

# **Annual Progress Report**

(30 Aug 2017 – 29 Aug 2018)

## **Chattogram Hill Tracts Watershed Co-Management Activity**



Prepared for

**United States Agency for International Development**

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**Strengthening Inclusive Development in Chattogram Hill Tracts**  
**Chattogram Hill Tracts Development Facility**  
**United Nations Development Programme, Bangladesh**  
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*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*

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## ACRONYMS

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|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| AWP             | Annual Work Plan   |
| SID-CHT         | Strengthening Inclusive Development in Chattogram Hill Tracts            |
| CCF             | Chief Conservator of Forests   |
| CF              | Conservator of Forests   |
| CHT             | Chattogram Hill Tracts   |
| CHTDB           | Chattogram Hill Tracts Development Board                                 |
| CHTDF           | Chattogram Hill Tracts Development Facility                              |
| CHTRC           | Chattogram Hill Tracts Regional Council                                  |
| CHTWCA          | Chattogram Hill Tracts Watershed Co-Management Activity                  |
| CMC             | Co-management Council and Committee                                      |
| CMOs            | Co-Management Organizations  |
| CO <sub>2</sub> | Carbon di oxide  |
| CSO             | Civil Society Organizations  |
| DQA             | Data Quality Assessment  |
| FD              | Forest Department  |
| FFS             | Farmers Field School   |
| FMP             | Forestry Master Plan   |
| GHG             | Green House Gases  |
| GoB             | Government of Bangladesh   |
| GPS             | Global Positioning System  |
| HDC             | Hill District Council  |
| IFESCU          | Institute of Forestry and Environmental Science of Chattogram University |
| IPAC            | Integrated Protected Area Co-Management Project                          |
| IRs             | Immediate Results  |
| IWMP            | Integrated Watershed Management Plan                                     |
| KNP             | Kaptai National Park   |
| LOA             | Letter of Agreement  |

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| M&E    | Monitoring and Evaluation                                   |
| MEL    | Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning                         |
| MOCHTA | Ministry of Chattogram Hill Tracts Affairs                  |
| MOEF   | Ministry of Environment and Forests                         |
| NGO    | Non-Government Organization                                 |
| NRM    | Natural Resource Management                                 |
| NSC    | National Steering Committee                                 |
| NTFP   | Non-Timber Forest Products                                  |
| PA     | Protected Area  |
| PC     | Project Coordinator   |
| PDC    | Para Development Committee                                  |
| PDT    | Project Data Table  |
| PNDC   | Para Nari Development Committee                             |
| PMO    | Prime Minister Office                                       |
| PRA    | Participatory Rural Appraisal                               |
| REDD   | Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation |
| RF     | Reserved Forest   |
| SALT   | Sloping Agricultural Land Technology                        |
| Sub-IR | Sub-Interim Result  |
| TOT    | Training of Trainers  |
| UDCC   | Union Development Coordination Committee                    |
| UNDP   | United Nations Development Programme                        |
| USAID  | United States Agency for International Development          |
| VCF    | Village Common Forest                                       |

## PROJECT SUMMARY

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| USAID Grant Number     | AID-388-IO-00003  |
| Project Title          | Chattogram Hill Tracts Watershed Co-Management Activity   |
| Project Start Date     | 30 August 2013  |
| Project End Date       | 29 August 2019  |
| Reporting Period       | 30 August 2017 – 29 August 2018 (year 5)  |
| Project Budget         | Total contract amount USD 8,002,800<br>Total obligated amount USD 6,576,126.64 (as on 29 August 2018)   |
| Executing Agency       | Strengthening Inclusive Development in Chattogram Hill Tracts, CHTDF, UNDP, Bangladesh  |
| Responsible Ministry   | Ministry of Chattogram Hill Tracts Affairs, Government of Bangladesh  |
| Project Area           | Hill Districts of Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachari in the Chattogram Hill Tracts of Bangladesh  |
| Beneficiaries          | Watershed- and forest-dependent communities in and around the targeted Village Common Forests and headwater Reserved Forests  |
| Objective              | Improved climate resiliency and ecosystems in the Chattogram Hill Tracts  |
| Strategic Institutions | Working with Forest Department, the CHT institutions and leaders, and forest-dependent communities towards establishing participatory forest management and decentralized forest governance systems   |
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This Annual Progress Report (APR) compiles and analyzes the progress of planned outcomes, outputs and activities under the Chattogram Hill Tracts Watershed Co-Management Activity (CHTWCA) for the activity's year 5 (30 Aug 2017 – 29 Aug 2018). UNDP Bangladesh through Chattogram Hill Tracts Development Facility (CHTDF) is implementing partner under the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) approved Strengthening Inclusive Development in Chattogram Hill Tracts (SID-CHT) project (1 Oct 2016 to 30 Sep 2021). The CHTWCA, funded by USAID, has an implementation timeframe of six years (Aug 30, 2013 – Aug 29, 2019). The UNDP, working with the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs (MoCHTA), is implementing the CHTWCA with the following three participatory forestry and watershed management objectives:

- Sustainable management of village common forests (VCFs), small streams and associated watersheds for livelihood improvements
- Support for the Forest Department (FD) in headwater reserved forests (RFs) management activities in the Chattogram Hill Tracts (CHT)
- Promotion of sustainable land use practices for resilient ecosystems and livelihoods

Notable progress was made during year 5 in achieving important results by carrying various activities for meeting the project objectives. Successful implementation of the CHTWCA with financial support from USAID has resulted in positive changes both at the community and FD levels, leading to community trust building around natural resource management (NRM) with reduced forest-use conflicts. Over the reporting period of the CHTWCA implementation, participatory forest management is field implemented and mainstreamed both for VCFs and RFs of the CHT by developing suitable institutions, trained field staff and communities, required guidelines and frameworks, management planning and tools, and successful field pilots over 5,884 ha of VCFs and 625 ha of headwater RFs. After consolidating the gains during year 6, participatory management of VCFs and RFs, as field piloted under the CHTWCA, can be upscaled in the three districts of the CHT.

The UNDP with more than a decade work on trust and peace building in the CHT has under the USAID's CHTWCA laid strong foundation by providing a framework mechanism under which different stakeholders with historical remorse and conflicts have come together by building consensus on developing select VCFs and headwater RFs. Significant progress is achieved during year 5 for completing field activities with key results: improved community-based management of VCFs and participatory management of headwater RFs for biodiversity conservation with enhanced environmental governance and improved livelihoods. During year 5 in total 2,313 ha of forests (1,688 ha of VCFs and 625 ha of RFs) have been brought under improved, participatory forest management.

A draft Integrated Watershed Management Plan (IWMP) was submitted to FD on 29 March 2018 for finalization. An Action Plan, as prepared under the project based on the draft IWMP and presented by the Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) and agreed to by key stakeholders in the Prime Minister Office meetings held on 21 August 2016 and 1 December 2016, was approved by the GOB on 29 May 2017. The Action Plan was field implemented by FD, with

technical support provided under the project, during the reporting period by covering 625 ha of headwater RFs in the CHT (South) and Lama Forest Divisions under integrated watershed management with focus on assisted natural regeneration. The successful field piloting by FD has improved headwater forest management and biodiversity conservation by enhancing partnerships with the CHT communities and leaders. Senior FD officials including the Conservator of Forests and Divisional Forest Officers based in the CHT have initiated many meetings with the CHT leaders including the Chairman of the CHT Regional Council (CHTRC).

During year 5 technical training on climate change adaptation and integrated watershed management was completed for 110 FD field staff, thereby creating trained resource base locally, which will continue to be available even beyond the project period. In addition, the FD field staff was technically supported for field implementation of integrated watershed management in participation of local community in headwater RFs. For this several technical discussions were held with the Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) and other senior FD officials, both at the headquarters and at field levels. Moreover, extensive consultations on participatory forest management were held with the CHT leaders and institutions.

Technical training, imparted during the reporting period to 110 forest officials on integrated watershed management and climate change has resulted in improved field implementation of the Action Plan in two Forest Divisions. The enhanced capacity of FD field staff has helped in participatory management of degraded RFs with focus on assisted natural regeneration (ANR) interventions for restoring degraded RFs in identified watersheds. Successful field implementation of the Action Plan focusing on participatory watershed management with ANR has instilled renewed confidence and capacity amongst the FD field staff with practical experience and lessons. The technical consultations, mobilization of local community and leaders, and training has enabled FD to successfully implement integrated watershed management including ANR interventions for forest restoration.

The success of field pilots has empowered FD to restart participatory forest management in the headwater RFs after over 20 years during which FD was not able to practice sustainable forest management in the CHT due mainly to continuation of land-use conflicts even after the Peace Accord was signed and partially implemented. The breakthrough achieved by FD in field implementing participatory watershed management is indeed a milestone achievement during the reporting period and will help in designing and implementing future forestry projects in the CHT. In the process the FD, while agreeing to and initiating participatory forest management in the headwater RFs, has adopted and indeed implemented a paradigm shift in the CHT forest governance. For this success of the FD the project technical staff held several intensive discussions with the Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) and other senior FD officials, both at the headquarters and at the field levels, apart from holding extensive consultations with the CHT leaders and institutions.

The co-management of Kaptai National Park (KNP), re-established by strengthening existing co-management organizations in year 4, continued its focus on protected area (PA) conservation during the reporting period. The strengthened co-management organizations of KNP are playing active role in biodiversity conservation by carrying out assigned responsibilities as per the GOB approved Co-Management Rules, 2018. Because of advocacy with FD under CHTWCA, relevant lessons of participatory watershed management

interventions in the CHT have been included in updated 20-year forestry master plan as developed by FD. This is another milestone achievement as the proof of concept by FD by field implementing watershed management has led to its mainstreaming in the long-term forestry master plan.

Community management of the 82 project VCFs and of all the identified 314 VCFs has been for the first time formalized. This has been achieved by forming VCF management committees for the project VCFs and four VCF Networks as operationalized by covering all the identified 314 VCFs in the three CHT districts. The four VCF Networks, one each for the three districts and one at regional level, are governed and managed based on their written constitution. They are engaged in dialogues with local stakeholders for resolving VCF related issues including land-use conflicts and disputes. As federating institutions, they take responsibility for the Network governance and are indeed providing valuable guidance and support to their member VCF management committees on forest conservation and management. Many Headmen (head of a *mauza* comprising villages/paras) and Karbaries (head of a para/village) are members of the VCF Networks and so VCF related issues including forest land protection and biodiversity conservation are discussed and resolved amicably in the VCF management committee and Network meetings.

The VCF mainstreaming is further strengthened through social mobilization and organization of local communities in terms of VCF management committees formed in year 5 for 28 new VCFs, apart from 54 VCFs covered up to year 4. Unparalleled in the CHT history and as implemented under the project for the first time, VCF demarcation, survey, mapping and management planning, and the assessment of flora and fauna are important outcomes achieved under the leadership of the newly formed VCF management committees and Networks.

Management planning of the 28 new VCFs after survey, mapping and resolution of VCF boundary disputes is achieved by adopting a participatory dispute resolution platform in the form of VCF management committees and Networks formed and organized after mobilizing local communities. The identification, demarcation and survey of 28 VCFs was completed as part of management planning by local communities as members of VCF management committees. Similarly, participatory management planning and field implementation for old 54 VCFs was consolidated in year 5 through community-driven consultations and with technical assistance as provided under the CHTWCA. The achievement of this key result for putting in place a suitable framework for field implementing participatory management of VCFs was possible through extensive consultations required for resolving VCF land conflicts through community consensus. The continued field implementation of the management plans by management committees under the guidance of respective VCF Networks has resulted in sustained community development and empowerment.

Capacity building support to VCF management committees was provided by three partner NGOs selected each for the three districts. The capacity of grassroots stakeholders was enhanced through training imparted on climate change by PNGOs whose technical staff were trained by CHTDF staff as part of training of trainers. During the reporting period 5,884 VCF dependent people were trained on climate change adaptation for their engagement with participatory management of VCFs and their own homesteads. This resulted in their



empowerment and ownership for efficient preparation and implementation of the VCF management plans. The members of VCF management committees worked together with forest dependent communities for improved management of VCFs by implementing management plans. The operations of VCF Networks through extensive participatory process has instilled community ownership and empowerment, and improved forest governance in the CHT.

Community and FD field interventions such as controlling *jhum* and illicit felling, developing fire control lines, women involvement through monthly discussions and meetings, and forest and biodiversity monitoring have had positive impact on forest health as evident from regenerating forests with abundant ground flora. The enhanced technological knowledge base of local community and leaders, and FD field staff is proving helpful in preparing and implementing management plans efficiently. The key findings of the study and biodiversity monitoring manual were disseminated amongst key stakeholders by organizing a workshop and several field consultations. The knowledge gathered in such orientations is used in developing, revising and field implementing management plans.

