



Climate-Resilient Ecosystems and Livelihoods (CREL)

ACTIVITY SHEET

Photo courtesy of Winrock International



Climate change presents many risks to ecosystems and livelihoods in Bangladesh.

USAID | Bangladesh’s Climate-Resilient Ecosystems and Livelihoods (CREL) project will scale up and adapt successful co-management models to build climate resilient ecosystems in the Protected Areas (PAs), wetlands and Ecologically Critical Areas (ECA). CREL aims to improve governance of natural resources and biodiversity conservation, and increase resilience to climate change through improved planning and livelihoods diversification.

CREL is being implemented by a team led by Winrock International. The team will build the capacity of resource users to improve Natural Resource Management (NRM), planning and implementation of adaptation and mitigation measures, financial and entrepreneurial literacy so they can enter points in value chains that will increase access to inputs, credit, markets, information, and improved technology. The result will be viable livelihoods and enterprises that increase incomes, contribute to sustaining resources, and improve resiliency to impacts of climate change, especially among marginalized and vulnerable populations.

CREL Strategy

CREL’s strategy addresses the environmental, socioeconomic, legal and policy issues and stressors that threaten PAs and surrounding landscapes in the target areas by strengthening and expanding proven approaches that increase resilience to climate change.

Management and conservation of PAs wetlands and biodiversity, including the Sundarbans:

CREL team will build on initiatives and investments to improve biodiversity and PA, wetland and ECA conservation, focusing on landscape planning to expand co-management areas,

The Ministry of Environment and Forest, The Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock and The Ministry of Land as well as Department of Fisheries, Department of Environment and the Forest Department will be working with CREL as partners



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GOAL: Improved responsiveness to climate change for more than 700,000 beneficiaries

- 350,000 stakeholders with increased capacity to adapt to impacts of climate variability and change
- 500,000 people with increased economic benefits
- 90,000 metric tons of CO₂e reduced or sequestered as a result of USG assistance
- 2,000 ha of natural resources showing improved biophysical conditions
- 475,000 ha under improved management
- 4,800 stakeholders using climate information in decision-making

bring PAs and connected forest and wetlands zones under conservation-oriented co-management to create wildlife corridors, and enable co-management organizations (CMO) to support climate-resilient resource use in expanded landscapes.

Alternative, climate-resilient economic opportunities:

Working through regionally based teams, CREL will empower vulnerable groups in target areas to access economic opportunities and help sustain the natural resource base that



The CREL Team

- Winrock International
- Community Development Centre (CODEC)
- Center for Natural Resource Studies (CNRS)
- Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS)
- Tetra Tech/ARD
- World Fish Center, Bangladesh
- Nature Conservation Management (NACOM)

supports their livelihoods. To support sustainable development, CREL will leverage private sector investments in ecotourism and other eco-friendly enterprises, and analyze value chains to identify alternative income generation (AIG) and job opportunities, and infrastructure investments.

Vulnerability of human and natural systems to the impacts of climate change and climate-related risks:

CREL's strategy unites landscape planning and preparedness with updated information, scientific analysis, monitoring, and forecasting through capacity building of national institutions and CMOs to improve resilience. Local partners and stakeholders will assess landscape and community vulnerabilities; develop adaptation plans to address risks to infrastructure, livelihoods, and resources; and improve local disaster response. CREL will promote climate change mitigation by increasing carbon stocks/sinks and emission reductions in forests and wetlands through regeneration of forests and reduction of forest degradation.

The Four Components of CREL:

Component 1: Improved governance of natural resources and biodiversity

CREL will address limitations in natural resource governance frameworks to strengthen co-management in Bangladesh. CREL will expand landscape-level knowledge base, support capacity building of Government of Bangladesh partners, increase awareness, support the development of more effective policies, laws and mechanisms for enforcement, and strengthen platforms for CMO sustainability.

Component 2: Enhanced knowledge and capacity of key stakeholders

CREL will provide customized courses to familiarize stakeholders in landscape-level approaches for resource and land-use planning, climate change adaptation strategies, and the practical application of relevant tools, methods, and technologies. Through training, technical assistance, mentoring, and grants that will fund related research, CREL will assess and support the professional development and collaboration among national and local resource partners to ensure scientific rigor in biodiversity and the use of environmental monitoring for local level management.

Component 3: Strengthened planning and implementation of climate-resilient NRM and adaptation

CREL activities will enhance and expand CMO stewardship and effective co-management through improved planning and implementation of climate resilient NRM and mechanisms to adapt to climate change. Building on the existing network of co-management organizations, CREL will transition from USAID's Integrated Protected Area Co-Management project and expand activities in the targeted landscapes. CREL will also coordinate efforts to identify co-financing opportunities that will mitigate biodiversity threats identified in PA plans and at the landscape level, and the means for CMOs to implement PA management plans.

Component 4: Improved and diversified livelihoods that are environmentally sustainable and resilient to climate change

CREL activities will improve, expand and diversify livelihoods that are environmentally sustainable and resilient to climate change. CREL will promote landscape-level assessments and value chain analyses to guide economic growth, strengthen value chains, and strengthen market linkages, and partnerships, and catalyze enterprises and services that support sustainable development.