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Chief Conservator of Forests attends Co-management day events



March 23, 2008 was an important day for all individuals working to conserve forests and wetlands in Bangladesh, using a co-management approach established by the Government of Bangladesh with support from USAID. The date marks the ultimate sacrifice by 25-year-old Rafiqul Alam, a Volunteer Forest Guard under Community Patrol Group (CPG) in Shilkhali range, Teknaf. Rafiqul Alam was murdered by illegal loggers during his attempt to stop them. His death not only symbolizes his dedication towards the conservation of forestry in Bangladesh but also represents the transformation that is taking place among people in Bangladesh regarding conservation of nature and the idea of co-management.

Rema-Kalenga Wildlife Sanctuary Co-Management Committee organized various events to commemorate this day. Mr. Yunus Ali, Chief Conservator of Forests of Bangladesh attended these events as the chief guest. There, he inaugurated the Community Patrol Group (CPG) activity board to aware and inform people about CPG activities, visited a photo exhibition displaying various activities of Co-management Committee & Council and how CREL is supporting the community to conserve one of the better preserved forest of Bangladesh. Later Mr. Yunus joined a meeting with all the CMC office bearers of Sylhet region. Mr. Akber Hossain Jitu, President, presided over the meeting. All senior officers of Forest Department joined the meeting. COP and DCOP of CREL project also attended the meeting. All speakers, including CCF praised the active role of local community in forest conservation and management.

Workshop held on developing ANR Protocol

A day long working session was held at Chittagong on Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) on March 03, 2015 at the Office of the Forest Department, Chittagong Circle. The main objectives of the event were to share ANR concept and develop plan for implementing ANR activities. Chief Conservator of Forests, Mr. Md. Yunus Ali led the workshop as chief guest while Mr. Md. Abdul Latif Mia, Conservator of Forests, Chittagong Circle chaired the session. Mr. Darrell Deppert, COP, CREL was a guest speaker of the working session. Concerned DFOs presented their ANR related plan at the workshop. 51 FD officials participated at the workshop.



Communications trainings for CREL Staffs

CREL communications team conducted day long communications trainings in Cox's Bazar, South West and Chittagong region. A total of 85 CREL staffs participated in these trainings. The trainings were designed to support the field staffs with their everyday concerns related to communication issues. The basic objectives of these trainings were to provide the regional team with a guideline to promote CREL successes through media, stories, newsletters, events. The training also gave them an understanding on how to engage stakeholders in CREL communications, do's and don'ts during VIP visits etc.

Forest-resource extraction redirected to successful farming

Humaun Kabir invested forty thousand taka in his field for strawberry cultivation in November. Now, after three months he has sold ninety thousand taka worth strawberry and still expects to earn another twenty thousand taka from the remaining crops in his field. Humaun Kabir's story is just one story that the national news syndicate reported in a leading national daily. This is one of many success stories of CREL in reducing dependency on natural resources by hardcore resource dependent people in Cox's Bazar region. CREL provided training, developed demonstration plots and arranged exposé visits to promote strawberry cultivation in Cox's bazar region. From January- April this year 23 members of CREL beneficiaries of Cox's Bazar region have received hands-on training on strawberry. The change is visible in livelihood patterns of the communities around protected areas of Himchari, Medakacchapia, Fashiakhali, Chokoria, Teknaf, Shilkhali and Inani. The people who used to earn their livelihood by extracting fuel wood, illegally cutting trees from the forest are now successful farmers – and, they have increased incomes. Moreover, they are now advocates of conservation as well. CREL livelihood interventions have reduced poverty as well as empowered women in the Cox's Bazar region.

Chief Conservator of Forests upholds Co-Management



Mr. Md. Yunus Ali, Chief Conservator of Forests of Bangladesh, wants to expand co-management into more forest areas. He informed this during a televised program on the occasion of Co-management day on March 23. CREL facilitated the program, that was aired by Bangladesh Television, the state owned television channel.

Mr. Md. Yunus Ali was the key speaker of the program. Other speakers were Mr. Ishtiaq Uddin Ahmed, Country Representative, IUCN Bangladesh and Mr. Akbar Hossain Jitu, President RKWS CMC. The program was anchored by Mr. Ishtiaq Reza, a prominent journalist. All the speakers talked about various aspect of co-management, history of co-management, roles and benefits of Forest Department and local communities through co-management system and ways to improve it.

Using Research Results to Inform Policy



Two days training on Using Research Results to Inform Policy was conducted on March 21st and 22nd, 2015 for USAID's CREL research grant recipients and grant applicants under the John D. Rockefeller 3RD Scholars Program. Faculty of the University of Chittagong from the Institute of Forestry and Environmental Sciences, the Faculty of Sciences, the Faculty of Law, and the Faculty of Social Sciences also participated in the training program. The training was designed for forest and wetland conservation policy-making, and delivered by two trainers from the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) in London, attended by 35 participants, and two Winrock staff were trained as trainers (TOT) for replication. ODI's RAPID Programme focuses on the relationship between research, policy, practice and promoting evidence-based policy-making. It provided detailed guidance on how to build a Policy Influence Plan, engagement strategy for bilateral and multilateral donors, government, CSOs, researchers, private sector and ultimately the 'Policy Entrepreneurs'.