The mobilized and organized communities are conserving the forested micro-watersheds encompassing biodiversity and water sources after identification and demarcation of VCF boundaries achieved after resolving forestland conflicts and disputes. Not only they themselves have stopped unregulated forest extraction and *jhum* in the project VCF and RF areas, but the organized communities also are successfully obstructing outsiders engaged earlier in illicit forest felling and forestland encroachment activities. As a result, the project sites have started regenerating with the establishment of upcoming natural regeneration as evident from local consultations. These participatory forest management and community development achievements, unprecedented in the CHT, have instilled community empowerment and improved forest governance as evident from regenerating forests and reduced conflicts in and around the project VCFs.

Growing VCFs and RFs under the CHTWCA, as protected by local community, are increasingly sequestering carbon di oxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) from the atmosphere, thereby mitigating climate change by reducing greenhouse gases (GHG). The project VCFs and RFs will sequester, store and enhance carbon in the growing forests through avoided deforestation and forests degradation because of protection and improved management by local community and FD staff. Additionally, the project will generate alternative livelihoods options for local communities and conserve biodiversity in the project forests.

Diverse VCFs and RFs are contributing positively in enhanced ecosystem resilience and increased adaptive capacity of local community through co-benefits to neighboring communities. For instance, local communities in many VCF and RF areas are receiving perennial supply of water for their home use and for agriculture through streams and rivers that are rejuvenated as consequence of regenerating forest ecosystems. The project has in fact taken advantage of rejuvenated water streams by putting improved water supply through gravity flow systems as part of livelihood activities. Enhanced supply of bamboo and other NTFPs are being equitably shared by local community under the supervision of VCF management committees. These results are contributing in achieving the project objective of improving climate resilience and ecosystem.

Resilient livelihood interventions and skill development activities are leveraged and implemented during year 5 by using the GoB and DANIDA funds respectively for select villages around the project VCFs. Resilient livelihood and skill development for community stakeholders on climate change adaptation were implemented in the project sites through funds made available by the GoB and DANIDA respectively. During the reporting period 785 households, covering 4,188 participants, implemented small scale livelihood development activities, thereby reducing their forest dependency. Alternative income generating activities that were implemented in and around the project VCF and headwater RF areas after imparting skill development training through trained Facilitators included: vegetable cultivation, poultry rearing, goat rearing, pig rearing, and seasonal small businesses. Some families, who earlier used to collect fuelwood from neighboring VCFs, reduced their forest dependency by earning income from livelihood support provided under the project.

Resilient livelihoods, implemented by trained local community, have contributed in peoples' asset development (for example, their livestock and land including homesteads), enhanced community cohesion and climate change adaptive capacity. Strong focus is given on high female participation in resilient livelihoods and skill development as a result of which more women are participating in the protection and management of VCFs. Capacity development of local community and FD field staff has created trained resources locally, which will continue to be available even beyond the project period. For instance, many Livelihood Facilitators trained under the project are providing services, sometimes on payment, to local community even though the project supported livelihood activities have been completed. These achievements made under the project are contributing in meeting the IR 2 on improved, resilient livelihoods.

Community cohesion was enhanced when the local communities in and around the project RFs and VCFs worked together for improved forest management. The capacity of key grassroots stakeholders was enhanced through training imparted to community people and traditional leaders on climate change and resilient livelihoods. These participatory forest management achievements have instilled community empowerment while contributing in the improved forest governance in the CHT. As a plausible exit strategy, the sustainability of RF and VCF interventions is being ensured through technically empowered FD and the VCF Networks respectively. Several cross-cutting activities (gender sensitization, communication and outreach, public awareness and youth motivation, with special attention to indigenous community) were implemented as per the AWP for year 5 and revised MEL plan.

Key challenges faced during the project field implementation were successfully resolved during year 5. A major challenge to watershed management in the CHT has been the non-implementation of forestry interventions by FD under component 2 that focused on RF management activities. The field implementation of integrated watershed management in the CHT that focused on encouraging natural regeneration in headwater RFs was successfully field implemented by FD with technical assistance under the CHTWCA. FD achieved this milestone, in consultation with the CHT institutions, leaders and local community, after shared understanding was achieved on restoring headwater RFs by following an innovative and improvised integrated watershed management approach with focus on ANR. Despite the challenges the CHTWCA has been successful in improving sustainable and equitable

watershed management that will sustain biodiversity conservation and resilient livelihoods for increased income of local communities.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 LAND-USE ANALYSIS

Bangladesh is the world's biggest delta landscape situated between the foothills of the Himalayan massif and the Bay of Bengal and developed by the large amount of sediments deposited in their estuaries by three big rivers—the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna. The country in general and the Chattogram Hill Tracts (CHT) in particular is highly vulnerable to natural disasters due to the geographical location, monsoon, and hydrology including multiplicity of rivers and other water bodies. Nearly 90% of the country's total area is lowland, and the highlands including the CHT are in the foothills of Shillong Plateau having the world's highest rainfall. The CHT, therefore, drains out extensive amounts of rainwater to the Bay of Bengal, thereby creating water-induced disasters such as landslides and floods.

Flash floods occur due mainly to heavy rainfall and unplanned development. But the slope gradients of the landscape and vicinity to the Bay of Bengal favor a rapid disposal of flood water. Rivers and heavy rains erode soft beds of the CHT hills and resulting landslides cause severe damage to local community and the ecology. Heavy and sustained rainfall leads to increased risk to erosion due mainly to continuing forest degradation and deforestation. The disaster situation has of late been aggravated by deforestation, watershed and other land-use degradation, and unplanned and unsustainable human settlements developed by hill cutting, encroachments of waterbodies and other public lands, and leasing out of forest lands for monoculture of commercial crops and trees.

The CHT is in the south-eastern Bangladesh, comprising of the three hill districts: Khagrachari, Rangamati and Bandarban. It has a total area of 13,344 km<sup>2</sup> with an estimated population of 1.58 million<sup>1</sup>. The region is geographically distinct from plain land of Bangladesh and is formed from steep and rough terrain. The remoteness of villages along with poor infrastructure and facilities have impeded the socio-economic development of the region. In addition to Bengali population, there are eleven main indigenous communities in the CHT, including Bawm, Chak, Chakma, Khyang, Khumi, Lushai, Marma, Mro, Pangkhua, Tangchangya and Tripura. These communities speak their own distinct languages. The Chakmas, Marmas and Tripuras represent approximately 90 percent of the indigenous people in the CHT.

As the CHT is mainly hilly, it is interspersed with plain lands in the valleys, particularly along rivers and drainage channels. Of the three districts, Bandarban is the hilliest, followed by Rangamati and Khagrachari. The region is characterized by numerous rivers and streams, cultivated valleys, degraded forests and *jhum* (shifting cultivation). Upland hydrology is regulated by local rainfall and surface run-off through intricate networks of drainage valleys and channels. The region's economy is mainly agrarian and land-based primary sectors such as agriculture including *jhum*, forestry, homesteads, orchards and fisheries contribute substantially to the rural economy. The CHT land-use system is multipurpose with various land-use patterns evolving over a period of time such as favorable soil and hydrological conditions, rainfall and flooding, lack of capital and cultivable land, and surplus family labor.

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<sup>1</sup> Bangladesh Population and Housing Census, 2011

The CHT forests support multi-story biodiversity as part of the evergreen and semi-evergreen forests. However, the rain forests have become severely degraded mainly due to biotic pressure and poor land-use policies and management. These forests formed as important catchments of rivers and were so named as headwater Reserved Forests (RFs) after the river names (Kassalong, Reinkheong, Matamuhuri and Sangu RFs). Key significance of these forests lies in fulfilling the function of keeping the river/stream water at a steady level, of protecting the soils, and regulating the climate locally. Village Common Forests (VCFs) and other categories of non-reserved forests, in addition to their ecological functions, are important particularly for meeting the demands of local people and the region's economy. Homestead forestry is another important land use in the CHT and local community grows trees in their homesteads.

There are two main administrative systems for forest resource management, which operate in the CHT in parallel. The first, comprising RFs, is the responsibility of Forest Department (FD) whereas the second one is traditionally practiced by indigenous people as forest commons, often referred to as village common forests or *mouza* forests. According to the CHT Regulation of 1900, VCFs or *mouza* forests are under the management of the CHT traditional institutions—Circle Chiefs, Headmen and *Karbaries*, whereas according to the Hill District Council Act 1989 all forests except RFs come under the mandate of the three HDCs.

VCFs are community-managed forests, traditionally held and treated as forest commons. They serve as important ecosystems, rich in both flora and fauna biodiversity as evident from the findings of Flora and Fauna Study and are significant providers of forest products and services to neighboring communities. However, due to overexploitation of forest resources and insecure land tenure, the quantity and quality of VCFs has declined as their resources have degraded over time, in turn adversely impacting the livelihoods of dependent communities and decreasing services including water supply for household uses. Forest degradation created a major threat to sustaining natural ecosystems and biodiversity, including siltation of watershed streams and increased run-off causing flash floods and other water-induced disasters.

Indigenous communities have traditionally practiced *jhum* cultivation, a local form of 'shifting' or 'rotational' slash and burn cultivation. Of an estimated 364,000 acres of available cultivable land in the CHT, 27 percent is used for *jhum*, 20 percent is under plough cultivation, 18 percent is set aside for homesteads and 35 percent is used for plantation or left as fallow land. There has been poor use of appropriate farming practices for a range of reasons including lack of knowledge and skills, supply constraints, land shortages, financial limitation and poor access to markets. As a result, most of the communities located in the remotest parts of the CHT live in chronic poverty and with restricted access to services. Other development problems include a high degree of under-employment, low literacy rate and limited economic opportunities. The 2013 Household Survey (UNDP, 2014) conducted by the Chattogram Hill Tracts Development Facility (CHTDF) found that 74 percent households of the CHT live below upper poverty line and 52.4 percent households live below the lower poverty line, measured by following the direct calorie intake method.

An important objective of forest management in the CHT needs to be the conservation of soil and water so that the region's land use remains productive, maintaining a perennial vegetative

cover, necessary for fulfilling various environmental and socio-economic functions, besides reducing risk of water-induced disasters such as landslides and floods. Not only do remaining headwater RFs need to be managed based on sound silvicultural principles, but also degraded forests need to be restored with co-benefits to the local community participating in forest restoration based on a forest ecosystem approach. In addition, appropriate settlement and land-use conservation guidelines need to be formulated and implemented by gainfully involving local people. This will require leases of forest lands be stopped and hill cutting to be controlled and banned finally. The monoculture of trees including teak plantations will be controlled and *jhum* practices will be rationalized in the rapidly changing socio-ecological context.

Reduction of disasters is multifarious and active community participation is a must in controlling water-induced disasters through mainly by low-cost but labor-intensive vegetative measures. For this to happen local community should get co-benefits of their active participation in forest collaborative management activity. In addition to the livelihood activities and local employment opportunities generated during vegetative interventions, it is necessary to provide for land-based benefits to local participants responsible for the protection and improved management of identified landscapes of forest watersheds.

The amended Social Forestry Rules 2011 provide for benefits to participating local community who may be gainfully involved in the improved management and joint protection of identified forests and degraded watersheds, without taking recourse to clear felling. This is possible by distributing forest produce and other benefits to participants obtained as a result of carrying out appropriate silvicultural operations including cleaning, thinning and selective canopy opening required for encouraging natural regeneration through assisted natural regeneration (ANR) to come up and get established through joint protection and integrated watershed management.

