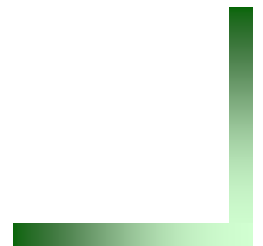


SITE STRATEGY FOR
CHUNUTI WILD LIFE SANCTUARY



Task no.:
USAID Contract no.: 388-C-00-03-00050-00



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Prepared For:
International Resources Group (IRG)

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April 2005



With Partners: CODEC, NACOM, RDRS & IUCN



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TABLE OF CONTENT

TABLE OF CONTENT	ii
1. Environment Scanning	3
2. Key Problem Areas Needing Strategic Intervention	5
3. What Makes Chunuti Wildlife Sanctuary Unique?	5
4. Objective	6
5. Strategic Interventions	6
6. Programmatic Interventions	7
7. Chunoti Wildlife Sanctuary Activities And Time Allocation of Staff December '05 to May '06	11

SITE STRATEGY FOR CHUNUTI WILD LIFE SANCTUARY

1. Environment Scanning

Location

- Chunuti Wildlife Sanctuary (CWS) is located about 70 km south of Chittagong city on the west side of Chittagong Cox's Bazar Highway covering partly 7 unions--Chunuti, Adhunagar, Herbang, Puichari, Banskali, Borohatia, and Toitong--of Bashkhali and Lohagara Upazila of Chittagong District and Chokoria Upazila of Cox's Bazar District.
- The sanctuary was under the jurisdiction of Chittagong (south) Forest Division, but recently it has been transferred to newly created Wildlife and Nature Conservation Division of the Forest Department. It is under two Forest Ranges, Jaldi and Chunuti, divided into 7 Forest Beats.
- The Sanctuary was formally established through a Gazette Notification in 1986 under the provision of *Wildlife (Preservation) (Amendment) Act of 1974*. The Sanctuary has an area of 7763.94 ha or 19177 acres.
- The forest is seriously degraded. The forest cover has decreased by more than 60%, forest thickness by 90%, abundance of tall trees and wildlife by 90%. Herbs and shrubs have increased by 60%.
- Betel leaf cultivation has flourished so has also agricultural activities. According to the local people and FD staff, about 6000 or 30% of the households living in and around the PAs are involved in betel leaf cultivation.
- Land encroachment has increase by 80% compared to 1970. FD's local record shows that 1734 acres of forest land of Chunuti is under encroachment but the local people think that the figure will be around 10% of the total forest land. Major encroachment is done by betel leaf cultivators.

Settlements

- There are a total of 70 settlements or "paras" located in and around the Sanctuary. Nearly half (48%) of these are situated inside the forest and the rest are adjacent or close to the sanctuary.
- PRA exercise conducted in the Chunuti range identified 42 settlements. Out of these 24 are located inside the forest, 13 adjacent and 4 within one kilometer. 32 paras have high stake and the rest have moderate stake in the forest. The "paras" have about 7810 households.

Social Stratification

- About 40% of the 7810 households are landless, 64% are extremely poor, and the rest belong to poor and middle class. On the average about 30% of people are unemployed.

Stakeholders

- A total of 24 categories of stakeholder groups have been identified who have stakes in the forest. Of these, 19 are primary stakeholders who are directly involved in resource extraction, and the remaining are indirectly responsible.
- Highest percentage (80%) of people collects bamboo, fuel wood, sun grass, followed by fruits (8%), vegetables (5%), cane (5%) and bark of trees (2%).

