



TAHZINGDONG

Environment and Socio-economic Development Organization

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ORGANIZATION AND PROJECT DOCUMENTS FOR GLOBAL GIVING CAMPAIGN

Project Title: Children's Education for Forest Dependent Community

Official Project Title: Provide quality education to the children of forest dependent communities in Bandarban Hill District of Bangladesh to reduce dependency on community natural forest resources.

The Goal of Project: The goal of this project is to provide best education facilities to the indigenous children of forest dependent communities.

Overall Objective/purpose of the Project:

The overall objective of the project is to provide best education facilities to the indigenous children of forest dependent communities to be admitted in nearest school for continuing proper education. Besides, the project will also focus on creation of green environment and livelihood development activities to reduce dependency on forest resources.

Brief Description and Background of Organization:

TAHZINGDONG is a non-profit organization working on environment and socio-economic development in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh. It emerged on 15th December 1999 with the collaboration of a group of young energetic indigenous students and social workers, through an informal consultation between them, in Bandarban Hill District of Bangladesh. Bandarban is uniquely a home in the country in terms of language and cultural diversity where eleven different indigenous communities of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT's) and mainstream Bengali have been living for long.

At the beginning, **TAHZINGDONG** started their journey as leading youth organization in Bandarban Hill District of Bangladesh. Since its inception, the organization started its venture as a non-profit organization with a vision of creating a society where local marginalized people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh live in equity and justice by their dedicated development service. Later, the organization became popularized at home and abroad for promoting and conserving community managed natural forest in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT's) of Bangladesh.

The organization has taken different types of initiative to protect and preserve the Community Conserve Area (CCA), which is locally known as Village Common Forest (VCF) or *Mauza* Forest, with the collaboration of forest dependent communities in Bandarban Hill District of Bangladesh.

Mission:

The mission of TAHZINGDONG is to empower the most disadvantaged and vulnerable people in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT's) of Bangladesh in order to bring them towards alternative development process for sustainable development.

The organization is focusing on environment and socio-economic development issues in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT's) of Bangladesh. It intends to work with most disadvantaged communities, for improving their livelihood and, who mostly depend on forest and local resources.

Besides, the organization takes different program-based development initiatives including education for the poorest sections of the country.

Project Summary:

The project will provide educational support to 150 underprivileged indigenous children of six forest dependent communities in six villages, who hail from the poorest sections of society, in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) of Bangladesh. Through the project, Indigenous children, aged of 5 to 16, will get quality education and other facility. They live in hard to reach areas which lack education facilities.

The forest dependent communities and their children, live in the remote rural areas, and are deprived from quality education in their childhood due to extreme poverty and lack of basic literacy of their parents. According to LGED, district literacy rate, which makes up to 28.07%, is much lower than national average (45.3%). Average per capita income is far below the national average of \$374. According to FAO-2010, average annual income of the ethnic people of Bandarban district is USD 652/- which is much lower than national rural net income (USD 1086).

The project will provide best education facilities to the ethnic children of forest dependent communities to be admitted in nearest school for continuing proper education. For this purpose, community teacher is to be provided to take care of their education problem. Besides, the project will also focus on creation of green environment and livelihood development activities to reduce dependency on forest resources.

The education program keeps the 150 forest dependent children in school and ensures continued education for their better future so that they can get involved in mainstream development to break the poverty cycle. Our goal is to start educating the children of the poorest section of the society, building up their confidence for developing a better society.

Total Budget for the Proposed Project:

Total amount **USD 99943** is needed for this project through Global Giving and other sources for 24 months.

What We Have Done:

Conservation of Community Conserved Area (CCA):

In 2004-2005, TAHZINGDONG took some primary survey initiatives to identify existing village common forests (VCF's) in Bandarban Hill District. Later on, TAHZINGDONG got involved with some VCF's dependent communities to promote conservation initiatives. Based on these initiatives, in 2008 TAHZINGDONG started a project namely *Consolidating Community Rights over Natural Resources for Conservation of Environment and Sustainable Development (CCRNR)* which was led by TAUNGYA, a local NGO of the CHT and supported by DANIDA. After that, in 2009 TAHZINGDONG started another VCF project namely *Community Based Conservation of Village Common Forest in Rowangchari, Bandarban* supported by *Arannayk Foundation, Bangladesh (Tropical Forest Conservation Foundation)*. At present, this project is being implemented in Bandarban District as well. On the basis of previous experience, consequently, in 2012 UNDP-CHTDF has given opportunity to implement the *"Piloting VCF and Stream Management in the CHT"* project in Bandarban District of Bangladesh.