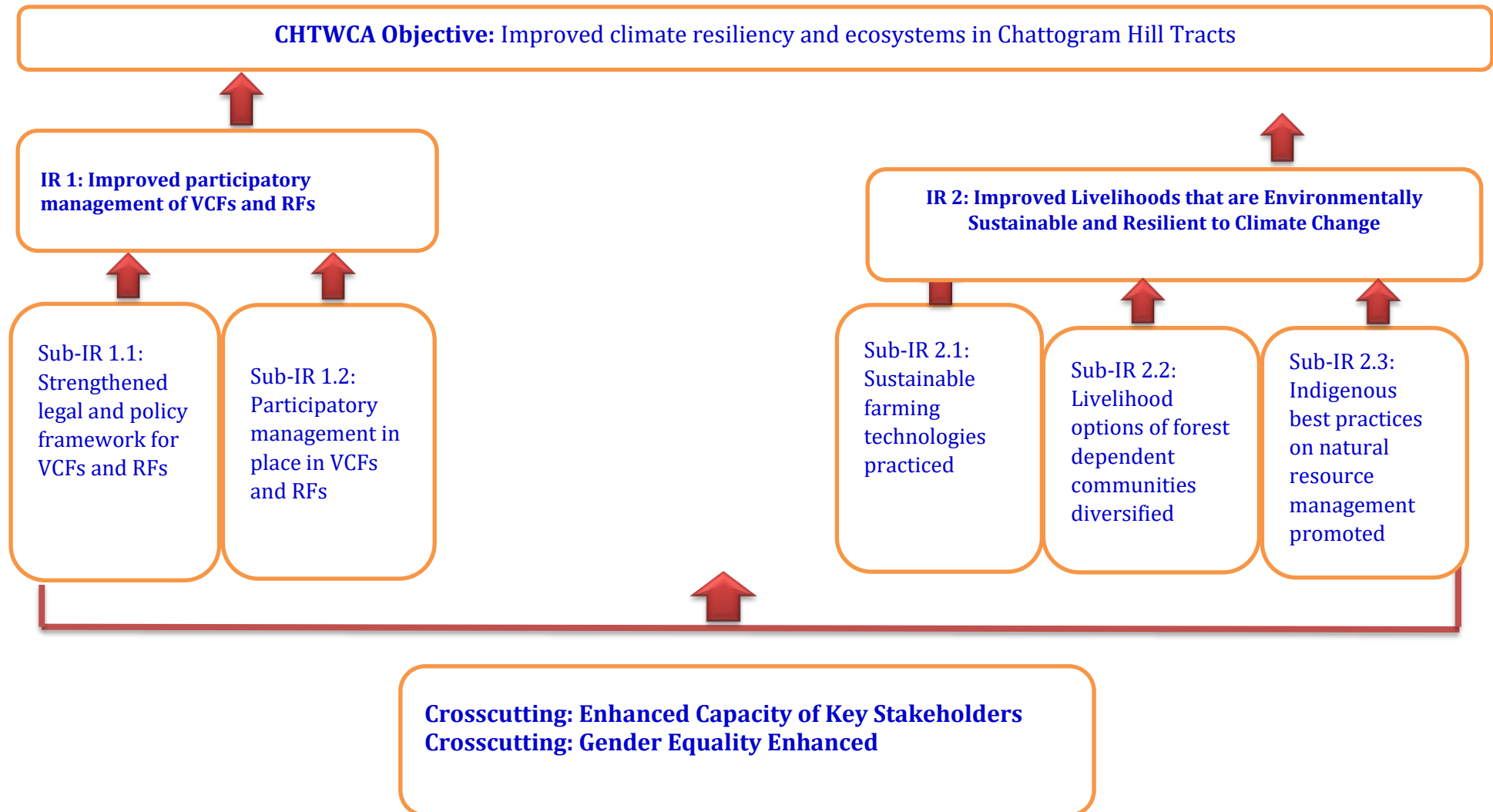
The identified watersheds can be regenerated and managed by following selection-cum-improvement silvicultural system applied with the objective of ensuring natural regeneration with co-benefits to local participants. Intermediate yields in terms of non-timber forest products and water yield because of participatory watershed management can also be allocated amongst the participants. Additionally, an awareness and outreach campaign need to be taken up for local people to follow sustainable hill land use practices, including sustainable farming, with active participation of local community.

Integrated watershed management is proved a suitable landscape approach with socio-economic and environmental co-benefits for reducing the risk of water-induced disasters in the CHT in view of its land-use, geographical, topographical and socio-economic situation. Developing active and gainful partnerships of the local community is, however, vital in addition to a participatory monitoring mechanism.

## **1.2 ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES**

The results framework of the CHTWCA is reproduced from the approved MEL Plan as below:

**Figure 1: CHTWCA Result Framework**



As stated above in Figure 1 the overall objective of the Chattogram Hill Tracts Watershed Co-Management Activity (CHTWCA) is to improve climate resiliency and ecosystems in the CHT. This objective is being achieved through the following two Intermediate Results (IRs) and two crosscutting results:

|  |
|--|
| <b>IR 1:</b> Improved participatory management of Village Common Forests and Reserved Forests          |
| <b>IR 2:</b> Improved livelihoods that are environmentally sustainable and resilient to climate change |
| <b>Crosscutting:</b> Enhanced Capacity of Key Stakeholders   |
| <b>Crosscutting:</b> Gender Equality Enhanced  |

The above-mentioned two IRs cover five Sub-IRs as shown in Figure 1.

### 1.3 ACTIVITY AREA

The activity intervention areas of the CHTWCA includes three hill districts (see Figure 1 below), namely Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagarchari that traditionally come under the three Circles namely Chakma Circle, Mong Circle and Bohmong Circle. Within these three districts, the project has carried out activities in 82 VCFs which fall under the following Upazilas: (i) Bandarban: Alikadam, Lama, Naikhyongchari, Rowangchhari, Ruma, and Thanchi (ii) Rangamati: Belaichari, Barkal, Juraichari, Langadu, Nanniarchar, Rajosthali, Rangamati Sadar, and Kaptai (iii) Khagrachari: Dighinala, Guimara, Khagrachari Sadar, Mahalchari, Laxmichari, Matrianga, Panchari and Ramgarh. During year five 28 new VCFs are covered whereas old 54 VCFs continued their activities in three districts.

Headwater RFs in 2 Forest Divisions (CHT South in Rangamati district and Lama Forest Division in Bandarban district) are covered by including Reinkheong and Kaptai headwater RFs in Rangamati district, and Matamuhuri headwater RFs in Bandarban district.



Figure 2: Three Districts covered under the CHTWCA



## 2. KEY Results Achieved with Major Activities Carried Out

After mobilizing and organizing local communities, management plans were prepared by VCF management committees for 28 new VCFs taken up during year 5. So now in total 82 management plans are under field implementation by the VCF management committees of 82 VCFs covered under the CHTWCA so far. The identification, demarcation and survey of 28 VCFs have been completed as part of management planning by local communities. The VCF Networks and management committees comprising community representatives and leaders are now available for identification, demarcation and management planning of 20 new VCFs to be covered next year based on the capacity developed and lessons learned during year 5 of the CHTWCA implementation. The field implementation of the VCF management plans by management committees under the guidance of respective Networks helped sustain the community development and empowerment. The capacity development of the VCF

management committees and Networks have continued through wide consultations, training and workshops.

The Institute of Forest and Environmental Sciences of the Chattogram University (IFESCU), after completing final reporting on the Floral and Faunal Stocktaking Study, prepared a biodiversity monitoring manual and conducted training to the members of VCF management committees on biodiversity monitoring. Four Networks of all the 314 VCFs, as identified under the CHTWCA, formed by holding exhaustive stakeholder consultations, continued their operations for strengthening VCF management by imparting guidance to their member VCF management committees. Technical training on climate change adaptation was completed for 1,686 VCF dependent people and traditional leaders.

The capacity development of 110 FD field staff on climate change and integrated watershed management was implemented by FD during year 5. Most of the FD participants have not had any training opportunity for nearly 20 years as FD was not able to implement any major forest development activity in the CHT RFs. The GoB approved Action Plan was field implemented by trained FD field staff for participatory management of the headwater RFs in 2 Forest Divisions of the CHT. The focus of field intervention in the project RFs was on integrated watershed management with low cost natural regeneration technology implemented in gainful partnerships of local community: In identified micro-watersheds local community was mobilized for forest protection and silvicultural operations including cleaning, stump dressing, weeding, soil and moisture conservation, seeds spraying, and enrichment planting of indigenous species in identified gaps were carried out by FD as part of assisted natural regeneration by involving local participants. Naturally occurring local species selected in consultation with the participants were included while raising nurseries for gap planting in identified degraded forests.

In over two decades FD thus achieved an important milestone by re-establishing FD's management through watershed management interventions in select headwater RFs covered under the CHTWCA. The breakthrough achieved formally under the USAID's CHTWCA in terms of all key stakeholders coming together to agree on and field implement the GoB approved Action Plan for watershed management is indeed very significant. The trained field staff of FD who implemented the Plan during the reporting period are indeed taking adequate preparations for implementing the Plan next year as well. They stand ready to extend their expertise and learning to other FD field staff of the CHT and beyond.

Resilient livelihood activities along with skill development training were implemented around select VCFs by leveraging funds from the GoB and DANIDA respectively. As part of Farmers Field Schools (FFS), Training of Trainers (TOT) was imparted on resilient livelihood to the field staff (as Master Trainers) of the three HDCs by the CHTWCA staff. The trained Master Trainers in turn provided livelihood skill development training to Livelihood Facilitators selected from communities. They finally trained local community people who were identified from the villages around the project VCFs. Based on grant making guidelines cash support of Tk. 6,000 per household was extended to select VCF stakeholders for implementing resilient livelihoods under GOB funds. The new skills thus acquired for practicing improved livelihood activities will continue to be useful locally even beyond the project period.

During year 5 the CHTWCA continued to focus on trust and peace building in the CHT by laying strong foundation by providing a framework mechanism under which different stakeholders with historical remorse and conflicts have come together by building consensus on restoring select headwater RFs and VCFs. Several cross-cutting activities (gender sensitization, communication and outreach, public awareness and youth motivation, with special attention to indigenous community) have been implemented as per the AWP for year 5 and the revised MEL plan.

Key stakeholders' consensus building for integrated watershed co-management in the headwater RFs was achieved by FD by consulting key CHT institutions, leaders and communities. Their suggestions and concerns (for instance, use of indigenous species and access to water sources) were taken on board while carrying out planned field interventions in the selected RFs. Field implementation of the approved Action Plan was thus smoothly done by trained field staff of FD with technical assistance provided under the CHTWCA. The sustainability of headwater RF and VCF interventions was ensured through technically empowered FD and the VCF Networks respectively.

As discussed further below specifically, significant achievements were made under each of the two Intermediate Results (IRs), sub-divided into five Sub-Immediate Results (Sub-IRs).

## **2.1 IR 1: IMPROVED PARTICIPATORY MANAGEMENT OF VCFs AND RFs**

New 28 VCFs were included under the CHTWCA in year 5 apart from the continuation of erstwhile 54 VCFs. Community-based management of 1,688 ha of VCFs and participatory management of 625 ha of headwater RFs was improved in year 5 through forestry interventions carried out in partnership with local communities. Additionally, existing 54 VCF

82 VCF management committees are managing their VCFs covering 5,884 ha with active participation of 156 paras/villages depends on VCFs.

Cumulatively, over 39,000 local people are benefited (4,188 in year 5), resulting in their reduced forest dependency.

management committees continued to strengthen management of their 4,196 ha of VCFs by enhancing their management capacity through learning by doing as part of management plan implementation. VCF management committees were formed, capacitated and operationalized for 28 new VCFs after mobilizing, organizing and training local communities around the selected VCFs. They prepared and implemented management plans developed after survey and mapping of 28 new VCFs.

Livelihood skill development training was imparted to community stakeholders through trained Livelihood Facilitators as part of FFS activities implemented with Danida funds. Field implementation of resilient livelihood activities (pig rearing, poultry rearing, goat rearing, improved vegetable cultivation,

mixed fruit gardening, and/or fisheries) was achieved through grants of Tk. 6,000 per household by using the GoB funds with cash transfers made through the three HDCs. Partner NGOs imparted capacity development training to the management committees of new 28 VCFs. They focused on the preparation and implementation of management plans, organization and financial management, and implementation of resilient income generation activities.

The member households of the project VCFs received financial support through HDCs for buying inputs and implemented their preferred livelihood activities by using training as imparted as part of FFS activities. As a result, members of VCF dependent communities/villages/paras were actively involved with livelihood and participatory forest management practices implemented in their communities as part of field implementation of VCF management plans.

1,686 local people trained on climate change adaptation.

Four VCF Networks in operation with their bylaws and processes.

During the reporting year the capacity of VCF dependent communities and their traditional leaders was enhanced on climate change adaptation by imparting training to 1,686 local people, with 902 female participants. As a result, 82 VCFs management committees, with the participation of para/village representatives, are implementing their VCF management plans including resilient livelihoods. The VCF management committees ensured that the plan field implementation followed a participatory approach focusing on community empowerment and improved governance. Based on the recommendations of the VCF management plans, the community people demarcated the VCF boundaries, installed boundary pillars, protected their VCFs and mitigated forest related conflicts locally.

Training was conducted for capacity development of 50 traditional leaders including VCF management committee members (with 10 women participants) on climate change adaptation and integrated watershed management. The trained community stakeholders are implementing the management plans for improved management of the project VCFs. For example, with the project support the local community of Bandorsing Para came forward to install a drinking water facility powered through solar energy. They are maintaining the water supply for 30 households who regularly collect water from 7 water collection points installed in and around the village. Consequently, the community action and empowerment around the water supply not only resulted in community development but their empowerment as well.

The social mobilization and organization of VCF communities was strengthened through management committees by holding regular monthly meetings and discussions in 82 VCFs. VCF boundary demarcation was carried out for 28 new VCFs through forest land conflict resolution by involving community leaders for enforcing community forest protection, and control of forest fires and *jhum*. Because of strong social mobilization and organization, not only the VCF members themselves are restrained their community people from uncontrolled forest use, they also are obstructed outsiders from entering the demarcated VCFs for extracting unauthorized forest produce. As a result, local communities are better organized, more aware and are protecting their VCFs against illicit removals, forest fires, grazing and *jhum*. The positive result is seen from regenerating forests and improved community cohesion in the project VCF areas.