The notable stakeholders are:

- *Fuel wood/sun/grass /dry leaf/fodder collectors (Women and Children)*
- *Land encroachers*
- *Bamboo collectors*
- *Farmers*
- *Betel leaf cultivators*
- *Illegal timber fellers*
- *Fruits and vegetables collectors*
- *Hunters/Poachers*
- *Timber traders*
- *Sawmill owners*
- *Brick field owners*
- *Local Government representatives (Union Parishad members)*
- *Law enforcing authorities*
- *Land encroachers*
- There are 11 sawmills in the immediate vicinity of the CWS. All are located on Jaldi side and are owned by very influential people. Out of these, 7 are located in Puichori Beat and 4 in Chambal bazar.
- There are 9 brickfields in and around the CWS, 3 in Jaldi side and 6 in Chunuti side. These brickfields are owned by very powerful people. Out of the 6 brickfields in Chunuti side, 4 are located inside the sanctuary.

Local Power Structure

- There are 84 local influential people who have control over the community. Three families in particular, 2 in Jaldi and 1 Chunuti side, are very powerful. Miabari and Chowdhurybari of Jaldi side and Deputybari of Chunuti side are located close to the sanctuary and have their agricultural land inside the forest.
- Key influential people are: State Minister Zafrul Islam, MP Md Shahjahan, State Minister Salauddin Ahmed, Union Parishad Chairmen and Members, local elite that include brickfield owners, educationists, religious leaders, etc.

Socio-Economic Status

- 65% of people are illiterate. Of the remaining 35%, 24% are enrolled in primary schools, 9% in secondary schools and 2% in college and above. Women's education is poor.

- Primary occupation of people is agriculture; 75% of people are involved in paddy and betel leaf cultivation, 9% wage labour, 10% fuel wood collection, and other occupation 6%.
- Secondary occupations pursued by people are wage labour, small business, home gardening, handicraft, rickshaw pulling, etc.

NGO Intervention

- Several NGOs operate in Chunuti. The notable ones are BRAC, ASA, SHED, CARE, Proshika, UDDIPON, Prothikrit, Nari Moitri, PUSH, VERC and Grameen Bank. Major activities of these NGOs include integrated social development (education, health, nutrition, livestock, poultry, horticulture) and microcredit. IGAs for which credit is provided include, among others, small business, fish culture, poultry, livestock, etc.

2. Key Problem Areas Needing Strategic Intervention

- Destruction of forest regeneration due to cutting of young timber trees during fuel wood, bamboo, and building material extraction.
- Dwindling food for elephants
- Forest Department's inability to protect forest
- Poor image of the Forest Department
- Persisting poverty
- Encroachment of forest land by powerful people who have political and administrative connection.

3. What Makes Chunuti Wildlife Sanctuary Unique?

- CWS could develop into an ideal place for tourists since it is situated on the main national highway linking Chittagong with Cox's Bazar. In fact, it is at the middle point between Chittagong City and Cox's Bazar town.
- The wild and mighty elephants are of particular attraction of the CWS. Other attractive animals found are barking deer, bear, fishing cat, honuman, wild dog, python, etc.
- An Eco-Park is being developed in the Jalda Forest Beat area, which is likely attract tourist and also contribute to bio-diversity conservation and development.
- A couple of good trails have recently been developed for hiking, which could be of tourist's interest.
- Increased encroachment and conversion of forest land for betel leaf cultivation and farming by powerful people pose a serious threat to biodiversity conservation and development.
- It has few patches of beautiful Garjan garden in Chambal Beat and could serve as points of attraction for nature lovers.

- There are number of brickfields inside the GR and at the outskirts. These are playing major role in forest destruction.
- Culturally, people are very conservatives and the religious leaders exert great influence on every facet of life. Women are severely repressed.

4. Objective

Motivate and mobilize different stakeholders and poor people of the community within the defined landscape and take, in collaboration with the Forest Department, collective actions to reduce resource extraction so as to ensure regeneration of green cover and restoration of bio-diversity. Also promote alternative income opportunities for poor people to reduce their dependence on the forest for their livelihoods.

