relating to impacts in the context of land loss and eviction in the agrarian SREZ community.
Aquaculture loss	Applied when aquaculture loss is suggested
Cannot recover land	Applied when reported that land could not be recovered
Cattle loss	This signifies the people who lost cattle after land acquisition
Compensation delayed, not received or lost	Applied when compensation loss or delay is suggested
Compensation Litigation and Disputes	Applied when compensation delay for litigation/dispute is suggested

Compensation low rates	Applied when low rates of compensation is suggested
Compensation not received by female members	Applied when reported that compensation as not received by female members
Compensation well utilized	Applied when well utilization of monetary compensation is suggested
Could recover land	Applied when a participant is able to recover land
De-facto and Disconnected de jure possession	Applied when a participant suggests that the disconnected de-jure owners caused dispossession
De-jure	This code is applied when any reference is made or participant reports about any de-jure dispossession of house/land
Displacement for second time	This code is applied when a participant reports about a displacement for a second time
Displacement in situ	This code is applied when a participant reports about or makes a reference to displacement in situ meaning that he might not be affected directly by land acquisition but can be affected by the aftermaths and/or indirectly
Displacement Livelihoods Social Cultural issues	This code is applied when a participant reports about displacement causing livelihoods problems/ affects social or cultural aspects of their lives.
Ex situ	Applied when ex-situ displacement is reported
Dispute social trust relations networks broken	This code is applied when a reference is made as to disputes triggered by land acquisition/ compensation or anything relating to the consequences in the communities affecting social relations and networks
Farming became secondary	Applied when suggested that farming has become secondary
Farming for subsistence	Applied when suggested that farming is used as subsistence
Farming loss affected	Applied when suggested that farming loss affected the participants
Fishing loss	Applied when fishing loss is reported
Forced eviction	Applied when a coercive eviction is reported
Gathering or collection loss women	Applied when a suggestion is made that women faced loss of gathering or collection
WE Accommodation	This code is applied when a reference is made about a participant's achievement of core functioning of being able to have accommodation
WE Employment	This code is applied when a participant reports or makes suggestions about being able to be employed
WE Nourishment, Income, Wealth	This code is applied when a participant reports about the attainment of the core functioning of being able to be nourished have income and secure wealth to ensure economic security through these.
WP Bodily Health	This code is applied when a participant reports about the core functioning of being able to get health service and be physically well
WP Dignity	This code is applied when a participant reports about the achievement of core functioning being able to protect and oneself from humiliation, discrimination

WP Education	This code is applied when a participant reports about his core functioning of being able to get education/anything relating to education affecting an individual life/ any household member.
WP Identity	This code is applied when a participant reports about the core functioning of being able to enhance or protect self identity
WP Life and Life security	This code is applied when a participant reports about his core functioning of being able to live one's normal life without the mental stress and fear of violence and attack. Being able to live a life of normal length, in the context of the household.
WP Play	This code is applied when a participant reports about core functioning of Being able to play and achieve recreational goals
WS Affiliation	This code is applied to understand core functioning of being able to maintain networks, trust and social places and enhance them to accomplish personal and familial goals through those. being able to express concerns for others.
WS Emotions	This code is applied when a reference is made or reported about core functioning of being able to be attached to the place of choice, live with families, meet near ones and provide care work.
1.3 MIEZ land losing	This category includes data/codes that are relating to impacts in the context of land loss and displacement in the transitioning MIEZ
Aquaculture loss	Applied when aquaculture loss is reported
Cannot recover land	Applied when participants report that they could not recover land
Cattle loss	This signifies the people who lost cattle after land acquisition
Compensation low rates	Applied when low rate of compensation is reported
Compensation not received by female members	Applied when reported that compensation was not received by female members
Compensation well utilized	Applied when reported that compensation is well-utilized
Could recover land	Applied when a participant is able to recover land
De-facto and Disconnected de-jure possession	Applied when a participant suggests that the disconnected de-jure owners caused dispossession
De-jure	This code is applied when any reference is made or participant reports about any de-jure dispossession of house/land
Displacement for second time	This code is applied when a participant reports a displacement for a second time
Displacement in situ	This code is applied when a participant reports about or makes a reference to displacement in situ meaning that he might not be affected directly by land acquisition but can be affected by the aftermaths and/or indirectly
Displacement Livelihoods Social Cultural issues	This code is applied when a participant reports about displacement causing livelihood problems/ affects social or cultural aspects of their lives.
Ex situ	
Dispute social trust relations networks broken	This code is applied when a reference is made as to disputes triggered by land acquisition/ compensation or anything relating to the consequences in the communities affecting social relations and networks