Over 1,150 people were reached (including 35% females) out at different levels through awareness raising activities including observing the World Environment Day, organizing rallies and discussions, and engaging children and stakeholders in forestry, climate change and watershed issues. In total 1,910 promotional materials were printed and distributed amongst stakeholders during the reporting period.

Main findings of the study entitled "Floral and Faunal Diversity Baseline Assessment in the VCFs of Chittagong Hill Tracts" and biodiversity monitoring manual as prepared by the IFESCU were disseminated for wider field use in a regional workshop and local consultations conducted for the stakeholders. The findings of the study and the monitoring manual are used in revising existing VCF management plans and for preparing new management plans. Trained representatives of VCFs are employing biodiversity monitoring tools for assessing biodiversity health of their VCFs as part of their constitution and management guidelines, drafted by management committees after holding wide discussions with the stakeholders.

Four batches of 110 FD field staff, comprising Divisional Forest Officers, Assistant Conservator of Forests, Forest Range Officers, Foresters and Forest Guards, were trained on Climate Change and Integrated Watershed Management in two-day training sessions organized by FD at Forestry Development and Training Centre, Kaptai. Resource persons were invited from the IFESCU and senior management of FD with relevant field experience. The trained FD field staff implemented the approved Action Plan for the headwater RFs in two Forest Divisions. In addition, the technical skills learnt in integrated watershed management is helping the FD field staff to implement improved forest management practices in other hill forests. Because of the project advocacy, integrated watershed management in the CHT has been adopted in the updated Forestry Master Plan and so the technical skills learnt by the FD field staff will be useful in future forestry works as well.

Specific activities carried out and key results achieved thereof under each of the two Sub-IRs are discussed further as below:

### **2.1.1 Sub-IR 1.1: Strengthened legal and policy framework for Village Common Forests and Reserved Forests**

Regular meetings were held with the MoCHTA, FD, CHTRC, Hill District Council (HDCs), Circles and other key stakeholders on strengthening legal and policy framework both for the participatory management of the VCFs and RFs in the CHT. For instance, during the reporting period, 12 policy consultations and dialogues were conducted with VCF representatives, traditional leaders, and local stakeholders to reach consensus and strengthen VCF management committees and networks. Main purpose of the VCF policy consultations was to strengthen sustainable management of VCFs by resolving VCF land conflicts and improving their community management. Many meetings were held with senior officials of the Forest Department, including the CCF, the Project Coordinator, and the Conservator and Divisional Forest Officers of the CHT.

Technical meetings and consultations were arranged with FD for the field implementation of the GoB approved Action Plan. Discussions were held with local stakeholders for building consensus on technical approaches suitable for participatory forest management in the CHT. The consensus building was necessary on sound technical practices and approaches to be implemented in the headwater RFs as part of the approved Action Plan field implementation. Additionally, policy advocacy was done with FD on watershed management to be included in

updated Forestry Master Plan. As a result, integrated watershed management approach has been included in the Forestry Master Plan developed by FD for the period 2017-35.

By following their written constitution, the four VCF networks are operating efficiently in active participation of local traditional leaders and communities and by following the written constitution. They are providing guidance and support to local communities and VCF management committees on the improved management of the VCFs. Main aims of the VCF Networks are to demarcate and protect the VCFs as managed by local communities, and to provide support to the VCF management committees in biodiversity conservation and environmental amelioration in the CHT.

### **Success Story: 1**

#### **Participatory Management of Reserved Forests in the Chattogram Hill Tracts**

The forests in the Chattogram Hill Tracts cover more than 40% of the country's forests and comprise significant biodiversity as part of tropical evergreen and semi-evergreen forest types. The Reserved Forests, constituting nearly one-quarter of the total CHT area and many of them declared as RFs during British period, are sources of important rivers and were in past so managed as headwater RFs with focus on ecosystem and conservation objectives. However, over the years, most of the RFs have degraded mainly due to biotic pressure and prevailing mistrust between local community and Forest Department, with declining ecosystem services and products, that jeopardized ecological and food security. The Forest Department, over the past two decades, was not able to make any breakthrough in managing its designated RF areas by partnering with local communities in the CHT.

The conflict started to reduce since 2017 under the USAID supported CHTWCA Forest Department with technical support from the project staff developed an Action Plan on integrated watershed management of headwater RFs with a focus on assisted natural regeneration (ANR). The Plan was approved in two high level meetings convened by the Prime Minister Office and attended by key CHT institutions and leaders, and high officials of the MOCHTA, MOEF&CC and Forest Department. During 2018 the Forest Department in partnership with local people successfully implemented the Action Plan in over 625 ha of headwater RFs in the CHT South and Lama Forest Divisions.

The Forest Department identified mostly degraded watersheds in select headwater RFs with the objective of bringing back forest cover, and conserve forest and watersheds through ANR in participation of the local communities. The communities were consulted on the needs of protection of forests and watersheds, community livelihood concerns and ANR approach that significantly differed from traditional extension forestry. The field officials of FD received training and orientation on ANR, watersheds management and participatory forest conservation under the project. Then the Forest Department organized community level consultations and local stakeholder training on forest conservation through ANR, watersheds management and climate change issues. Finally, the Forest Department developed site plans with the local communities with focus on site selection, selection of local species, development of nurseries, enrichment plantation and a community monitoring system.



The watershed management activities in the CHT South Forest Division, Rangamati covered two Forest Ranges: Allekhyong Range and Kaptai Range. During year 5 of the project



Cisha Marama Para ANR Site, Alekhyong Range, Belaichari, Rangamati District

intervention, a total of 425 hectares of denuded forests have been brought under ANR and improved, participatory silvicultural practices in the CHT South Forest Division. More than 170,000 seedlings of local importance have been planted under enrichment plantations, including indigenous plant species such as *Gorjon*, *Chapalish*, *Boilam*, *Dhakijam*, *Koroi*, *Kathal*, *Tetul*, *Amloki*, *Horitoki*, *Bohera*, *Nim*, *Gamar*, and *Bamboo*. The ANR and enrichment plantation activities were carried out by the local communities who were also entrusted with the ownership of regular monitoring.

During a field visit by the project staff the local Headman at Cisha Para, Farua commented:

*"Together with Forest Department we identified the ANR forest area. My community members did the enrichment plantation works and other field activities. We see good benefits in protecting the forests and biodiversity in our area. The forest supports our livelihood by supplying non-timber forest products such as bamboo and food stuff, keep our chara and streams alive to provide water supply*

*for community use. We are looking after our ANR sites and nearby forests. We are regularly monitoring against illegal activities within the project area. We are happy to work under this participatory project".*



Assisted natural regeneration and enrichment plantation in CHT South Forest Division

The Divisional Forest Officer, Md. Taufiqul Islam of the CHT South Forest Division was very jubilant with the field success of the participatory watershed management interventions and

commented, “This partnership with UNDP under USAID supported CHTWCA is very significant for us as UNDP over the period has earned good trust with the local communities and that helped us to get easy access to and successfully engage communities with FD field activities. As a pilot project this success serves as a milestone breakthrough for Forest Department to implement conservation initiatives in our RFs. Protection and development of the CHT’s RFs is very crucial for environment, biodiversity, and river systems and watersheds as they constitute the headwater sources of important rivers. We need further support from USAID/UNDP to scale up this participatory forestry intervention in all RF areas located throughout the CHT. I am very optimistic about success and impact of this initiative and hope that through concerted efforts by Forest Department and USAID/UNDP and other Donors, we can protect the CHT’s forests, watersheds, and biodiversity with positive contributions to community development and addressing climate change issues in Bangladesh”.

### 2.1.2 Sub-IR 1.2: Participatory management in place in Village Common Forests and Reserved Forests

Improved management of the targeted VCFs through 82 VCF management committees has ensured the sustainability of community forests and encompassing water bodies, which are vital for the enhanced productivity of agriculture and homesteads as evident from many examples of water supply brought to villages through gravity flow systems developed under the project. The VCF management committees, formed by following a set criteria (see Annex 2), have been effective in controlling illicit felling in the 82 VCFs under the CHTWCA by controlling their access from outsiders along with convincing fellow villagers about the co-benefits of forest conservation (example: such as water sources).

Since the establishment of VCF management committees the forests have improved as brought out during the field works carried for the Flora and Fauna Study. This accomplishment was possible due to setting of boundaries and pillar posting after resolving conflicts through wide consultations. The committees are monitoring the use of forest resources by villagers by following rules and guidelines to improve and sustain forest health. The rules include: ban on



After VCF boundary demarcation, community people engaged with VCF mapping & validation exercises

hunting for wildlife, ban on cutting trees, harvest bamboo only as per decision of the committee with maximum of 150 bamboos supplied per family, and at minimum waiting for 3 years after the harvest to let the bamboo stock replenish. As a result, the forests have started regenerating and water streams originating thereof have more flow of water which they are using for the

developing water sources for their domestic use.



In a regional workshop and in local consultations biodiversity monitoring guidelines prepared as per the Biodiversity Manual for assessing forest health have been disseminated amongst stakeholders along with main lessons learned so far from CHTWCA field implementation. The trained VCF members are monitoring the forest health of their VCFs.



VCF members inspecting their forests

A group of 12 members of VCF management committees and Networks from Khagrachari district have learned successful approaches after taking an exposure visit to VCFs in Rangamati district.

### **Success Story: 2**

#### **Improved Environmental Governance of Village Common Forests**

The Village Common Forest is an important category of forest ecosystems in the Chattogram Hill Tracts. The VCFs, also named locally as para ban or mauza forests, are broadly constituents of Mouza areas, and so formally fall under the management of Hill District Councils (HDCs) as per the relevant provisions of the prevailing laws (HDC Act; CHT Regulation, 1900). In popular Government parlance, however, the Mouza forests constitute the so called Unclassed State Forests which cover nearly one-quarter of the country's total forest area. The VCFs are a kind of common property forest resources managed by a community or a group of communities based on customary rights under traditional institutions such as village Karbari or Mouza Headman. Due to traditional management systems in practice a key challenge resolved during the project year 5 related to community management planning of 28 VCFs in the CHT after boundary demarcation and pillar posting, survey and mapping after resolution of boundary conflicts and disputes.

An example is presented as success story from Ghilatali VCF under Jurachari Upazila of Rangamati. The local community started preserving this VCF from 1980s under the mentorship

of the village Karbari. Following them, a neighboring community from Bhakko Ghona para also started preserving a patch of common forests located next to Ghilatali VCF. But during 2003-2004, the Bhakko Ghona community dismantled their VCF and divided the forests into individual plots.

Encouraged by this disturbing event, some members of the Ghilatali community also attempted to convert the VCF into individual plantation plots. But the Karbari did not relent to their demands and continued his efforts to mobilize local community for conserving the VCF. The community in the meantime got divided into two groups – one of the two factions in favor of keeping the VCF while the other in favor of converting the forest patch into private plots.

In the words of Village Karbari, Anil Chakma: *"The tussle over the VCF treated as a common forest resource pool vs individual property continued for long. As a Karbari I was under huge pressure, but I kept my cool and stuck to my guns. I kept on motivating the local community for the VCF conservation, its collective management, and community benefits of preserving the VCF. I made frequent references about regular efforts as made by Raja Devashish Roy for VCF conservation. Finally, I gained the required strength and confidence after this VCF was selected in early 2018 under the CHTWCA for its community-based management."*

Over the years, the para grew in size, finally extending into two paras that started contesting claims over the community management and ownership of the VCF. As a result, a parcel of the VCF area was converted into private woodlots. But through the project interventions focusing on community mobilization and organization, the communities of two paras united again to revive the old VCF by combining the private woodlot parcels with the VCF.

A new management committee was formed which identified potential solutions for the VCF related conflicts with the help of a PRA map. Local community deliberated upon in community meetings for consensus building and conflict resolution around boundary demarcation and mapping.



Sharing of VCF maps and guidelines (top) with community members (bottom) at Ghilatali VCF, Jurachari Upazila

The VCF management committee formulated community management guidelines including resource extraction rule, community saving, and ban on stone extraction. The community enforcement of such conservation measures protected the VCF from further degradation and over-exploitation because of which ground flora started regenerating and *charas* and streams are rejuvenating.

The Ghilatali VCF, until recently on the verge of forest degradation and deforestation, has started regenerating with timely community focused interventions under the CHTWCA. Echoing the members of the VCF management committee, the general secretary reiterated, *"We have resolved our VCF related conflicts through consensus and have agreed on VCF management as prepared by ourselves for field implementation to serve common interests of all the surrounding communities. We are hopeful to conserve the VCF and handover well-preserved natural resources to our next generation"*.