5. Strategic Interventions

A. Social Mobilization and Improved Local Governance of PA

People's support, cooperation and participation are now considered imperative for protection and conservation of forest and biodiversity. NSP is trying to mediate and forge partnership between the community people and the Forest Department (FD) through Collaborative Management, involving participation of various sections of the community having stake on the forest in some form or other and sharing with Forest Department authority, responsibility and decision making related to forest and biodiversity conservation. Co-management also demands community empowerment. NSP is also undertaking various awareness raising and social mobilization interventions using various tools to make people understand and realize the short-term and long-term disastrous environmental impact of indiscrete resource extraction on their lives and livelihoods and other life forms and roles they need to play to avoid such disaster.

B. Enhanced Esteem, Importance and Performance of Forest Department

For the Collaborative Management to take root and function on a sustainable basis, it is essential for the FD to break its isolation and be proactive in interacting with and involving community people to protect forest and conserve biodiversity. NSP is trying to forge this through joint activities and other supportive interventions. This will not only dispel the negative image of the FD but will also bear long term impact on forest protection and bio-diversity conservation.

NSP is also trying to enhance the knowledge and social skills of field level staff-members of FD through need-based training, exposure visits and workshops.

C. Economic Alternatives for Local Households

Mere motivational efforts are not likely to make much impact on the behavior of people living in and around PAs and are fully or partially dependent on forest for their livelihoods unless alternative income generating opportunities are created. In all sites, NSP is trying to expand income opportunities for poor people who are mostly dependent on forest for their livelihoods through providing grant money on different trades. To enhance income opportunities for the larger section of the community NSP is trying to promote eco-tourism, which, with increased flow of tourists, will create demands for different products and services, that people around could provide and earn income.

Demand for fuel woods both for consumption in households and enterprises prompts hundreds of people to go inside the PAs to collect fuel wood that they can easily sell and earn income. The demand is likely to increase in the future due to demographic dynamics and increased developmental needs. One of the major areas that NSP has particularly focused on is promotion of alternative energy both for households and enterprises particularly in brickfields.

D. Protection of the Landscape, Especially the PA Core

Once the community is empowered and catalyzed protection of the PA is less likely to be a problem since the members of the Co-management Council/ Committee are likely to, by themselves, evolve modalities to perform the task. Until such community empowerment takes place some mechanisms have to be evolved to protect the forest. One of the mechanisms that NSP and FD have initiated is paid patrolling by selected community people in one of the PAs and has earned significant success in arresting tree felling. NSP and FD are now trying to promote volunteer patrolling through the initiatives of the Co-management Council/Committee. They are also trying to motivate the beneficiaries of the buffer zone plantation to organize patrol groups to protect the Core Area.

E. Local Participation in Monitoring Impact

There is need for local people to get actively involved in monitoring of actual progress made in the protection of PAs. Apart from observation by NSP and FD staff during their regular field visits, council members will be motivated to initiate the process following certain criteria.

6. Programmatic Interventions

A. *Social Mobilization and Improved Local Governance of PA*

1. Develop Collaborative Management Structure

- 1.1 Organize Co-management Council meetings
- 1.2 Form Co-Management Committee
- 1.3 Hold monthly co-management committee meeting
- 1.4 Finalize Co-management Council Constitution with comments from members and FD

- 1.5 Prepare work plan for Co-management Committee/Council
- 1.6 Share site strategy with the Co-management Council/Committee
- 1.7 Open office in Chunuti (Bashkhali), Rent office and purchase office furniture and fixture
- 1.8 Hire appropriate staff
- 1.9 Survey and form 10 groups
- 1.10 Zone PA
- 1.11 Form Co-management Council in Bashkhali
- 1.12 Hold regular meetings of the Co-Management Council at Bashklhali

