PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT (ANNUAL) TEMPLATE

January - December 2025

Project Summary Information	
Project Title	Initiation Plan for Ecosystems Restoration and Resilience for Development in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (ERRD-CHT)
Quantum Project ID	01004911
Project Duration	Start: 01-09-2025 End: 31-08-2026
Gender Marker	Gen 2
Total Budget	16,520,000
Donors (funding sources)	Global Affairs Canada and the EU
Budget (annual budget)	USD 7,478,848.00
Expenditure recorded for the reporting period	USD 7,164,749.51
Expenditure recorded for the total project	
Project Manager's Name	Yugesh Pradhanang, yugesh.pradhanang@undp.org

1. **Executive Summary** (1000 characters maximum)

In 2025, the ERRD-CHT project made significant progress in promoting climate resilience, biodiversity protection, and inclusive education throughout the three hill districts. Under CoRLIA, 5,850 women got climate-adaptive livelihood grants, with 1,562 already earning money, while 150 WCRCs created Local Resilience Plans that benefited 11,746 people. BERCR supported community-led conservation with 150 BCGs (60% women), 44 NT/WRTs, 100+ restoration plans, 43,448 trees planted, and the identification of seven elephant corridors. WGEIE boosted girls' education by providing Mothers' Clubs, teacher training, solar multimedia classrooms in 570 schools, safe transportation for 1,200 students, and targeted assistance for underprivileged girls. Key problems included LRP delays, financing deficits, administrative bottlenecks, and access limits, which were addressed through improved coordination, engineer recruiting, institutional participation, and adaptive field planning.

2. **Progress Review**

   a) **Key results achieved** (2000 characters maximum)

Under the ERRD-CHT project, in 2025, significant progress was achieved in advancing climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, and inclusive education across the three hill districts. Through CoRLIA, 5,850 vulnerable women received climate-adaptive livelihood grants, enabling many to start or expand income-generating activities; 1,562 are already earning profits. At the community level, 11,746 people benefited from locally prioritized adaptation

initiatives led by 150 Women-Led Community/Climate Resilience Committees (WCRCs). These committees developed Local Resilience Plans that reflect real climate risks and community priorities. Youth engagement has also grown, with 120 youth groups actively promoting climate awareness, nature-based solutions, and social cohesion. While progress is visible, completing the remaining LRP activities and securing sustained government support will be critical to ensure these gains are consolidated and sustained.
Under BERCR, communities are taking ownership of biodiversity conservation. A total of 150 Biodiversity Conservation Groups, 60% women, are leading local conservation planning, supported by 44 Nature Teams and Wildlife Response Teams. Over 100 conservation and restoration plans were developed, and many groups have already begun implementation. Alternative livelihood support reached thousands of women through AIGA groups, helping reduce pressure on forests. Restoration efforts included planting over 43,000 native trees and identifying seven elephant corridors for targeted protection.
Meanwhile, WGEIE has improved girls' education and school environments. Mothers' Clubs, teacher training, and adolescent health awareness initiatives have strengthened gender equality and life skills education. Solar-powered multimedia classrooms in 570 schools, improved sanitation facilities, safe boat transportation for 1,200 students, and targeted financial and residential support have helped ensure safer, more inclusive, and uninterrupted learning for marginalized girls.
Together, ERRD-CHT initiatives reflect stronger local structures, increased community participation, and practical steps toward more resilient and inclusive development.

b) Output progress

Output statement	Baselines Value type (2025)	Indicators	Annual Targets	End of the project target	Progress	Means of verifications and comments to substantiate the selected response
Increased practice of climate smart resilience-building practices, and diversification of livelihoods	0	# financial grants provided to the project's household participants to support the implementation of their designated components within the HH Resilience Plan	8,000	13,500	11,746	Annual report of CoRLIA 2025
	0	# of capacity building training conducted on CC, NbS, CCVA, LRP implementation and monitoring for women-led CRCs, Union Parishads, CBOs, and relevant line departments	150	390	270	Annual report of CoRLIA 2025
Improved capacity on biodiversity ecosystem restoration	0	# of women participated in local planning of biodiversity ecosystem restoration	2000	4000	2250	Annual report of Biodiversity 2025
	0	# of trees planted in Jhiri, spring, natural fountain, canal/chara etc. for improved biodiversity	50,000	90,000	43,000	Annual report of Biodiversity 2025

Output statement	Baselines Value type (2025)	Indicators	Annual Targets	End of the project target	Progress	Means of verifications and comments to substantiate the selected response
Empowered girls and women through inclusive education, GBV prevention, and enhanced livelihood skills Increased knowledge, skills, and confidence in inclusive education	0	# of off-grid solar driven Multimedia Classroom (MMC) facilities distributed to project schools	110	200	570	Annual report of education 2025
	0	# of grant support provided to non-MPO schools to compensate expenditures related to pursuing the MPO granting process	30	60	0	Annual report of education 2025

Data sources and references (can be prepared as an annex with details)

3. **Communications, visibility, and partnerships** (1000 characters maximum)