Climate change adaptation and integrated watershed management training was implemented by partner NGOs for capacity development of 1,686 VCF stakeholders including management committee members and traditional leaders (with 902 women participants). The acquired skills and knowledge are being used by community people in the improved management of the VCFs, but also in managing assets in their own homesteads and surroundings.

The training on climate change adaptation contributed in improved knowledge and skills on adaptation and mitigation, disaster management, climate vulnerability, weather and climate, impact of climate change, climate change and gender, watersheds and forests, and relation of climate change and disasters. But no formal assessments have been done on assessing knowledge improvements. The trained FD field staff are using their improved knowledge base in the field implementation of the Action Plan. The trained community people are using their skills in livelihood implementation in their homesteads and farms.





Training on climate change adaptation, and monitoring and reporting for the project staff

In total 308 VCF dependent farmers received training on sustainable farming and as a result were involved with improved land-based farming practices such as broody hen management, farmyard manure preparation and use, improved management of fruit trees with high productivity, and improved pig rearing practices with good returns. As a consequence of the capacity development training, 82 VCF management committees are field implementing their VCF management plans, covering 5,884 ha of forests under improved VCF management. The trained participants have been sharing their learning and skills in their regular VCF meetings and raising community awareness on climate change and adaptation issues.

In year 5 the Forest Department implemented participatory forest management in select headwater RFs of the CHT. For this several technical discussions were held with the CCF and other senior FD officials, both at the headquarters and at field levels, in addition to holding extensive consultations with the CHT leaders and institutions. The existing Kaptai co-management organizations comprising co-management councils and committees carried out their routine activities for the conservation of Kaptai National Park.



Forest Department training inauguration by National Project Manager, SID-CHT, UNDP

In total 110 FD field staff (Divisional Forest Officers, Assistant Conservator of Forests, Forest Range Officers, Foresters and Forest Guards) were trained on climate change adaptation and integrated watershed management. The training was organized by FD with technical support from CHTWCA within the context of restoring headwater RFs through assisted natural regeneration in the CHT forests being impacted by climate change. The training overview aimed to create resilient forest ecosystems and watershed conservation to combat climate change and ensuring resilient livelihoods. The training was

organized at Forestry Development and Training Centre of FD at Kaptai in Rangamati district. The trained FD field staff implemented the approved Action Plan for the headwater RFs of two

Forest Divisions, apart from applying acquired skills in their regular FD activities. The draft Integrated Watershed Management Plan (IWMP) was updated and submitted to FD for finalization.

## **2.2 IR 2: IMPROVED LIVELIHOODS THAT ARE ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT TO CLIMATE CHANGE**

82 VCF management committees are managing their VCFs in participation of local communities from 156 paras/villages

5,884 ha of VCFs and 625 ha of RFs are under improved NRM

Cumulatively over 39,000 (4,188 in year 5) forest dependent people are brought under livelihood development initiatives in and around the VCFs and RFs.

During the reporting period, resilient livelihood support and skill development training were leveraged and implemented through financial support from the GoB and Danida respectively. VCF dependent communities were identified by the three PNGOs and cash grant of Tk. 6,000 per household was distributed through HDCs for implementing their preferred livelihoods. Relevant skill development training was imparted through trained Livelihood Facilitators as part of Farmers Field School (FFS).

VCF management committees and communities thus enhanced their management capacity by participating in different training and their engagement with livelihood development activities. As a result, community people were able to identify and implement their preferred livelihood interventions for their welfare and community development.

During the reporting period 785 households, covering 4,188 participants, were involved with small scale livelihood development activities from the GOB funds. The additional income so generated is reducing their dependence on neighboring forests as seen from reduced extraction of fuelwood from neighboring VCFs. For instance, Ms. Loimoti Tripura of Simana Para, who along with her husband used to collect fuelwood from neighboring forests for sale, has stopped fuelwood extraction. Her household income increased as she was supported under the project by purchasing goats as a means of livelihood.

Implemented alternative income generating activities included vegetable cultivation, poultry rearing, goat rearing, pig rearing, and seasonal small businesses. Community discussions have revealed increased income and favorable impact on family wellbeing. For example, the community previously used a traditional method of poultry rearing, but with use of hatching pan they have reported receiving more production which they use for their subsistence consumption but also for sale with higher family income.

The three HDCs were engaged in on-farm livelihood activities through FFS implemented in and around the project VCFs with DANIDA funds. The staff of the three HDCs were trained on on-farm activities as part of TOT imparted to Master Trainers. They provided need-based skill development training to Livelihood Facilitators selected from the local community. Finally, community people were trained by Livelihood Facilitators with focus on increasing farm production, thereby enhancing income earning opportunities of the CHT communities. Key results as achieved under each of the three Sub-IRs are further discussed below.

### 2.2.1 SUB-IR 2.1: SUSTAINABLE FARMING TECHNOLOGIES PRACTICED

TOTs were imparted to the HDC staff on sustainable farming technologies as part of FFS. In total 308 farmers were trained by Livelihood Facilitators on sustainable farming technologies. As a result, the trained farmers are applying the learning while practicing cultivation in their farms around the VCFs and RFs. They are also sharing their learnings with other people from their neighboring communities. Some of the applied farm practices include preparation and application of farmyard manure in their homesteads and farms, vaccination of livestock, insect control, hand hold breeding practices for vegetable cultivation, and better harvesting and storage methods. Improved farming practices are contributing in the conservation of neighboring forests by reducing forest dependency (see some examples of alternative income generating livelihood activities as below).



VCF community people involved with various income generating activities

### 2.2.2 SUB-IR 2.2: LIVELIHOOD OPTIONS OF FOREST DEPENDENT COMMUNITIES DIVERSIFIED

The VCF dependent communities/paras were covered under the livelihood development initiatives as per the livelihood implementation guidelines. In this reporting period, 52 VCF dependent communities have received livelihood development support. Over 4,188 local people received livelihood development grant support. VCF dependent communities identified and implemented diversified income generation activities.



Livelihood activities implemented during the reporting period include pig rearing, poultry rearing, mixed fruits gardening, etc. The beneficiary and activity details available as part of household level trackers and community focus group discussions indicate positive impact on the peoples' lives and livelihoods. The training imparted to the beneficiaries by the trained Livelihood Facilitators of the partner NGOs has built sustainability as the learned knowledge, aptitude and skills will continue to be used even after the livelihood activity is completed.

Ms. Riten Chakma of Na Bhanga village in Barkal Upazila of Rangamati was supported under the CHTWCA for buying and rearing goats. As the goats multiplied she earned Tk. 13,000 by selling goats over a period of one and half year. She still has 8 goats including baby goats with estimated value of Tk. 20,000. Ms. Shefalika Chakma of Ranjit Para of Langudu Upazila with project support bought and reared pigs. After rearing she sold pigs for Tk. 18,000. She utilized her income for buying a calf and two piglets, apart from paying school fees of her son.

Livelihood Volunteers and Farmer Facilitators trained by the CHTWCA technical staff as local resource base continue to make positive impact in the lives of the VCF communities by imparting hands on livelihood skill development training and related demonstrations. Currently, there are 120 Livelihood Volunteers/Farmer Facilitators have been trained under DANIDA supported project. The assigned Livelihood Volunteers/Farmer Facilitators in VCF communities continue to provide training and relevant services to farmers in VCF communities of CHTWCA.



Community water facilities developed by channeling chara/stream originating from Ranjit Para VCF, Langadu Upazila

### **2.2.3 Sub-IR 2.3: Indigenous best practices on natural resource management promoted**

Several NRM promotion activities were organized under the project for the CHT institutions, VCF communities and their Networks, traditional leaders and community people through various awareness development events. This included World Environment Day and distribution of printing materials with messages on 'biodiversity conservation for livelihoods'. With the project support, 1,910 printing materials and displays were developed and distributed/installed. In total 1,165 people were reached out directly whereas 4,660 people

benefited indirectly as reported by the partner NGOs in their progress reports and maintained in the project trackers.



#### Awareness raising on sustainable natural resource management

Indigenous best NRM practices as promoted by the project included earmarking and conserving at least one VCF in each *mauza*, convincing Karbaries and Headmen to designate more forest areas as VCFs for community use, forest land conflict resolution through participatory approach, water conservation through improved management of VCFs, community use of water originating from VCFs and other forests, improved bamboo culm and clump management, gap planting, bamboo rhizome collection and planting along streams and *charas*, community patrolling and obstructing entry of outsiders in their neighboring forests and farming fields, and sustainable management of non-timber forest products.



#### Local community patrolling their village common forests



### **3. ANALYSES OF KEY RESULTS, OBJECTIVES AND CHALLENGES**

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#### **3.1 Key Results**

Despite some challenges as analyzed in this section, notable progress was made during year 5 in achieving the results by carrying out project activities for meeting the project objectives. Forest management has not been sustainably practiced in the CHT for more than two decades due mainly to continuation of land-use conflicts even after the Peace Accord was signed and partially implemented. Successful implementation of the CHTWCA with financial support from USAID has resulted in positive changes both at the community and FD levels, leading to community trust building with reduced forest related conflicts. Over the period of 5 years of the CHTWCA implementation, participatory forest management has been initiated and mainstreamed both for VCFs and RFs of the CHT by developing suitable institutions, trained field staff and communities, required guidelines and frameworks, management planning and tools, and successful field pilots. After consolidating the gains in the final year of the CHTWCA, the participatory forest management as field demonstrated under the CHTWCA can be upscaled in the CHT.

Institutional coordination on participatory forest management has improved as a result of high level inter-ministerial and CHT institutions meetings as convened by the PMO. Forest Department presented the Action Plan in these meetings for reaching stakeholders consensus and accordingly the Actions Plan, as prepared based on the draft Integrated Watershed Management Plan, was approved by the GOB. In year 5 FD has field implemented the Plan successfully in select headwater RFs of the CHT. Technical training imparted to 204 forest officials (94 staff in year 4 and 110 in year 5) on integrated watershed management and climate change has resulted in their enhanced capacity to implement integrated watershed management including assisted natural regeneration interventions for restoring degraded RFs. Successful field implementation of the Action Plan focusing on participatory watershed management with ANR has instilled renewed confidence and capacity amongst the FD field staff with practical experience and lessons.

The FD while agreeing to and initiating participatory forest management in the headwater RFs has adopted a paradigm shift in the CHT forest governance. For this the project technical staff held a number of intensive discussions with the CCF and other senior FD officials, both at the headquarters and at field levels, in addition to holding extensive consultations with the CHT leaders and institutions. The strengthened co-management organizations of Kaptai are playing active role in biodiversity conservation by carrying out assigned responsibilities as per the GOB approved Co-Management Rules, 2018. Relevant aspects of participatory watershed management have been included in updated 20-year forestry master plan as developed by FD during 2017-18.

Community management of the 102 VCFs in particular and of all the 314 VCFs in general has been for the first time formalized by covering them under four VCF Networks working in the three districts of the CHT. The mainstreaming is further strengthened through social mobilization and organization of local communities in terms of VCF management committees for 28 new VCFs, in addition to 54 VCFs covered up to year 4. Unparalleled in the CHT history

as implemented under the project for the first time, VCF demarcation, survey, mapping and management planning, and the assessment of flora and fauna are important outcomes achieved under the leadership of the newly formed VCF management committees and Networks.

The mobilized and organized communities are conserving the forested micro-watersheds encompassing biodiversity and water sources after identification and demarcation of VCF boundaries achieved after resolving forestland conflicts and disputes. Not only they themselves have stopped unregulated forest extraction and *jhum* in VCF areas, but the organized communities also are successfully obstructing outsiders engaged earlier in illicit forest felling and forestland encroachment activities. As a result, the project VCFs have started regenerating with the establishment of upcoming natural regeneration as evident from local consultations and the findings of the flora and fauna study.

Natural regeneration in the CHT forests including RFs and VCFs, as characterized by good rainfall and suitable edaphic conditions, comes up rather well, but could not get established (seedlings/saplings above breast height) due mainly to heavy biotic interference in the erstwhile unmanaged forests. With improved RF and VCF management as brought by the organized communities, the adverse situation has started changing in the project forest areas as evident from profuse ground flora that has come up of late. With enhanced forest protection the established natural regeneration will over the period graduate to middle story and then finally forming top canopy with valuable forest/tree assets.

Improved silvicultural management of the forests protected by local community will be needed after natural regeneration is established in the form of saplings, poles and trees. This will involve carrying out silvicultural operations including cleaning, stump dressing, coppicing, stool thinning, forest fire control measures, and canopy opening needed for further encouraging natural regeneration. All the harvests of forest produce so obtained as by-product of assisting natural regeneration will be equitably distributed amongst the community rendering their free labor for forest protection.