2. Promote Broad-based Social Mobilization, Including Women and Ethnic Minorities

- 2.1 Conduct bi-weekly group meeting
- 2.2 Form 7 groups in N.Harbang, Adhunagar, B.hatia)
- 2.3 Prepare constitution for Nishorgo Club
- 2.4 Arrange training for Co-management Council members (2 batch)
- 2.5 Conduct hiking for Council and Committee members
- 2.6 Conduct visit by selected Council members to West Bengal
- 2.7 Organize video clip shows on forest and bio-diversity conservation for community mobilization.
- 2.8 Organize specific awareness building programmes such as Rallies , Meetings, Essay writing, Art Competitions and Cultural Programs during the observance of three national days (21st February, 26th March, and 16 December) at Chunuti and Bashkhali
- 2.9 Build rapport with other NGOs operating in the areas and identify and implement actions to leverage extended social movement by networking with them
- 2.10 Review of proposed technology : TERI report
- 2.11 Develop manual for group meeting facilitation
- 2.12 Form Federations and organize meeting
- 2.13 Arrange monthly meeting for Nishorgo Nature's Club and other Cultural Clubs
- 2.14 Mobilize against brickfield.

B. Enhanced Esteem, Importance and Performance of Forest Department

3. Develop Strong Collaboration Between the Forest Department and NSP

- 3.1 Discuss with FD local staff 6 months work plan and post it Range Office
- 3.2 Arrange monthly meeting between the SF and RO to strengthen relationship between NSP and local FD staff
- 3.3 Invite local FD staff in all NSP programs
- 3.4 Send all NSP reports to the local FD office

4. Build Capacity of Staff Members of the Forest Department

- 4.1 Arrange training program for Forest guards
- 4.2 Arrange training program for RO and BOs
- 4.3 Arrange exposure visit for FD staff to West Bengal

5. Develop Positive Image of the Forest Department

- 5.1 Provide NSP provisions including logo, bag, dress to the local FD staff
- 5.2 Develop a code of conduct for local FD staff
- 5.3 Arrange community meetings attended by local FD staff

C. Economic Alternatives for Local Households

6. Promote Alternative Income Generation (AIGA) for Poor Households

- 6.1 Provide training and grant for poultry rearing involving 20 members
- 6.2 Provide training and grant money to forty members for fish culture
- 6.3 Provide training and grant money for milch cow to 10 members
- 6.4 Provide training and grant money to 60 members for vegetable gardening
- 6.5 Provide training and grant money to 15 members on Nursery development

7. Support Tree Planting, Forest Regeneration and Social Forestry

- 7.1 Supply of seedlings to households for homestead plantation
- 7.2 Provide training to participant in homestead plantation
- 7.3 Organize patrolling by user groups for forest conservation

8. Identify Alternative Energy Sources for Brickfields and Households

- 8.1 Train 16 women on improved oven and make them responsible to motivate others
- 8.2 Organize energy fair at Banskhali
- 8.3 Provide 80 household with improved oven

Eco-tourism development

- 8.4 Set up 5 billboards in strategic locations with messages on bio-diversity
- 8.5 Broadcast the value of PAs through various media (TV, Radio, etc.)
- 8.6 Prepare and distribute brochures and other materials
- 8.7 Organize Chunuti Eco-week

D. Protection of the Landscape, Especially the PA Core

9. Establish Systems to Ensure that Protected Area is Respected and Conserved

- 9.1 Assist in preparing PAs map, PA boundary demarcation, survey, & pillar posting
- 9.2 Discuss in community meetings about core and landscape zones, value of wildlife, control of illicit felling, poaching and forest fire
- 9.3 Discuss about forest burning and land encroachment in the Co-management Council meetings and obtain community commitment to stop the process
- 9.4 Organize community patrolling, particularly to the remaining patch of Garjan Forest near Bon Pukur of chunoti Beat

E. Local Participation in Monitoring Impact

10. Engage Local Stakeholders in Monitoring Impact of Project

- 10.1 Conduct bird survey, photo-monitoring, BAF sampling etc. by participatory monitoring system engaging locals
- 10.2 Training on monitoring system to the council members

