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ONLINE ISSN: 1881-4212 PRINT ISSN: 0915-499X

Bulletin of the Institute of Tropical Agriculture, Kyushu University

Vol. 30 (2007), No. 1 pp.47-56

[PDF (298K)] [References]

The impact of irrigation on income distribution across households in a selected barind area of Bangladesh

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Abstract: This study was conducted to determine the impact of irrigation on income distribution among farm families in the drought-prone Barind Tract in the Rajshahi district of Bangladesh. We performed a decomposition analysis of the Gini measures of inequality in order to quantify the relative importance of the various component of income in accounting for overall income inequality. This analysis provided some information about how different farm and non-farm income sources (agriculture, livestock, fisheries, business and off-farm jobs, and agricultural wages) in irrigated and non-irrigated villages were distributed across farm households. Finally, we compared the Gini ratios for overall income and the various components of income for irrigated and non-irrigated situations in order to ascertain the effect of irrigation on income distribution. The overall Gini ratio that we computed was slightly higher in irrigated situations than in non-irrigated situations. This implies that increased production efficiency due to irrigation may slightly increase income inequality in the irrigated villages where land income tends to be unequally distributed among households, farm income contributed the lion's share of this income.

Keywords: Irrigation, Income Distribution, Across households

[PDF (298K)] [References]

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Q. M. Alam and S. M. Elias 2007 The impact of irrigation on income distribution across households in a selected barind area of Bangladesh . Bull. Inst. Trop. Agr., Kyushu Univ. **30**: 47-56.

JOI JST.JSTAGE/bita/30.47

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