

## Grants Provide a Path to Changing Livelihoods



USAID's Climate-Resilient Ecosystems and Livelihoods (CREL) Project provided around 1.7 million BDT as grants to Dudpukuria Co-Management Committee, Chittagong after they received financial management training. They demonstrated their fiscal management capacity and commitment to conservation with successful utilization of these funds. Following their initial success, in April 2016, Dudpukuria CMC

requested and received another grant of 481,000 BDT to help support alternative livelihoods for forest dependent VCF and CPG members. This grant was part of their strategy to conserve biodiversity in the wildlife sanctuary. The CMC has helped create an alternative financial path for 51 Community Patrol Group (CPG) and 68 Village Conservation Forum (VCF) members from Dudpukuria, Barsonkhola and Kalichari villages through aquaculture. These 119

people received a loan of 82,000 BDT from the CMC to cultivate fish in 5 ponds comprising 4.90 acres, for which they completed the required pond preparations including repairing pond embankments and ensuring appropriate pond depth. They stocked these ponds with 160,000 monosex tilapia and 250 kg of carp fingerlings.

"Fish are like my son.... I feed them and gradually they grow in front of me" commented Abdur Razzak, a 28 year old committed member of the CPG from Dudpukuria Village. Together with Mr. Abdur Razzak, those involved in aquaculture expect to earn 1.5 million BDT this year from their fish. Md. Abu Jafor, President of Dudpukuria CMC said, "We are working for forest conservation and engaging resource dependent people in alternative livelihoods opportunities. We hope these grants will help us create a path for people to reduce forest dependency."

## PA Management Rules 2016 Move Forward

USAID's Climate-Resilient Ecosystems and Livelihoods (CREL) Project facilitated a discussion on the draft Protected Area Management Rules' 16 with the Finance Division on 19 October 2016. The focus was on clauses related to the revenue sharing system and government allocation for conservation financing. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Jalal Ahmed, Additional Secretary with

participation from Mr. Shahabuddin Ahmed, Additional Secretary, Ms. Krishna Gyen, Joint Secretary, Mr. Abdul Latif Mia, FD- Project Director of CREL, Dr. Mohammad Mohiuddin, Deputy Secretary MoEF, other senior officials of the Finance Division and CREL policy team. It was agreed that the Finance Division would review the relevant clauses and send their views to the MoEF at the earliest.

## CREL Participation in IUFRO Congress, 2016



Md. Shams Uddin, Manager-Landscape planning, Ecosystems and Biodiversity participated in IUFRO, held in Beijing, China from 24-27 October, 2016,

## First Female Office Bearer in Khadimnager National Park Co-Management Committee

Ms. Shomela Patro became the first female office bearer of Khadimnager National Park Co-Management Committee. She was already recognized to be an active participant in co-management and was selected to be the treasurer of the newly reformed committee. This committee was reformed on 4 October 2016 through a Co-Management Council meeting. The meeting was chaired by the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO), Sylhet Sadar Upazila with the Divisional Forest Officer, Sylhet and Upazila Chairman, Sylhet Sadar present. This is the fourth Co-Management Committee of Khadimnagar and consists of 21 members including five women. Mr. Md. Morshed Ahmed Chowdhury Masum was selected as the President with Md. Abdus Shahid as Vice-president.



## Winds of Change: Mangroves for Protection



USAID's Climate-Resilient Ecosystems and Livelihoods (CREL) Project shared information on adverse impacts of climate change and the importance of mangroves with the members of a Village Conservation Forum (VCF) in Pankhali Village of Munshiganj, Satkhira. Inspired by this information they decided to plant trees on 1,500 square meters of land that was previously used as a shrimp farm. This pond had been illegally excavated on the edge of the Chuna River embankment resulting in destabilization of the embankment. During Cyclone Aila the weakened embankment collapsed and flooding and destroying Pankhali Village. The VCF members were committed to preventing disasters like this in the future and mobilized the people of both Pankhali and Chuna Villages to evict the powerful owners of the shrimp farm, even in the face of physical threats. The VCF members, with support from Forest Department and CREL Project, planted 5,000 mangrove saplings and more than 10,000 mangrove tree seeds. Just two years, the once gloomy and grey land is now covered with 3-4 feet high lush green mangrove trees that are protecting the village from future damage from storm events.

## Ecological Pond Management for Climate Resilience

USAID's Climate-Resilient Ecosystems and Livelihoods (CREL) Project's eco-pond initiative established 30 learning centers in the saline challenged southwest region to help farmers adapt their pond systems to changes in the environment. In these centers, women farmers learn how to better manage their ponds by making fish habitats that are conducive for different fish species that can thrive in the changing pond environment. CREL Project is providing training on ecological management of ponds to 500 women in southwest Bangladesh during this monsoon.

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