Environment and Climate Change:

In terms of the impact of climate change, environmental, economic, and cultural integrity especially the indigenous community will be threatened. There are assumptions among the local indigenous communities that the rainfall will have been reduced compared to earlier times and the rainy season will have erratic patterns like the changed seasons. In the rainy season, unexpected heavy rainfall increases soil erosion; land slide and others environmental hazards that causes flash flood in the streams and small rivers. In light of this, the organization took mitigation responses to face the challenge through conservation and enrichment plantation for minimizing carbon emission from forest ecosystem.



TAHZINGDONG has provided and installed environment friendly improved cooking stoves (ICS), solar panels for creating clean and green environment as the poor indigenous communities do not get electricity and gas. As a result, 50% of household-based biomass (CO₂) has been reduced in the villages since improved cooking stoves (ICS) distribution, which is more effective compared to previous traditional cooking stove. On the other hand, it has improved women health condition as it creates less smoke environment in the house.



Especially, women and children are quite happy as they have benefited from this technology and the communities enjoy economic benefits directly from these measures. Moreover, use of ICS instead of ordinary stove reduced fuel wood consumption and reduced firewood collection from the forests substantially.

Biodiversity Conservation:

Through different project initiatives, community people planted more than 50,000 seedlings at the community managed forests including the endangered species and fruit seedlings in the homesteads. Among them, endangered species *Banspata (Podocarpus neriifolius)*, Forest mango species (*Mangifera sylvatica*) are mentionable. Besides, bamboo and native trees have been planted to protect soil erosion of stream, river and other water bodies.

Survivability percentage of the seedlings in the plantation areas was very good (75%). Through the plantations, around 25% degraded area of 3 community managed forest have been restored. Rest of 75% forest is in





systematic conservation (i.e. community bound legislation) under the strong VCF management committee. TAHZINGDONG's projects initiatives resulted positive changes in biodiversity conservation. Threatened and endangered plant species were also included in the plantation programs which increased their population in the project areas. Among the seedlings, medicinal plants and timber trees enriched the plant diversity. Natural regeneration of potential different native plant species in the VCF's has increased as a result of the protection measures (i.e. regular patrol) undertaken by the community.

The availability of wildlife has been increased after the interventions of conservation project. Prohibition and thus reduction of the traditional habit of hunting wildlife from the forests helped increase roaming of the wild animals i.e. jungle fowl, snake, boar etc. Though there is no research regarding the change in carbon stock in the VCFs, it is obvious that the vegetation coverage and firewood stock were increased in the community managed forests.



Health and Hygiene Promotion:

TAHZINGDONG has provided and installed hygienic latrines and established water harvesting system using gravitational flow system (GFS) which is locally called GFS technology. It does not need machine or water pump to maintain this. The initiative decreases waterborne diseases in the communities. It is also an example of surface water management technology in the hill area where other water technology is impossible to be installed. It is estimated that through GFS technology, water is consumed and used more than 387,000 liter in a village. GFS (Gravity Flow System) is a process of collecting and reserving water upstream and



distributing it in the villages downstream to meet demands without having any negative impact on the environment. Seepage water comes through the stream to be reserved in the small dam and it is filtered and goes to reservation tank.



Water is piped to the households downstream. Especially women are benefited from this initiative as water collection point is located nearby their houses.

Livelihood Development:

To support alternative livelihood, through different project initiative, TAHZINGDONG has given AIG activities such as: rice bank development, turmeric and ginger cultivation, nursery development, fruit orchard, livestock project (Goat, Pig, Chicken etc) as input support for the extreme poor section of the community.