Growing VCFs and RFs under the CHTWCA, as managed by local community, are increasingly sequestering carbon di oxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) from the atmosphere, thereby mitigating climate change by reducing greenhouse gases (GHG). Although no GHG assessments have been done under the project, the approximations of GHG reductions can be taken as proxy from the nearby forests for which detailed study was done under USAID supported Integrated Protected Area Co-Management Project (IPAC). The project VCFs and RFs will sequester, store and enhance carbon in the growing forests through avoided deforestation and forests degradation as a result of protection and improved management by local community. Additionally, the project will generate alternative livelihoods options for local communities and conserve biodiversity in the project forests.

Indeed climate change mitigation potential of the improved VCF and RF management is quite substantial : Under USAID supported IPAC a study (Bangladesh REDD + ARR Protected Areas Project) was conducted during 2012-13 to estimate carbon mitigation potential in the neighboring forests of Dudupukria-Dhopachari, Fasiakhali, Medhkachpia, Sitakunda and Teknaf protected areas which being nearby located have evergreen and semi-evergreen forests similar to the CHT. Annual carbon di oxide stock change per ha was estimated as 6,462 tCO<sub>2</sub>e based on the estimations of additionality and baseline carbon stocks: This figure when

multiplied by the forest area coverage of 6,509 ha brought so far under the project interventions gives a substantial estimate.

Diverse and growing VCFs and RFs are contributing positively in enhanced ecosystem resilience and increased adaptive capacity of local community through co-benefits to neighboring communities. For instance, local communities in many VCF and RF areas are receiving perennial supply of water for their home use and for agriculture through streams and rivers that are rejuvenated as a result of regenerating forest ecosystems. The project has in fact taken advantage of rejuvenated water streams by putting improved water supply through gravity flow systems as part of livelihood activities. Enhanced supply of bamboo and other NTFPs are being equitably shared by local community. These results are contributing in achieving the project objective of improving climate resilience and ecosystem.

Resilient livelihoods, implemented by trained local community, have contributed in peoples' asset development and enhanced community cohesion and climate adaptive capacity. Strong focus is given on resilient livelihoods and skill development with high female participation. Capacity development of local community and FD field staff has created trained resources locally, which will continue to be available even beyond the project period. For instance, many Livelihood Facilitators trained under the project are providing services to local community even though livelihood activities have been completed. These achievements made under the project are contributing in meeting the IR 2 on improved, resilient livelihoods.

The community cohesion was enhanced when the local communities in and around the project RFs and VCFs worked together for improved forest management. The capacity of key grassroots stakeholders was enhanced through training imparted to traditional leaders on climate change and resilient livelihoods. These participatory forest management achievements have instilled community empowerment while contributing in the improved forest governance in the CHT. As a plausible exit strategy, the sustainability of RF and VCF interventions is being ensured through technically empowered FD and the VCF Networks respectively.

The CHTWCA has thus been successful in improving sustainable and equitable watershed management that will sustain biodiversity conservation and resilient livelihoods for increased income of local communities. Based on the following forestry hypotheses developed for the CHTWCA, the positive achievements are contributing in meeting the project results and objectives:

*If degrading watersheds of the CHT, comprising forests and protected areas and their encompassing biodiversity, agriculture including jhum, and water bodies are restored by gainfully involving FD field staff, and local people through resilient economic opportunities and skill development; resulting in restored forest and water ecosystems with improved productivity, resilient livelihoods, and skilled local people and FD staff; then the ecosystem products and services will be available to skilled local people to improve their lives and livelihoods, that increase peoples' income and also reduce their dependency on forest resources; this will in turn promote resilient, sustainable and equitable natural resource management that is improving watersheds, forests and biodiversity, and diversified livelihoods with increased income for socio-economic well-being of local people.*

### **3.2 Meeting the SID-CHT Objectives**

Working within the Joint United Nations Programmatic Framework (2015-20) the overall objective of the SID-CHT is to strengthen the capacity of the CHT population to shape and make decisions that impact on their lives. Within this overall objective three specific objectives which are being achieved by implementing the SID-CHT are to:

1. Strengthen community land, resource and livelihood management,
2. Increase participation and influence to shape decision-making, and
3. Strengthen democratic governance with responsive institutions and effective services.

Improved participatory management of VCFs and RFs as being achieved under the CHTWCA under IR 1 has contributed in strengthening community-based village common forestland management, and participatory forest resource management in the project VCFs and RFs and their associated watersheds. Improved resilient livelihoods as implemented under IR 2 in the villages/paras located in and around the project RFs and VCFs has contributed in income generation of local people and thereby reducing community dependency on nearby forests for exploitative and unsustainable harvesting of forest produce. Participatory management of VCFs and RFs in partnerships of the CHT institutions, leaders and communities is resulting in strengthening of democratic governance with increased peoples' participation and shared decision-making on natural resource management in the CHT.

### **3.3 Challenges and Risks**

A major challenge to watershed management in the CHT has been the non-implementation of RF management activities due to lack of adequate consultations and consensus building amongst the MOEF&CC and FD, and the CHT institutions and leaders. Because of several technical and policy level consultations held with FD, MOEF, MoCHTA, CHTRC, HDCs, USAID and UNDP, a shared understanding was formally achieved on restoring headwater RFs in partnerships with the CHT institutions and communities by following an innovative and improvised integrated watershed management approach with focus on assisted natural regeneration. An Action Plan agreed to and approved by the GOB has been field implemented by FD during the reporting period by covering 625 ha in CHT (North) and Lama Forest Divisions. The DFOs, Bandarban and CHT (North) Forest Divisions commented that they could not implement field activities mainly due to disturbances related to Rohingya and upcoming elections in and around the Sangu RF and Kassalong RF respectively.

The post conflict situation of the CHT and the presence of multiple institutions and leaders, often with overlapping roles and responsibilities, may give rise to risks. There have been some untoward law and order situations recently and some serious political incidents including different political factions engaged in serious rivalry and fighting. The project has in year 5 managed to remain least affected and planned activities have continued. The upcoming national elections and ensuing political situation may, however, create some uncertainties during the year 6 of the project implementation. Negotiations on the implementation of the Peace Accord may also introduce strikes and unrest in the CHT, apart from natural disasters such as floods and landslides to which the CHT is particularly exposed.

#### 4. ACTIVITY VISIBILITY AND COMMUNICATION

Based on the UNDP visibility guidelines, the project continued to utilize project communications and visibility materials to promote sustainable forestry and integrated watershed management while raising simultaneously the USAID visibility. Different activities of the project with their results were periodically uploaded (see examples as below) on the CHTDF website for wider circulation and sharing of the project achievements. This was done in accordance with the CHTWCA Communications Strategy, which sets out a pathway for utilizing communication as a platform for supporting project outcomes. In this reporting period different kinds of visibility materials were produced: In total 1910 promotional materials, including t-shirts and caps, VCF maps, Newsletter, training and workshops banners/materials, were printed with the USAID logo. USAID branding and marking guidelines will be followed meticulously. Samples of some of the promotional materials are reproduced and the project in future will ensure that standard USAID branding and marking guidelines are followed meticulously.



News source: <http://epaper.samakal.com/nogor-edition/2018-03-05/11>







## **5. CROSSCUTTING ACTIVITIES**

Gender sensitization issues focusing on women, girls, and men were mainstreamed during regular VCF meetings. Gender sensitization discussions and orientations were arranged while imparting training and arranging various meetings including meetings of the VCF management committees and Networks. In workshops and meetings women participants were specially invited and encouraged to speak and participate actively in deliberations.

Many women are now functioning as Karbaries, particularly in Rangamati district, and they get invited and actively participate in VCF related meetings and consultation. Some of them are active as office bearers of VCF management committees and Networks. Women in CHT are generally hardworking and in many cases are responsible for household chores and decision-making. Women's unique needs are considered while deciding venues for the project events and activities. Indeed, the SID-CHT project has a Chief, Gender and Social Cohesion who is involved while making gender related decisions under the CHTWCA. Male participants of VCF management committees and Networks are made aware about women needs and affirmative actions taken for their effective and enhanced participation. As a result, various VCF management committees have been giving priority to women participation while arranging different meetings, workshops and training locally.

Special focus is given to women participation while making livelihood cash grants and imparting skill development training. Gender disaggregated data are collected and compiled for reporting. For instance, out of total training courses on climate change and integrated watershed management, 54% were women. Moreover, the project gave special attention to the women headed households while identifying participants for livelihood development activities: Out of the total population benefited under livelihood programs, 49% were women that took advantage of small-scale income generating activities.



## **6. ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS**

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### **6.1 ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT**

The CHTWCA is managed through Rangamati based CHTDF field staff, with strategic and coordination support being provided by Dhaka office. Field level implementation is undertaken through the Livelihoods and Natural Management Cluster, headed by the Chief, responsible for oversight of day to day project management. The project team comprises of an M & E Officer, Programme Officer (Forest and Environment), Programme Officer (Livelihoods), Technical Coordinators for Training and Quality, support staff and Chief Technical Specialist. At the UNDP Country Office, resource management support is provided by the Results and Resource Management Cluster, with overall accountability resting with the Senior Management Team of the UNDP.

### **6.2 PARTNERSHIPS**

With the aim to achieve the CHTWCA's objectives, strong partnerships were established with the implementing partners. For efficient implementation of VCF and RF related activities, productive relationships continued with the GOB ministries and agencies, development partners, three partner NGOs, and other key stakeholders including the CHT institutions and leaders. Livelihood support to local community was leveraged in and around the project VCFs and RFs through funds from DANIDA and the GOB. Partner NGOs were engaged in the project field implementation especially in VCF management planning, skill development and livelihood activities implemented in and around the VCFs. Letter of Agreement (LOA) for implementing watershed management interventions in select headwater RFs was signed with FD after taking approvals from the MOEF&CC.

Strategic partnerships were established with government counterparts, including the MOCHTA, MoEF&CC, CHTRC, HDCs and the FD, and with traditional institutions particularly Circles to support the field and policy level outcomes with respect to the VCFs and headwater RFs. The partnership developed with the Institute of Forestry and Environmental Sciences of the Chittagong University for conducting Flora and Fauna Study continued during the period. Informal partnerships were established with civil society and NGOs to resolve specific issues and assessments. To support livelihood activities at the field level, partnerships were forged with existing Para Development Committees (PDCs) and Para Nari Development Groups (PNDGs).

### **6.3 PROJECT REVIEW COMMITTEES**

The National Steering Committee (NSC) and Project Implementation Committee (PIC), headed by the MoCHTA Minister and Secretary respectively and meeting half-yearly, continued their responsibility for providing overall policy guidance and advice on the project implementation. The NSC comprises amongst others the Secretary of MOCHTA; Joint/Additional Secretary (Development), MOCHTA (Member Secretary); Chair of the CHTRC; HDC Chairs; a representative from the CHT Development Board; a Circle Chief (based on annual rotation among the three Circle Chiefs), and others. The last NSC meeting was held on 8 August 2017

in the conference room of the MOCHTA under the chairmanship of the State Minister Mr. Bir Bahadur Ushwe Sing, MP. Of many decisions as made by the NSC, an important decision directly related to the CHTWCA was: Special attention should be given to empower the CHT people as well as the CHT institutions for livelihood development.

The PIC conducted periodical progress reviews of the project implementation. The MOCHTA conducted monthly reviews as part of the development meetings convened regularly for reviewing all development projects under the ministry. Additionally, the project participated regularly in the meetings of the Parliament Committee on CHT Affairs.

## 7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The project has a comprehensive Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan as approved by the USAID. The existing MEL Plan is being updated as per the findings of Data Quality Assessment conducted by USAID and ACME team. As per DQA feedbacks, the CHTWCA data collection manual has been revised and training conducted for the project staffs on revised monitoring and reporting mechanism. A systematic monitoring mechanism is in place based on the DQA findings, ensuring monitoring with evidence-based system and data collection. Biodiversity monitoring guidelines with necessary tools have been developed and are under field implementation to monitor the biodiversity of the project VCFs by their management committees.



DQA conducted by the USAID and ACME

Since the commencement of the CHTWCA, the project continued to undertake periodical monitoring and assessment activities, working closely with partner institutions, ACME and USAID. The periodical MEL related activities include collection and progress assessment of data, data cross checking and validation, and



Internal DQA conducted by the project staff

compilation of success stories on a continuous basis. At the field level, dedicated M&E focal points/assigned people collected and verified data, minimized data errors, and updated the database for sending to Planning, Monitoring and Reporting unit of the SID-CHT for consolidation and reporting. The Quarterly Progress Reporting system is in place and focuses on outputs/immediate results for reporting within UNDP. The annual progress reports capture the performance and custom indicators of the project for reporting to USAID and UNDP.

At the field level, the staff of the project and implementing partners undertook regular monitoring visits and participated in staff planning and coordination meetings with the stakeholders to identify key successes and areas for further improvement. This information is collected and analyzed by the CHTWCA, before making clear recommendations for addressing challenges observed in the field. This reflective practice is undertaken to ensure the project progress is as per the identified objectives and goals, and ever evolving to meet the needs on the ground.