Environmental and land degradation in situ dispossession	Applied when environmental/ land degradation or in situ displacement is reported
Water crisis in the tube wells	Applied when a water crisis in the tube well is reported
Farming for subsistence	Applied when suggested farming is used for subsistence
Fishing loss	Applied when fishing loss is reported
Forced eviction	Applied when coercive eviction is reported
LA caused inconvenience	Applied when reported that Land acquisition cause inconvenience
WE Accommodation	This code is applied when a reference is made about a participant achievement of core functioning of being able to have accommodation
WE Employment	This code is applied when a participant reports or makes suggestions about being able to be employed
WE Nourishment, Income, Wealth	This code is applied when a participant reports about attainment of the core functioning of being able to be nourished have income and secure wealth to ensure economic security through these.
WP Bodily Health	This code is applied when a participant reports about the core functioning of being able to get health service and be physically well
WP Dignity	This code is applied when a participant reports about the achievement of core functioning being able to protect and oneself from humiliation, discrimination
WP Education	This code is applied when a participant reports about his core functioning of being able to get education/anything relating to education affecting an individual's life/ any household member.
WP Identity	This code is applied when a participant reports about the core functioning of being able to enhance or protect self identity
WP Life and Life security	This code is applied when a participant reports about his core functioning of being able to live one's normal life without the mental stress and fear violence and attack. Being able to live a life of normal length, in the context of the household.
WP Play	This code is applied when a participant reports about core functioning of Being able to paly and achieve recreational goals
WS Affiliation	This code is applied to understand core functioning of being able to maintain networks, trust and social places and enhance them to accomplish personal and familial goals through those. being able to express concerns for others.
WS Emotions	This code is applied when a reference is made or reported about core functioning of being able to be attached to the place of choice, live with families, meet near ones and provide care-work.
Significance of land	Applied when a functioning/significance of land is reported by participants
Cattle poultry	
Collection	
Common resource	
Dignity	
Emotion	
Farming	

Fishing aquaculture	
Housing	
Identity	
Income	
Livelihoods	
Non-farming	
Peace	
Politics	
Power	
Price increasing (unearned income)	
Security	
Sharecropping	
Social capitals	
Spiritual	
Wage	
Wealth	
Cultural life affected	
(CH6) Broader Thematic area: Impacts Without Land loss and Prev. landless	This category compiles impacts in the context of without land lose and previous landlessness
Anticipation Necessity and Preference	This code is applied when anticipation and necessity for development and low preference for farming is reported
Farming is insecure	Applied when farming is reported as insecure
Farming is uncertain	Applied when farming is reported unpredictable/uncertain
Farming less profitable	Applied when farming is reported low profitable
Farming people had low purchasing power	Applied when reported that farming people had low purchasing power
Income was insufficient for buying land	Applied when suggested that income from farming was insufficient for purchasing land
2.1 Coastal MEZ	This category includes codes and data relating to impacts of SEZs through infrastructural development and employment of the participant without land loss in the coastal MEZ community
WE Accommodation	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks about their place of living /being able to secure accommodation in the coastal MEZ
WE Employment	This code is applied when a participant without losing land makes reference or suggestions about their being able to be employed in the coastal MEZ
WE Nourishment Income Wealth	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks or makes reference about their being able to be nourished, have an income and secure wealth through the /after the establishment of the coastal MEZ
WP Bodily Health	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks about their being able to get health service and be physically well in the coastal MEZ

WP Dignity	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks about their being able to protect from humiliation, discrimination in the coastal MEZ
WP Education	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks about their being able to get education in the coastal MEZ
WP Identity	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks about their being able to protect or enhance their identity after the establishment of the coastal MEZ
WP Life and Life security	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks about their being able to live one's life without the mental stress and fear of violence and attack (in the context of the household) in the coastal MEZ
WP Play	This code is applied when a participant without losing land talks about or makes reference of their being able to play and achieve recreational goals in the coastal MEZ
WS Affiliation	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks about their being able to live with and towards others, maintain networks, trust and social places and enhance them to accomplish personal and familial goals through those.
WS Emotions	This code is applied when a participant without land loss is being able to be attached to the place of choice, live with families, meet near ones and provide care work in the coastal MEZ
2.2 Agrarian SREZ	
WE Accommodation	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks about their place of living /being able to secure accommodation in the agrarian SREZ
WE Employment	This code is applied when a participant without losing land makes reference or suggestions about their being able to be employed in the agrarian SREZ
WE Nourishment Income Wealth	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks or makes reference about their being able to be nourished, have an income and secure wealth through the /after the establishment of the SREZ
WP Bodily Health	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks about their being able to get health service and be physically well in the agrarian SREZ
WP Dignity	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks about their being able to protect from humiliation, and discrimination in the agrarian SREZ
WP Education	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks about their being able to get an education in the agrarian SREZ
WP Identity	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks about their being able to protect or enhance their identity after the establishment of the agrarian SREZ
WP Life and Life security	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks about their being able to live one's life without the mental stress and fear of violence and attack (in the context of the household) in the agrarian SREZ
WP Play	This code is applied when a participant without losing land talks about or makes reference to their being able to play and achieve recreational goals in the agrarian SREZ
WS Affiliation	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks about their being able to live with and towards others, maintain networks, trust