7. Chunoti Wildlife Sanctuary Activities And Time Allocation of Staff December '05 to May '06												
<i>Sl.</i>	<i>Activity or Milestone</i>	Timing						Site NSP Resources Allocated?			Other Resources	
		Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	SF (132)	FO's (132 x 4= 528)	RC (~30)	FD Staff	Other NSP
<i>A</i>	<i>Social Mobilization & Improved Local Governance</i>											
1.	Develop Collaborative Management Structure											
1.1	Organize Co-management Council meetings			X		X		6	18	3	ACF,RO	LGCBS
1.2	Form Co-Management Committee			X				1	6	1	ACF,RO	LGCBS
1.3	Hold monthly co-management committee meeting			X	X	X	X	4	9	4	ACF	LGCBS
1.4	Finalize Co-management Council Constitution with comments from members and FD			X				1	0	1	ACF,RO	LGCBS
1.5	Prepare work plan for Co-management Committee/Council				X			2	2	1	ACF,RO	LGCBS
1.6	Share site strategy with the Co-management Council/Committee											
1.7	Open office in Chunuti (Bashkhali), Rent office and purchase office furniture and fixture.		X					6	0	2		D A&F
1.8	Hire appropriate staff											
1.9	Survey and form 10 groups			X	X	X	X	2	20	2		
1.10	Zone PA				X	X		2	9	1		

1.11	Form Co-management Council in Bashkhali					X		3	6	1	ACF,RO	LGCBS
1.12	Hold regular meetings of the Co-Management Council at Bashkhali											
2.	<i>Promote Broad-based Social Mobilization, Including Women and Ethnic Minorities</i>											
2.1	Conduct bi-weekly group meeting	X	X	X	X	X	X	6	80	2		
2.2	Form 7 groups in N.Harbang, Adhunagar, B.hatia)	X	X	X	X	X	X	7	15	2		
2.3	Prepare constitution for Nishorgo Club				X			2		1		COS
2.4	Arrange training for CO-management Council members (2 batches)			X		X		1	5	0		TCBS
2.5	Conduct hiking for Council and Committee members		X					2	3			
2.6	Conduct visit by selected Council members to West Bengal			X				2	6	0		COS, TCBS
2.7	Organize video clip shows on forest and bio-diversity conservation for community mobilization.			X				2	3	0		COS
2.8	Organize specific awareness building programmes such as Rallies , Meetings, Essay writing, Art Competitions and Cultural Programs during the observance of three national days (21st February, 26th March, and 16 December) at Chunuti and Bashkhali			X	X			1	4	1		
2.9	Build rapport with other NGOs operating in the areas and identify and implement actions to leverage extended social movement by networking with them											
2.10	Review of proposed technology : TERI report		X					1		1		AIG
2.11	Develop manual for group meeting facilitation				X			1	5	1		LGCBS , TCBS
2.12	Form Federations and organize meeting				X		X	6	15	0		
2.13	Arrange monthly meeting for Nishorgo Nature's Club and other Cultural Clubs.	X	X	X	X	X	X	6	12	0		COS
2.14	Mobilize against brickfield.		X		X		X	5	20	2		PAMS

II	<i>Enhanced Esteem, Importance & Performance of FD</i>											
3.	<i>Develop Strong Collaboration Between the FD and NSP</i>											
3.1	Discuss with FD local staff 6 months work plan and post it Range Office		X					2	7	1	ACF,RO	
3.2	Arrange monthly meeting between the SF and RO to strengthen relationship between NSP and local FD staff	X	X	X	X	X	X	6	6		RO	
3.3	Invite local FD staff in all NSP programs	X	X	X	X	X	X	1	6			
3.4	Send all NSP reports to the local FD office	X		X		X		1		1		
4.	<i>Build Capacity of Staff Members of the FD</i>											
4.1	Arrange training program for Forest guards	X		X	X			2		2	ACF, RO	TCBS
4.2	Arrange training program for RO and BOs											
4.3	Arrange exposure visit for FD staff to West Bengal			X				2		1	ACF,RO	TCBS
5.	<i>Develop Positive Image of the FD</i>											
5.1	Provide NSP provisions including logo, bag, dress to the local FD staff				X			1			ACF, RO	COS
5.2	Develop a code of conduct for local FD staff			X				1		1	ACF, RO	COS, TCBS
5.3	Arrange community meetings attended by local FD staff	X	X	X	X	X	X	6	20	2	ACF, RO	
III	<i>Economic Alternatives for Local Households</i>											
6.	<i>Promote AIG for Poor Households through Demonstration Training & Grant.</i>											
6.1	Provide training and grant for poultry rearing involving 20 members	X	X	X	X			4	15	1	ACF, RO	TCBS