For ensuring livelihood security, TAHZINGDONG works for the poor marginalized population who are deprived of the real value of their work due to lack of appropriate knowledge and skill. The organization provides support for farmers' capacity building, skill development training, marketing linkage development, entrepreneurship training, technological resource and knowledge on crop

agriculture, fisheries and livestock. The organization also has developed experiences working with the vulnerable workers of the informal sector who are involved in handicrafts and weaving (*household based handloom*) profession. The initiatives have given significant boost to household income.



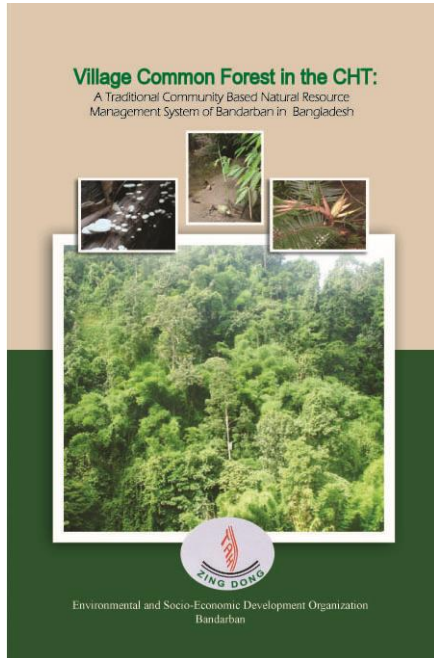
Children Education Program:

To support national efforts towards basic education for all, the organization provides education support to marginalized forest dependent communities. They provide with educational materials



to the students and teachers including books, stationary, teaching aids like charts and manuals especially to school dropouts (aged 8-12) for bringing them back to school through campaigning, motivation, and awareness development. They also ensure women participation in the implementation and management of primary education program. For this purpose, TAHZINGDONG, has set up non-formal primary schools, and provided free education for the forest dependent communities.

Publication and Research:

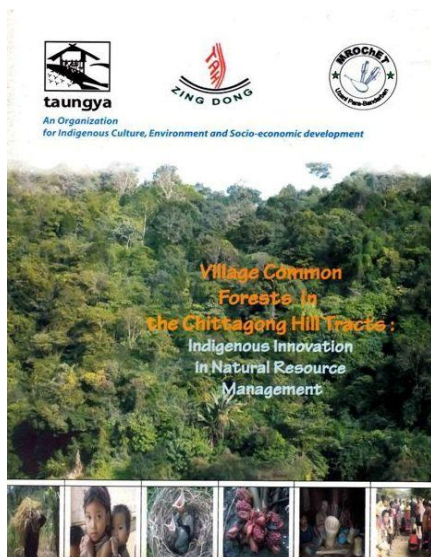


Village Common Forest in the CHT: A Traditional Community Based Natural Resource Management System of Bandarban in Bangladesh.

Author: Aung Shwe Sing, Executive Director, TAHZINGDONG, Bandarban, Bangladesh.

About the Book: The book describes about traditional management system of village common forests (VCF) and natural resource management in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) of Bangladesh. In this study, management patterns, current status of forest resource and issues related to the VCF sustainability have been discussed. Moreover, the concept of VCF in the CHT, the historical context related with the inception of Bijoy para VCF was discussed. In addition, land-use practice, land tenure security, drinking water technology, biodiversity and forest resource analysis, traditional knowledge of local indigenous community in

conserving forest and natural resource were also discussed. The book brings out facts that local indigenous community proved their capacity in conserving forest and natural resources through resource utilization management practices in traditional way.



Village Common Forests in the Chittagong Hill Tracts: Indigenous Innovation in Natural Resource Management.

About the Book:

The book is published under the project of *Consolidating Community Rights over Natural Resources for Conservation of Environment and Sustainable Development (CCRNR)*. TAHZINGDONG, Taungya, MROCHET jointly published the book and implemented the project where Taungya (A local NGO of the CHT) took lead role. The objective of the publication is to sensitize all sections of the people about the relation among VCF community and natural forest and biodiversity through disseminating the information, data, achievement and innovations of the project.