	and social places and enhance them to accomplish personal and familial goals through those in the agrarian SREZ
WS Emotions	This code is applied when a participant without land loss is being able to be attached to the place of choice, live with families, meet near ones and provide care-work in the agrarian SREZ
2.3 Transitioning MIEZ	This category depicts impacts in the Transitioning MIEZ community
WE Accommodation	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks about their place of living /being able to secure accommodation in the transitioning MIEZ
WE Employment	This code is applied when a participant without losing land makes reference or suggestions about their being able to be employed in the transitioning MIEZ
WE Nourishment Income Wealth	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks or makes reference about their being able to be nourished, have an income and secure wealth through the /after the establishment of the transitioning MIEZ
WP Bodily Health	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks about their being able to get health service and be physically well in the transitioning MIEZ
WP Dignity	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks about their being able to protect from humiliation, discrimination in the transitioning MIEZ
WP Education	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks about their being able to get education in the transitioning MIEZ
WP Identity	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks about their being able to protect or enhance their identity after the establishment of the transitioning MIEZ
WP Life and Life security	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks about their being able to live one's life without the mental stress and fear violence and attack (in the context of the household) in the transitioning MIEZ
WP Play	This code is applied when a participant without losing land talks about or makes reference of their being able to paly and achieve recreational goals in the transitioning MIEZ
WS Affiliation	This code is applied when a participant without land loss talks about their being able to live with and towards others, maintain networks, trust and social places and enhance them to accomplish personal and familial goals through those in the transitioning MIEZ
WS Emotions	This code is applied when a participant without land loss is being able to be attached to the place of choice, live with families, meet near ones and provide care-work in the transitioning MIEZ
2.4 Social networks	Applied when a reference is made about social network
2.5 Exclusion and Discrimination of locals	Applied when participants report that the locals are discriminated or excluded from recruitment
(CH7) Aspirations, Capability of Women	This category contains codes / data relating to Impacts on the capabilities of women in the employment and infrastructural development context
3.1 Coastal MEZ	This Category contains codes describing impacts of SEZs on women in the coastal MEZ context
EW Accommodation	This code is applied when a reference is made regarding accommodation in the coastal MEZ context

EW employment	This code is applied when a reference is made about being employed by participants in the coastal MEZ
EW income, wealth	This code is applied when a reference is made/ participants talk about being able to be nourished/ have income / wealth in the coastal MEZ
PW Bodily Health	This code is applied when participants talk about/ a reference is made about their being able to maintain bodily health in the coastal MEZ
PW Education	This code is applied when participants talk about their ability /inability to receive education including their members/children from the household in the coastal MEZ
PW life and life security	This code is applied when participants talk about/make a reference about being able/not being able to maintain /protect life and life security in the coastal MEZ
PW Play	This code is applied when a participant talk about /makes reference to their being able to accomplish recreational goals in the coastal MEZ
PW Self-dignity	This code is applied when participants talk or make a reference about their being able to maintain or enhance self-dignity/respect in the coastal MEZ
PW self-identity	This code is applied when participants talk about or make a reference about their being able to maintain or enhance self-respect in the coastal MEZ
SW Affiliation	This code is applied when participants talk or make reference about being able to life for and towards others/ maintain trust and be associated with the social life in the coastal MEZ
SW Emotions	This code is applied when participants make a reference about their being able to live with the preferred people/ in their preferred place in the coastal MEZ
3.2 Agrarian SREZ	This Category contains data/codes relating to the impacts of SEZs on women in the Agrarian SREZ context
EW Accommodation	This code is applied when a reference is made regarding accommodation in the agrarian SREZ context
EW employment	This code is applied when a reference is made about being employed by participants in the agrarian SREZ
EW income, wealth	This code is applied when a reference is made/ participants talk about being able to be nourished/ have income / wealth in the SREZ
PW Bodily Health	This code is applied when participants talk about/ a reference is made about their being able to maintain bodily health in the agrarian SREZ
PW Education	This code is applied when participants talk about their ability /inability to receive education including their members/children from the household in the agrarian SREZ
PW life and life security	This code is applied when participants talk about/ makes a reference about being able/not being able to maintain /protect life and life security in the agrarian SREZ community
PW Play	This code is applied when a participant talks about /makes reference to their being able to accomplish recreational goals in the SREZ
PW Self-dignity	This code is applied when participants talk or make reference about their being able to maintain or enhance self-dignity/respect in the SREZ
PW self-identity	This code is applied when participants talk about or make reference about their being able to maintain or enhance self-respect in the SREZ