## 8. STATUS OF EXPENDITURE (30 Aug 2017 - 29 Aug 2018)

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Table 1 : Project expenditure (during 30 August 2017 to 29 August 2018)

| <b>Grant Activity</b>   | <b>Expenditure in USD</b> |
|---|---------------------------|
| CHT Watershed Co-Management Activity  | 579,134                   |
| Operation and Management  | 225,000                   |
| Admin & Oversight (GMS)   | 56,289                    |
| <b>Annual Expenditure</b>   | <b>860,423</b>            |
| Total Contribution as received from USAID since inception to 29 August 2018 | 5,500,000                 |

## ANNEX 1:

List of tree species planted by Forest Department

| SL  | Local Name                                     | Scientific Name                       | Local Use  |
|-----|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1.  | Dhakijam                                       | <i>Syzygium firmum</i>                | Food, timber, fuelwood                                       |
| 2.  | Bohera   | <i>Terminalia chebula</i>             | Astringent, laxative, cough, diarrhea                        |
| 3.  | Amaloki  | <i>Phyllanthus emblica</i> Linn       | Spice, stomachic, jaundice, diarrhoea, dysentery, hair tonic |
| 4.  | Garjan   | <i>Dipterocarpus turbinatus</i>       | Oil, timber  |
| 5.  | Telia Garjan                                   | <i>Dipterocarpus turbinatus</i> Gaetn | Oil, timber  |
| 6.  | Jarul  | <i>Lagerstroemia speciose</i>         | Timber, ornamental   |
| 7.  | Boilam   | <i>Anisoptera scaphula</i>            | Fruits as medicine, timber                                   |
| 8.  | Chapalish                                      | <i>Artocarpus chapalish</i>           | Food for wildlife, timber                                    |
| 9.  | Horitaki                                       | <i>Terminalia chebula</i>             | Constipation, laxative, fever, cough, asthma, skin diseases  |
| 10. | Bamboo<br>(mitinga,<br>dolo, parbua,<br>bodum) | <i>Bambusa species</i>                | House construction, shoots used for vegetable                |
| 11. | Chikrasshi                                     | <i>Chukrasia tabularis</i>            | Medicine, food, medicine, timber                             |
| 12. | Gamar  | <i>Gmelina arborea</i>                | Medicine, timber, fodder                                     |
| 13. | Borta  | <i>Artocarpus lacucha</i>             | Food, medicine, timber                                       |
| 14. | Tentul   | <i>Tamarindus indica</i>              | Medicine, house construction                                 |
| 15. | Bel  | <i>Aegle marmelos</i>                 | Medicine, fruits, leaves, barks                              |

## **ANNEX 2:**

Main process and criteria followed to form VCF management committees are described as below:

Neighboring forest-dependent para(s)/village(s) informally/traditionally conserving VCF patch(s) are identified after holding informal discussions with local communities. A meeting of all willing households of identified para(s)/village(s) is called to form a general committee through a participatory approach. Immediately after a VCF management committee is formed by the members of general committee through consensus or general voting (generally with raising hands by the members of general committee). There shall be at least 30% female members in a management committee and at least one office bearer position will be assigned to a women member.

VCF management committee decides about the office bearers either consensus or election. The following office bearers are decided by a management committee:

President: 1

Vice President: 1

General Secretary: 1

Treasurer: 1(female given a priority)

Executive Members: 5-7 (ensuring representatives from all participating para(s)/village(s))

The concerned village head or headman of the mouza generally gets a priority to be the president of VCF management committee. Attempts are made to form an inclusive management committee by considering different groups, youths and marginalized sections dependent on forests. Advisory positions may be created by a management committee to take on board local elites who may not be included in the management committee. The names and addresses of the members of general committee and management committee are recoded as meeting minutes and entered subsequently in a register preserved at the project office and with office bearers of VCF management committee.

### ANNEX 3: PROJECT DATA TABLE

| Indicat<br>or Ref.   | CHTWCA performance<br>Indicators   | Unit of<br>measure   | Baseline | Total Target | Year wise target & achievement (cumulative) |             |         |             |          |             |         |             |        |             | Remark  |
|--|--|--|----------|--------------|---|-------------|---------|-------------|----------|-------------|---------|-------------|--------|-------------|---|
|  |  |  |          |              | Year I                                      |             | Year II |             | Year III |             | Year IV |             | Year V |             |   |
|  |  |  |          |              | Target                                      | Achievement | Target  | Achievement | Target   | Achievement | Target  | Achievement | Target | Achievement |   |
| USAID DO4 objective: Responsiveness to climate change improved                               |  |  |          |              |   |             |         |             |          |             |         |             |        |             |   |
| CHTWCA Objective: Improved climate resiliency and ecosystems in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) |  |  |          |              |   |             |         |             |          |             |         |             |        |             |   |
| DO4<br><br>Indicat<br>or 1<br>(Custo<br>m, old<br>II EG.<br>13-6):                           | Custom Indicator:<br>Number of VCF<br>management plans<br>prepared and<br>implemented by<br>community<br>stakeholders and<br>managed VCF with<br>focus on sustainable<br>forest landscapes<br>supported by USG<br>assistance | No. of VCF<br>management<br>plans prepared<br>by community<br>stakeholders       | 0        | 95           | 0   | 0           | 29      | 29          | 54       | 54          | 55      | 54          | 75     | 82          | After completion of<br>the forest<br>identification,<br>demarcation and<br>management<br>planning through<br>community driven<br>conflict resolution<br>and planning<br>process, 82 VCF<br>management plans<br>are field<br>implemented.<br>Representatives of<br>VCF dependent<br>communities/villag<br>es are actively<br>involved with |
|  |  | No. of VCF<br>management<br>plans<br>implemented<br>by community<br>stakeholders | 0        | 95           | 0   | 0           | 0       | 0           | 54       | 54          | 55      | 54          | 75     | 82          |   |

| Indicat<br>or Ref.  | CHTWCA performance<br>Indicators  | Unit of<br>measure        | Baseline | Total Target | Year wise target & achievement (cumulative) |             |         |             |          |             |         |             |        |             | Remark  |                                     |
|---|---|---------------------------|----------|--------------|---|-------------|---------|-------------|----------|-------------|---------|-------------|--------|-------------|---|-------------------------------------|
|   |   |                           |          |              | Year I                                      |             | Year II |             | Year III |             | Year IV |             | Year V |             |   |                                     |
|   |   |                           |          |              | Target                                      | Achievement | Target  | Achievement | Target   | Achievement | Target  | Achievement | Target | Achievement |   |                                     |
|   |   |                           |          |              |   |             |         |             |          |             |         |             |        |             |   | participatory forest<br>management. |
| IR 1: Improved participatory management of Village Common Forests (VCFs) and Reserved Forests (RFs) |   |                           |          |              |   |             |         |             |          |             |         |             |        |             |   |                                     |
| Do4 F<br>Indicat<br>orf.8.<br>1-26<br>(outco<br>me)   | Standard Indicator:<br>Number of hectares<br>(ha) of biological<br>significance and/or<br>natural resources<br>under improved NRM<br>as a result of USG<br>assistance | Hectares (VCF<br>& RF ha) | 0        | 8,700        | 0   | 0           | 4,200   | 4,196       | 4,200    | 4,196       | 4,200   | 4,196       | 6,450  | 6,509       | All 82 VCFs<br>completed the<br>forest identification<br>and demarcation<br>through community<br>driven conflict<br>resolution.<br>Presently 6,509 ha<br>of forests are under<br>improved NRM in<br>the VCFs and<br>headwater RFs |                                     |
| Sub-IR 1.1 Strengthened legal and policy framework for VCFs and RFs                                 |   |                           |          |              |   |             |         |             |          |             |         |             |        |             |   |                                     |
| Do4 F-<br>Indicat   | Standard Indicator:<br>Number of laws,  | No. of<br>Strategy/Plans/ | 0        | 2            | 0   | 0           | 1       | 1           | 2        | 2           | 2       | 2           | 2      | 2           | 1 VCF<br>Guideline/Regulati   |                                     |



| Indicat<br>or Ref.             | CHTWCA performance<br>Indicators  | Unit of<br>measure  | Baseline | Total Target | Year wise target & achievement (cumulative) |             |         |             |          |             |         |             |        |             | Remark   |
|--------------------------------|---|---|----------|--------------|---|-------------|---------|-------------|----------|-------------|---------|-------------|--------|-------------|--|
|                                |   |   |          |              | Year I                                      |             | Year II |             | Year III |             | Year IV |             | Year V |             |  |
|                                |   |   |          |              | Target                                      | Achievement | Target  | Achievement | Target   | Achievement | Target  | Achievement | Target | Achievement |  |
| or<br>4.8.2-<br>28<br>(output) | policies, regulation or standards addressing sustainable landscapes formally proposed, adapted or implemented as supported by USG assistance.   | Policy/Agreements/Regulations/Policy                            |          |              |   |             |         |             |          |             |         |             |        |             | on completed at sub-national level and 1 Action Plan approved by the GOB for Headwater RFs of the CHT at subnational level.  |
| Project<br>Indicator           | Custom Indicator:<br><br>Number of policy dialogues, workshops, consultation meetings held at national and regional levels on forest management | No. of Meetings/Consultations/Workshops on VCF & RFs management | 0        | 34           | 1   | 1           | 6       | 6           | 12       | 8           | 24      | 33          | 29     | 45          | Series of consultations at sub-district and district levels were organized. As a result, headwater RF Action Plan has been approved by the GOB. FD will hold technical consultations on drafted IWMP. Four VCFs Networks established and |

| Indicat<br>or Ref.  | CHTWCA performance<br>Indicators   | Unit of<br>measure  | Baseline | Total Target | Year wise target & achievement (cumulative) |             |  |                          |   |                              |   |  |  |  | Remark   |
|---|--|---|----------|--------------|---|-------------|--|--------------------------|---|------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
|   |  |   |          |              | Year I                                      |             | Year II  |                          | Year III  |                              | Year IV   |  | Year V   |  |  |
|   |  |   |          |              | Target                                      | Achievement | Target   | Achievement              | Target  | Achievement                  | Target  | Achievement  | Target   | Achievement  |  |
|   |  |   |          |              |   |             |  |                          |   |                              |   |  |  |  | operationalized<br>with their bylaws.  |
| Sub-IR 1.2: Participatory management in place in Village Common Forests and Reserved Forests in place |  |   |          |              |   |             |  |                          |   |                              |   |  |  |  |  |
| Do4 F<br>Indicat<br>or<br>4.8.2-6<br>(output)   | Standard Indicator:<br><br>Number of people<br>trained in climate<br>change adaptation<br>supported by USG<br>assistance<br><br><br>iii) EG 13-1: Number<br>of people trained in<br>sustainable<br>landscapes supported<br>by USG assistance | No. of<br>community<br>people,<br>traditional<br>leaders and<br>staff | 0        | 0            | 0   | 0           | 300<br><br>(Male<br>:210<br>&<br>femal<br>e: 90) | 300<br><br>(202<br>& 98) | 732<br><br>(Male<br>:512<br>&<br>femal<br>e: 220) | 732<br><br>(515<br>&<br>217) | 3254<br><br>(Male<br>:2278<br>&<br>femal<br>e: 976) | 3195<br><br>(Male<br>:2082<br>&<br>femal<br>e: 1113) | 4236<br><br>(Male<br>:2965<br>&<br>femal<br>e: 1271) | 4,881<br><br>Male:<br>2866<br>&<br>femal<br>e: 2015) | In fifth year, 1,686<br>participants with<br>54% female<br>participation<br>(cumulative: 4,881<br>people) were<br>trained on climate<br>change adaptation.<br>The trained<br>participants have<br>been sharing their<br>learnings and<br>experiences in their<br>regular VCF<br>meetings. This has<br>resulted in<br>enhanced<br>community<br>awareness on<br>climate change |

| Indicat<br>or Ref. | CHTWCA performance<br>Indicators | Unit of<br>measure | Baseline | Total Target | Year wise target & achievement (cumulative) |             |         |             |          |             |         |             |        |             | Remark   |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|----------|--------------|---|-------------|---------|-------------|----------|-------------|---------|-------------|--------|-------------|--|
|                    |                                  |                    |          |              | Year I                                      |             | Year II |             | Year III |             | Year IV |             | Year V |             |  |
|                    |                                  |                    |          |              | Target                                      | Achievement | Target  | Achievement | Target   | Achievement | Target  | Achievement | Target | Achievement |  |
|                    |                                  |                    |          |              |   |             |         |             |          |             |         |             |        |             | adaptation issues<br>and<br>implementation.  |
|                    |                                  | No. of FD staff    | 0        | 203          | 0   | 0           | 0       | 0           | 0        | 0           | 90      | 94          | 203    | 204         | This training was<br>organized at<br>Forestry<br>Development and<br>Training Centre at<br>Kaptai in Rangamati<br>district. In total 204<br>FD field staff<br>(including 110<br>DFOS, ACFs, Forest<br>Range Officers,<br>Foresters and<br>Forest Guards<br>trained in year 5)<br>were imparted<br>training on<br>integrated<br>watershed<br>management and<br>climate change. |