The success stories of the inclusive education initiative were featured multiple times on the UNDP website, increasing the project's visibility and outreach. Moreover, the project produced and distributed 8,665 adolescent reproductive health booklets and 8,665 menstrual hygiene posters to support awareness and knowledge-building. Additionally, 2,330 menstrual hygiene management guidebooks were printed and disseminated, more than double the initial target of 1,000 copies. To further strengthen public awareness on girls' education, three large billboards were installed at strategic locations, amplifying key messages and enhancing community visibility and engagement.
Links to the published success stories are provided below for reference.
1. https://www.undp.org/bangladesh/stories/empowering-women-through-menstrual-health-hills
2. https://www.undp.org/bangladesh/stories/victim-support-centers-lifeline-vulnerable-cht
3.https://www.undp.org/bangladesh/stories/growing-movement-hill-tracts-against-digital-gender-based-violence
4. https://www.undp.org/bangladesh/stories/boats-bring-girls-back-school-rangamati-better-future
5. https://www.undp.org/bangladesh/stories/safe-space-safe-future-girls-hills
Similarly, following engagement events with print and electronic media across the three districts, conservation awareness messages were featured in local newspapers and circulated through social media platforms. Selected links to the published articles and social media coverage are provided below for reference.
https://www.facebook.com/share/r/16ET8JdN19/
https://youtu.be/eRoqu1-BG1c?si=hhMCuemUMEnWJrp7
https://www.facebook.com/share/v/17bGuPHQm1/
https://youtu.be/i87J1t_ZBDc?si=RK4eI9IGC_0ZmU5P
https://www.bd-pratidin.com/agriculture-nature/2025/09/04/1154351
https://bhorersongbad.com/?p=76621

4. **Project risks and mitigation measures** (1000 characters maximum)

The following risks were encountered, and corresponding mitigation measures were implemented to address them.

Delayed or Incomplete Implementation of LRPs	*To accelerate the implementation of LRPs, measures were undertaken, including the recruitment of engineers across the three districts.*
Securing adequate funding from the government sources for the remaining LRP activities remains uncertain.	*The Annual Development Programme of Union Parishad activity was initiated across three districts to increase the government funding.*
Activating the District and Upazila Level Biodiversity Management Committees is difficult	*Mobilization activities were initiated, and communication with relevant officials was made.*
Women's low confidence and leadership participation in BCGs,	*Promoting women's leadership was given priority across all activities to motivate women to take on leadership roles.*
Political unrest and local conflicts periodically restricted staff from conducting regular visits to project sites.	*Remote monitoring was done when necessary, and the frequency of field visits increased in normal times.*
Quota and recruitment issues in Rangamati HDC hamper activity implementation	*Coordination was strengthened, and continuous guidance was provided to the HDC team to ensure activities were completed within the stipulated timeframe.*
Limited number of classrooms for safe spaces in schools	*Mothers' Club members and teachers were engaged to ensure the allocation of designated safe spaces within school premises.*
Security and accessibility challenges in remote and hilly areas.	*Field visits were planned during favorable conditions and coordinated closely with local authorities and other component teams to ensure smooth implementation*

5. Lessons Learned (800 characters maximum)

The overall experience shows that youth engagement can be a powerful driver of conservation when structured through organized platforms such as NT/WRTs, which gained strong community and institutional recognition. Creating inclusive spaces and multi-stakeholder platforms strengthened social cohesion, dialogue, and joint decision-making among community leaders and government actors. Effective facilitation proved essential for quality CCVA processes and realistic LRP design, while context-specific approaches were necessary in socially diverse settings to avoid conflict. Early institutional engagement, flexible use of limited infrastructure, and strong local coordination helped address administrative, political, and security challenges. These experiences indicate that anticipating bottlenecks, maintaining consistent coordination with institutional partners, and adjusting field strategies in response to contextual risks are essential to prevent delays and sustain progress

6. **Way Forward** (800 characters maximum)

In the upcoming days, priority will be given to addressing key implementation gaps and strengthening sustainability. Under CoRLIA, this includes accelerating the remaining LRP activities, operationalizing the Climate Cell with clear coordination mechanisms, strengthening government engagement for resource mobilization, and completing youth group formation while continuing technical support to WCRCs. BERCR will focus on advancing full implementation of BCG plans, closely monitoring AIGA group performance, scaling nature-based interventions, and reinforcing coordination to curb illegal wildlife trade. For WGEIE, emphasis will be placed on resolving administrative bottlenecks with HDC and education authorities, formalizing safe spaces in schools despite infrastructure limitations, strengthening local monitoring mechanisms, and applying risk-sensitive planning to manage political uncertainty and access challenges in remote areas.

Priority actions for the project and other teams before the next reporting cycle.

Issue/observation	Action to be taken	Responsible	Timeline
Limited institutional ownership for the climate cell	Organize district workshops to operationalize the Climate Cell	Component lead	Q2 2026
Lengthy government approval processes and competing with other priorities.	Submit prioritized LRP schemes for budget inclusion	HDCs	Q2 2026
Financial compliance requirements for BCG grants disbursement	Prioritization and contingent plan	Finance team	Q2 2026
Low prioritization of conservation issues in government agendas	Facilitate district-level policy dialogues	Component Lead	Q2 2026
Mobility restrictions due to local political issues.	Frontload activities before political disruptions	DPIA, HDCs	Q2 2026
Limited physical space and competing classroom needs	Formalize safe spaces in schools	Component Lead, HDCs	Q3 2026

7. Annexures

Provide links to the sources of evidence (based on entries described in Q2 and 3)

Other relevant information

https://www.undp.org/bangladesh/stories/victim-support-centers-lifeline-vulnerable-cht

https://www.undp.org/bangladesh/stories/growing-movement-hill-tracts-against-digital-gender-based-violence

https://www.undp.org/bangladesh/stories/boats-bring-girls-back-school-rangamati-better-future

https://www.undp.org/bangladesh/stories/safe-space-safe-future-girls-hills