SW Affiliation	This code is applied when participants talk or make reference about being able to life for and towards others/ maintain trust and be associated with the social life in the SREZ
SW Emotions	This code is applied when participants make reference about their being able to live with the preferred people/ in their preferred place in the SREZ
3.3 Transitioning MIEZ	This Category contains data/codes relating to impacts of SEZs on women in the Transitioning MIEZ context
EW Accommodation	This code is applied when a reference is made regarding accommodation in the MIEZ context
EW employment	This code is applied when a reference is made about being employed by participants in the MIEZ
EW income, wealth	This code is applied when a reference is made/ participants talk about being able to be nourished/ have income / wealth in the MIEZ
PW Bodily Health	This code is applied when participants talk about/ a reference is made about their being able to maintain bodily health in the MIEZ
PW Education	This code is applied when participants talk about their ability /inability to receive education including their members/children from the household in the MIEZ
PW life and life security	This code is applied when participants talk about/make a reference about being able/not being able to maintain /protect life and life security in the MIEZ
PW Play	This code is applied when a participant talks about /makes reference to their being able to accomplish recreational goals in the MIEZ
PW Self-dignity	This code is applied when participants talk or make a reference about their being able to maintain or enhance self-dignity/respect in the MIEZ
PW self-identity	This code is applied when participants talk about or make a reference to their being able to maintain or enhance self-respect in the MIEZ
SW Affiliation	This code is applied when participants talk or make a reference about being able to live for and towards others/ maintain trust and be associated with the social life in the MIEZ
SW Emotions	This code is applied when participants make reference to their being able to live with the preferred people/ in their preferred place in the MIEZ
Aspirations	Applied when aspirations of women are reported or identified
SEZ Female employ, empower	Applied when reported that women are employed/empowered by the SEZs
Social changes	Applied when social changes triggered by female work are reported
Compensation not received by women	Applied when reported that compensation is not received by female members
Facilitating employability or work domain	This code is applied when the SEZs are suggested to be facilitating women's participation to employment/ waged work
Male bread earner	Applied when suggested that the male are the bread earners in the household
Restricting Employability	Applied when a barrier to female work is reported
Transitioning barriers	Applied when any barriers to the transition of female work is identified/ reported

Unchanged home role work-home conflicts	Applied when participation is paid work does not change female participants' home roles/burdens
Women are homemakers	Applied when reported that the women are homemakers

Glossary

aman	A variety of rain-fed rice in Bangladesh
baor	A water body formed of a dead arm or bend of a river having no current. This is formed naturally due to a change in the course of a river.
beel	A swamp land which is a source of water and fish.
boro	A variety of dry season rice generally artificially irrigated.
char	An alluvial land in the middle of a river in the form of an island.
dalal	A person or group who prepares applications for monetary compensation, other land related matters and makes unofficial land deals. They are found to be linked with land acquisition offices and often appropriating or helping miscreants misappropriate monetary compensation of others through preparation of counterfeit documents.
Dalit	A lower caste in India (out of four recognized *vernas or* classes) who were formerly synonymous to untouchable and was placed in the lower tier of the social hierarchy.
kani	A local unit of land measurement. Generally, 1 *kani* = 0.396 acre of land. However, a *kani* is found to differ from place to place in Bangladesh. As some participants suggested that a *kani* equals to 1.80 acre of land in their locality.
khas land	Land with the ownership of the Ministry of Land of Bangladesh Government. Generally, the land is held, managed and allotted to the landless people by the local administration.
majar	A grave of a religious or notable person. A *majar* is a visited by people who come to show devotion and respect to the deceased or often for making solemn prayers.
mouza	An administrative or revenue unit of land survey in Bangladesh and India, often known as a survey village in Bangladesh. A *mouza* in Bangladesh contains a Jurisdiction List (JL) number which is based on a subdistrict within a district. A *mouza* can often be located at a different revenue district from the administrative district where its inhabited people are identified. For example, inhabitants of the Brahmangram village of the agrarian SREZ case in this study is within the administrative district of Habiganj while the same land of the Brahmangram *Mouza* is within the Moulvibazar district.

Sharia	A body of religious law based on the Islamic tradition. The principal sources of Sharia law is the Quran, the holy book regarded as the words of God and Hadith, the sayings and practices of prophet Mohammed.
Sutradhar	A caste of the Hindu religion in Bangladesh. The *Sutradhars* have a traditional caste occupation of carpentry.

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