6.2	Provide training and grant money to forty members for fish culture	X	X	X	X			4	24	1	ACF, RO	TCBS
6.3	Provide training and grant money for milch cow to 10 members	X	X	X	X			4	5	1	ACF, RO	TCBS
6.4	Provide training and grant money to 60 members for vegetable gardening	X	X					4	24	1	ACF, RO	TCBS
6.5	Provide training and grant money to 15 members on Nursery development	X	X	X	X			5	15	2	ACF, RO	TCBS
7.	<i>Support tree planting, forest regeneration and social forestry</i>											
7.1	Supply of seedlings to households for homestead plantation						X	2	7		ACF, RO	
7.2	Provide training to participant in homestead plantation.				X	X		5	7		ACF/RO	
7.3	Organize patrolling by user groups for forest conservation .		X	X	X	X	X	4	20			LGCBS
8.	<i>Identify alternative energy sources for brickfields and households</i>											
8.1	Train 16 women on improved oven and make them responsible to motivate others	X						8	10	1	ACF, RO	
8.2	Organize energy fair at Banshkhali	X						7	5	3	ACF, RO	COS M&E
8.3	Provide 80 household with improved oven	X	X	X				10	15	2		
	<i>Facilitate development of eco-tourism and 1-2 other enterprise areas</i>											
8.4	Set up 5 billboards in strategic locations with messages on bio-diversity				X			3	3		ACF, RO	COS
8.5	Broadcast the value of PAs through various media (TV, Radio, etc.)			X				1		1		COS
8.6	Prepare and distribute brochures and other materials.						X	1		1	ACF	COS
8.7	Organize Chunuti Eco-week				X			7	14	1	ACF,RO	

IV	<i>Protection of the Landscape, Especially the PA Core</i>											
9.	<i>Establish systems to ensure that PA is respected and conserved</i>											
9.1	Assist in preparing PAs map, PA boundary demarcation, survey, & pillar posting.				X	X	X	5	14	2	ACF, RO	M&E
9.2	Discuss in community meetings about core and landscape zones, value of wildlife, control of illicit felling, poaching and forest fire	X	X	X	X	X	X	2	15	1	ACF, RO	M&E
9.3	Discuss about forest burning and land encroachment in the Co-management Council meetings and obtain community commitment to stop the process.	X	X	X	X	X	X	3	12	1	ACF, RO	
9.4	Organize community patrolling, particularly to the remaining patch of Garjan Forest near Bon Pukur of chunoti Beat.	X	X	X	X	X	X	2	10	1	ACF, RO	M&E
9.5	Involve the existing user groups of FSP in protection of the Core Areas.		X		X			2	20	1		
<u>10</u>	<i>Engage Local Stakeholders in Monitoring Impact of Project</i>										<i>ACF, RO</i>	<i>M&E</i>
10.1	Conduct bird survey, photo-monitoring, BAF sampling etc. by participatory monitoring system engaging locals				X	X		3	20			M&E
10.2	Training on monitoring system to the council members			X				1	7			M&E, TCBS
	TOTAL LABOR ALLOCATION FOR STAFF							178	599	55		