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INTERNATIONAL

NEWSLETTER

January, 2016

USAID team meet with Dudhpukuria and Dhopachori CMC in Chittagong



Mr. Paul Sabatine, Deputy Mission Director, USAID appreciated Dudhpukuria and Dhopachori CMC's activities in his recent visit in the area. He was accompanied by Mr. Karl Wurster, Deputy Director, Economic Growth Office and Mr. Azharul Mazumder, AOR for CREL Project, among others. In the meeting the CMC, CPG and VCF members of Dudhpukuria and Dhopachori CMC were present. Mr. Golam Kabir Talukder, President, Dudhpukuria CMC, presented various achievements of Dudhpukuria CMC regarding NRM and biodiversity conservation with the visiting team. Abu Eusuf Chowdhury, President, Dhopachori CMC explained how are they supporting Forest Department and contributing in forest conservation and how their activity has helped to reduce illegal poaching by eighty percent.

Government of Bangladesh has approved USAID's CREL Project Technical Assistance Project Proforma (TPP)

Government of Bangladesh has approved USAID's CREL Project Technical Assistance Project Proforma (TPPs) that endorses CREL interventions in the Protected Area landscapes. CREL now has these formal cooperation agreements (TPPs) with three Government Departments: The Forest Department and Department of Environment (Ministry of Environment and Forests) and the Department of Fisheries (Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock). The TPPs establish set of activities and associated budgets that the Government of Bangladesh and USAID will undertake collaboratively, as well as jointly target results and impacts of their investment.

CREL Participation in Paris Conference of Parties (COP) 21

CREL, as part of GoB delegation, participated in COP 21 held in Paris during November 30 - December 11, 2015. CREL also supported the delegation where Mr. Md. Abu Mostafa Kamal Uddin from CREL Project and senior officials of Government of Bangladesh participated.

Bangladesh delegation pro-actively negotiated in COP 21 with emphasizing on priorities like-'Legally binding Paris agreement on emission reduction that ensures limiting temperature rise within 1.5 degree Celsius', 'Higher emphasis on adaptation and grants for implementation of the adaptation programs', 'Ensure additional funding (in addition to ODA) which must be predictable



and easy accessible by the least developed countries', Technology development and transfer free of cost for the least developed countries to overcome the challenge of the climate change', 'Resources for the least developed countries to tackle 'loss and damage' due to climate change'.

CREL Project is partnering with Ministry of Environment and Forests, Department of Forests and Department of Environment on issues of climate change and climate resilience.

Food Processing Trial Held in Cox's Bazar



Cox's Bazar district with world's largest sea beach attracts estimated 4 million tourists per year. Both of the major portion of national and international tourists of Cox's Bazar possessed a special interest in processed foods as peanut, pickles, candy's and dried sea fish locally available there. CREL is supporting local entrepreneurs to develop a high quality local food processing sector in Cox's Bazar that connects food processing to community environment stewardship efforts. As a part of this initiative five local entrepreneur of Cox's Bazar were taken to Thailand in a food processing training as Thailand has flourished food processing sector. Upon returning, these trained entrepreneurs brought together 15 women from VCF and VCGs involved in the CREL project to practice producing two products: coconut toffee and banana chips. It was a rigorous process to produce the product in right shape, taste and quality. This first attempt to produce these high quality products in Bangladesh was very successful, and generated considerable enthusiasm by the women producers and the four entrepreneurs who are supporting this effort. CREL will continue working closely with the entrepreneurs to come up with high quality branding, packaging and marketing.

Ten New Community Patrol Groups (CPGs) formed in Sundarbans for forest protection

Sundarbans mangrove forest is largest in the world and its geographical features makes it impenetrable to monitor any illegal activities. To support Forest Department with the monitoring activities, Sarankhola and Chadpai CMC formed 10 Community Patrol Groups (CPGs) for the first time.

From the VCF members, Sarankhola and Chadpai CMC have selected 5 groups of CPGs each and sent their names to the Divisional Forest Officer for his endorsement. In these 5 groups of Chandpai CPG there are 31 male and 4 female members. Sarankhola CPGs have total 35 male members under these 5 groups. CPGs will provide voluntary service of guarding the forests but they will get patrolling equipment including torch, whistle, battery, uniforms, and boots for their work. Each CPG group has specific working areas and they can also enter PA accompanied with forest department. Training will be provided for their skills development before they start their Patrol duty.

Women attending FELC at Night

It may seem like a scene from a fairy tale where a group of women, moving with their books in one hand and holding a lamp on the other through the night. But this is not part of a fairy tale and happening in every night in Dakhin Para, 6 no Koyra, a village next to Sundarbans, in South West Bangladesh. These women are participants of Financial and Entrepreneurship Learning Centre (FELC) of CREL Project. Their regular school time was in the noon like other places. But during months of November through January, learners have to take care of post-harvest activities during afternoon and evening. Their only free time is at night. So they rescheduled their school time at night. 20 regular participants come to FELC after finishing their household chores. Families of these women are also supporting them to continue school, other members of the society are also supportive of these initiative. The learners managed a solar system for lighting the school room and local school authority have also provided assistance for that.