| Indicat<br>or Ref.       | CHTWCA performance<br>Indicators  | Unit of<br>measure     | Baseline | Total Target | Year wise target & achievement (cumulative) |             |         |             |          |             |         |             |        |             | Remark   |
|--------------------------|---|------------------------|----------|--------------|---|-------------|---------|-------------|----------|-------------|---------|-------------|--------|-------------|--|
|                          |   |                        |          |              | Year I                                      |             | Year II |             | Year III |             | Year IV |             | Year V |             |  |
|                          |   |                        |          |              | Target                                      | Achievement | Target  | Achievement | Target   | Achievement | Target  | Achievement | Target | Achievement |  |
| Project<br>indicat<br>or | Custom Indicator:<br>Number of co-<br>management network<br>established and<br>functional | No. of VCF<br>Networks | 0        | 4            | 0   | 0           | 0       | 0           | 0        | 0           | 4       | 4           | 4      | 4           | Four VCF Networks<br>formed, one each<br>for 3 Districts and<br>one at the CHT<br>level. The VCF<br>networks are<br>providing<br>supporting<br>platforms for the<br>VCF members and<br>their committees,<br>and other<br>traditional leaders<br>to sustainably<br>manage the VCFs<br>and raise their voice<br>to wider people and<br>decision-makers at<br>regional and<br>national level. |

| Indicat<br>or Ref.  | CHTWCA performance<br>Indicators   | Unit of<br>measure                                       | Baseline | Total Target                      | Year wise target & achievement (cumulative) |             |         |             |                               |                               |                                      |                                     |                               |                                 | Remark   |
|---|--|--|----------|-----------------------------------|---|-------------|---------|-------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
|   |  |  |          |                                   | Year I                                      |             | Year II |             | Year III                      |                               | Year IV                              |                                     | Year V                        |                                 |  |
|   |  |  |          |                                   | Target                                      | Achievement | Target  | Achievement | Target                        | Achievement                   | Target                               | Achievement                         | Target                        | Achievement                     |  |
| Project<br>indicat<br>or  | Custom Indicator:<br>Number of<br>communities/people<br>that are participating<br>in VCF and/or RF<br>management | No. of<br>communities<br>engaged in<br>VCF<br>management | 0        | 187                               | 0   | 0           | 52      | 52          | 52                            | 52                            | 107                                  | 104                                 | 140                           | 156                             | In total 156 VCF<br>dependent<br>communities/paras<br>actively field<br>implemented 82<br>VCF management<br>plans including<br>livelihood activities<br>under the<br>supervision of<br>respective<br>management<br>committees. |
|   |  | No. of<br>communities<br>engaged in RF<br>management     | 23       | 0                                 | 0   | 0           | 0       | 0           | 0                             | 0                             | 0                                    | 0                                   | 23                            | 23                              |  |
| IR 2: Improved Livelihoods that are Environmentally Sustainable and Resilient to Climate Change |  |  |          |                                   |   |             |         |             |                               |                               |                                      |                                     |                               |                                 |  |
| Do4 F<br><br>Project<br>Indicat<br>or   | Standard Indicator:<br><br>Number of people<br>receiving livelihood<br>co-benefits (monetary                     | Number of<br>People                                      | 0        | 44,60<br>0<br>(Male<br>:<br>22,74 | 0   | 0           | 0       | 0           | 12,00<br>0<br>(Male<br>:<br>: | 10,55<br>0<br>(Male<br>:<br>: | 35,00<br>0<br>(Male<br>:17,85<br>0 & | 35,23<br>4<br>(Male<br>:1797<br>9 & | 39,80<br>0<br>(Male<br>:<br>: | 39,422<br>(Male:<br>20,105<br>& | In fifth year, 4,188<br>people (cumulative:<br>39,422) benefited<br>through resilient<br>livelihood  |

| Indicat<br>or Ref.  | CHTWCA performance<br>Indicators   | Unit of<br>measure | Baseline | Total Target              | Year wise target & achievement (cumulative) |             |         |             |                                 |                                 |                    |                   |                                |                    | Remark   |
|---|--|--------------------|----------|---------------------------|---|-------------|---------|-------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|--|
|   |  |                    |          |                           | Year I                                      |             | Year II |             | Year III                        |                                 | Year IV            |                   | Year V                         |                    |  |
|   |  |                    |          |                           | Target                                      | Achievement | Target  | Achievement | Target                          | Achievement                     | Target             | Achievement       | Target                         | Achievement        |  |
| (Output)  | or non-monetary)<br>associated with the<br>implementation of<br>USG sustainable<br>landscapes activities |                    |          | 6 &<br>female:<br>21,854) |   |             |         |             | 6,120<br>&<br>female:<br>5,880) | 5,381<br>&<br>female:<br>5,169) | female:<br>17,150) | female:<br>17255) | 20,298 &<br>female:<br>19,502) | female:<br>19,317) | development. They<br>are engaged with<br>alternative income<br>generating<br>activities which<br>includes poultry<br>rearing, pig rearing,<br>goat rearing, mixed<br>fruit gardening<br>(horticulture),<br>improved vegetable<br>cultivation,<br>fisheries, small scale<br>and seasonal<br>businesses (for<br>example tailoring,<br>tea stall, and selling<br>of vegetables and<br>fruits) |
| Sub-IR 2.1 Sustainable farming technologies practiced                     |  |                    |          |                           |   |             |         |             |                                 |                                 |                    |                   |                                |                    |  |
| Sub-IR 2.2 Livelihood options of forest dependent communities diversified |  |                    |          |                           |   |             |         |             |                                 |                                 |                    |                   |                                |                    |  |



| Indicat<br>or Ref.       | CHTWCA performance<br>Indicators  | Unit of<br>measure   | Baseline | Total Target   | Year wise target & achievement (cumulative) |             |         |             |          |             |   |   |  |  | Remark   |
|--------------------------|---|----------------------|----------|--|---|-------------|---------|-------------|----------|-------------|---|---|--|--|--|
|                          |   |                      |          |  | Year I                                      |             | Year II |             | Year III |             | Year IV   |   | Year V   |  |  |
|                          |   |                      |          |  | Target                                      | Achievement | Target  | Achievement | Target   | Achievement | Target  | Achievement   | Target   | Achievement                                      |  |
| Project<br>indicat<br>or | Custom Indicator:<br>Number of farmers<br>receiving training on<br>sustainable farming2 | Number of<br>farmers | 0        | 1135<br><br>(Male<br>: 579<br>&<br>Femal<br>e:<br>556) | 0   | 0           | 0       | 0           | 0        | 0           | 635<br><br>(Male<br>: 324<br>&<br>Femal<br>e:311<br>) | 707<br><br>(Male<br>: 588<br>&<br>Femal<br>e:119<br>) | 985<br><br>(Male<br>:502<br>&<br>Femal<br>e:483<br>) | 1,015<br><br>(Male:<br>767 &<br>Femal<br>e: 248) | In total 1,015<br>farmers (in fifth year<br>308) received<br>training on<br>sustainable farming<br>activities and are<br>implementing<br>sustainable farming<br>technologies, by<br>applying their<br>experiences and<br>learnings, in their<br>farms and<br>homesteads. They<br>are also sharing<br>their learnings and<br>best practices with<br>other people in<br>their communities. |

<sup>2</sup> Any type of land based farming irrespective of crop/fruits/vegetables/spices cultivation, livestock rearing, fish culture which are socially acceptable, do not pose threat (current and/or future) to local environment, and economically profitable.

| Indicat<br>or Ref.   | CHTWCA performance<br>Indicators   | Unit of<br>measure  | Baseline | Total Target   | Year wise target & achievement (cumulative) |             |  |                                  |  |                                  |   |   |   |   | Remark  |
|--|--|---------------------|----------|--|---|-------------|--|----------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |                     |          |  | Year I                                      |             | Year II  |                                  | Year III   |                                  | Year IV   |   | Year V  |   |   |
|  |  |                     |          |  | Target                                      | Achievement | Target   | Achievement                      | Target   | Achievement                      | Target  | Achievement   | Target  | Achievement   |   |
| Sub-IR 2.3 Indigenous best practices on natural resource management promoted |  |                     |          |  |   |             |  |                                  |  |                                  |   |   |   |   |   |
| Project<br>indicat<br>or   | Custom Indicator:<br>Number of people<br>applying/<br><br>promoting awareness<br>raising activities on<br>the indigenous NRM<br>practices3 | Number of<br>People | 0        | 18,00<br>0<br><br>(Male<br>:<br>12,60<br>0 &<br>Femal<br>e:<br>5400) | 0   | 0           | 6,900<br><br>(Male<br>:<br>4,830<br>&<br>Femal<br>e:<br>2,070<br>) | 6,818<br><br>(4280<br>&<br>2538) | 9,300<br><br>(Male<br>:<br>6510<br>&<br>Femal<br>e:<br>2790) | 9,314<br><br>(5969<br>&<br>3345) | 15,00<br>0<br><br>(Male<br>:<br>1050<br>0 &<br>Femal<br>e:<br>4500) | 10,78<br>8<br><br>(Male<br>:<br>6707<br>&<br>Femal<br>e:<br>4081) | 16,50<br>0<br><br>(Male<br>:<br>1155<br>0 &<br>Femal<br>e:<br>4950) | 11,953<br><br>(Male:<br>7,462<br>&<br>Femal<br>e:<br>4,491) | In total: 11,953<br>people (in fifth year<br>1,165) of the CHT<br>institutions, leaders<br>and community<br>have been made<br>aware of the<br>indigenous NRM<br>activities (for<br>example, need for<br>at least 1 VCF in<br>each <i>mauza</i> , VCFs<br>managed as source<br>of community water<br>supply, forest fire<br>control, control of<br><i>jhum</i> in and around<br>VCFs, bamboo culm<br>and clump |

<sup>3</sup> Here “Indigenous NRM practices” refer to any type of Natural Resource (Land, Water, Forests, etc.) management practices that are being practiced by the CHT indigenous/tribal communities since time immemorial and found effective to carry out their livelihood sustainably.

| Indicat<br>or Ref.                     | CHTWCA performance<br>Indicators  | Unit of<br>measure  | Baseline | Total Target | Year wise target & achievement (cumulative) |             |            |             |            |             |            |             |            |             | Remark   |
|--|---|---------------------|----------|--------------|---|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|--|
|  |   |                     |          |              | Year I                                      |             | Year II    |             | Year III   |             | Year IV    |             | Year V     |             |  |
|  |   |                     |          |              | Target                                      | Achievement | Target     | Achievement | Target     | Achievement | Target     | Achievement | Target     | Achievement |  |
|  |   |                     |          |              |   |             |            |             |            |             |            |             |            |             | management, etc.),<br>through various<br>awareness<br>development<br>programs and<br>events including<br>the world<br>environment day,<br>awareness sessions<br>at community level,<br>installation of sign<br>boards, and<br>distribution of<br>printing materials<br>with focus on<br>environment and<br>biodiversity. |
| <b>Projec<br/>t<br/>indica<br/>tor</b> | <b>Indicator 12 (Custom<br/>&amp; old 21):</b> Number of<br>people receiving<br>printed materials | Number of<br>people | 0        | 41,50<br>0   | 0   | 0           | 17,00<br>0 | 17,00<br>0  | 33,70<br>0 | 33,70<br>4  | 39,99<br>6 | 35,33<br>1  | 40,79<br>6 | 37,241      | Project produced<br>different kind of<br>visibility materials<br>with the USAID logo<br>and distributed to<br>the people. In fifth<br>year 1910, and   |

| Indicat<br>or Ref. | CHTWCA performance<br>Indicators | Unit of<br>measure | Baseline | Total Target | Year wise target & achievement (cumulative) |             |         |             |          |             |         |             |        |             | Remark   |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|----------|--------------|---|-------------|---------|-------------|----------|-------------|---------|-------------|--------|-------------|--|
|                    |                                  |                    |          |              | Year I                                      |             | Year II |             | Year III |             | Year IV |             | Year V |             |  |
|                    |                                  |                    |          |              | Target                                      | Achievement | Target  | Achievement | Target   | Achievement | Target  | Achievement | Target | Achievement |  |
|                    |                                  |                    |          |              |   |             |         |             |          |             |         |             |        |             | cumulatively 37,241<br>printing materials<br>(including t-shirts,<br>caps, signboard,<br>banner, poster, etc.)<br>by following<br>relevant guidelines<br>of the USAID and<br>UNDP. |

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