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# TAHZINGDONG

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## PREFACE

The year of 2021 was very challenging for TAHZINGDONG to execute its programmes as expected throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. However, all colleagues and partners of TAHZINGDONG have put their best efforts to carry out the targeted works in last year. The tasks were implemented efficiently and timely because of their tireless hard works, sincerities and commitment to the responsibilities.

TAHZINGDONG has been committed to its own vision, missions and core values with regard to “enjoy and live in peace and harmony, and free from poverty and injustice”, environment, empowering the most disadvantaged local communities and improving the livelihoods of the local communities. In line with its vision, mission and core values, TAHZINGDONG had implemented twelve projects in partnership with UNDP, Helen Keller International, Caritas, Manusher Jonyo Foundation, BRAC, BNPS, US Forest Service, Graus and Arannayk Foundation in the area of village court system, nutrition, livelihood, environment and forest conservation, women and girls empowerment, climate change adaptation, reproductive & menstrual health, gender responsive education and skill programme and youth capacity development.

Through publication of Annual Report, every concern would able to know the activity progress of 2021.

I humbly convey my sincere gratitude to the all partners and donors for working in close collaboration with TAHZINGDONG in implementing the projects.

My sincere thanks are also due to Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs, Regional Council, Bandarban Hill District Council, Deputy Commissioner Office, Circle Office, Upazila Parishads, Union Parishads, Govt Line Departments and other stakeholders for extending their kind supports in every sphere of the program implementation.

I look forward to working with all donors and partners for moving forward towards positive changes in the lives of the local communities in the coming years.



Ching Shing Prue  
Executive  
Director  
TAHZINGDONG



# TABLE OF CONTENT

Preface	02
Abbreviation & Achronyms	04
Donors and Implementing Partners	06
Brief Description & Background	07
Mission and Vision	08

## PROJECTS AT A GLANCE

Strengthen Civil Society and Public Institutions to Address Community Resilience to Adopt Climate Change (SCSACC)	09
SOKKHOMOTA-II Collaborate, Prepare and Resilient to Natural and Human Induced Disasters	10
Community Mobilization and Organization, and Livelihood and Value Chain Implementation for Local Communities in and Around Select Head Water Reserved Forest, Protected Areas, and Village Common Forest in Bandarban Hill District Under CHTWCA	14
Our Lives, Our Health, Our Futures (OLHF)	16
Activating Village Court in CHT (AVC)	17
Women and Girls Empowerment Through Education and Skills Component (WGE)	18
Bandarban Agriculture and Nutrition Initiative (BANI)	20
Chittagong Hill Tracts Communities Forest Landscape Restoration Project (CHT-FLR)	23
Community Partnerships to Strengthen Sustainable Development Program (Establish and Youth Conservation Corps in Bangladesh-YCC)	26
Support to Peaceful Coexistence of Diverse Ethnic and Religious Communities. Partnership for a Tolerant and Inclusive Bangladesh (PTIB)	28
SOKKHOMOTA- I Collaborate, Prepare, and Resilient to Natural and Human-Induced Disasters.	29
Gender Responsive Education & Skills Program (GRESPE) in Chattagram Hill Tracts.	30

## Abbreviations and Acronyms

- AF
- AVC
- BHDC
- BNPS
- CRS
- CDRT
- CHTs
- CHTWCA
- CCA
- CFW
- CSO
- DC
- DMC
- DRR
- DRM
- EWS
- FD
- FLR
- FUG
- GBV
- GFS
- GIS
- IDDRR
- IFESCU
- IGA
- IRCS
- LVMF
- MoCHTA
- MPCA
- NGO
- NTFP
- OLHF
- PA
- PEP PLW
- PF
- PTIB
- Arannayk Foundation
- Activating Village Court
- Bandarban Hill District Council
- Bangladesh Nari Progoti Sangha
- Catholic Relief Services
- Community Disaster Response Team
- Chittagong Hill Tracts
- Chittagong Hill Tracts Watershed Co-Management Activity
- Community Conserve Area
- Cash for Work
- Civil Society Organization
- Deputy Commissioner
- Disaster Management Committee
- Disaster Risk Reduction
- Disaster Risk Management
- Early Warning System
- Forest Department
- Forest Landscape Restoration
- Forest User Group
- Gender Based Violence
- Gravity Flow System
- Geographic Information System
- International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction
- Institute of Forestry and Environmental Sciences, Chittagong University
- Income Generating Activities
- International Red Cross Society
- Local Volunteer Mediator's Forum
- Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs
- Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance
- Non-Governmental Organization
- Non-Timber Forest Product
- Our Lives, Our Health, Our Futures
- Protected Area
- Poor and Extreme Poor Pregnant and Lactating Women
- Protected Forum
- Partnerships for a Tolerant and Inclusive Bangladesh



- RCY
- RF
- ROAM
- SMC
- SOD
- SRHR
- TBA
- TVET
- UCV
- UDMC
- UNDP SID-CHT
- USAID
- USFS
- VCF
- VConF
- WDMC
- Red Crescent Youth
- Reserved Forest
- Restoration Opportunity Assessment Methodology
- School Managing committee
- Standing Order on Disaster
- Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights
- Traditional Birth Attendant
- Technical & Vocational Education & Training
- Urban Community Volunteer
- Union Disaster Management Committee
- United Nations Development Programme  
Strengthening Inclusive Development in  
Chittagong Hill Tracts
- U.S. Agency for International Development
- U.S. Forest Service
- Village Common Forest
- Village Conservation Forum
- Ward Disaster Management Committee

## Development Partners and Donors of TAHZINGDONG



## Brief Description and Background:

**TAHZINGDONG** is a non-government voluntary organization working on environment and socio-economic development in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh. It has emerged on 15<sup>th</sup> December 1999 with the collaboration of a group of youth students and energetic youth social workers through an informal consultation between them in Bandarban Hill District of Bangladesh. Bandarban Hill District is uniquely a home in the country in terms of language and cultural diversity where eleven different ethnic communities of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT's) and mainstream Bengali have been living since time immemorial.



At the beginning, **TAHZINGDONG** has started their journey as youth leading organization in Bandarban Hill District of Bangladesh. Since its inception, **TAHZINGDONG** 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 development justice by their dedicated development service where possible.

**TAHZINGDONG** is also well-known as an organization in home and abroad for promoting and conserving community managed natural forest in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT's) of Bangladesh. The organization key roles in protecting and preserving the Community Managed Mouza Forest or Village Common Forest (VCF) or Community Conserve Area (CCA) with the collaboration of Forest Dependent Communities in Bandarban Hill District. The organization emphasizes community empowerment and livelihood development initiatives of the local communities for improving their livelihood who mostly live in the remote areas. The organization has also well

experienced in the areas of DRR, Nutrition, Health and Hygiene, WATSAN, combating climate change, food security and distribution, GFS, livelihood development, IGA, youth development program, SRHR, GBV, social cohesion and resilient, aquaculture, non-formal education and build awareness raising on pandemic COVID-19 since last 20 years in CHT.



## VISION

TAHZINGDONG envisions a society where all people may enjoy and live in peace and harmony, and free from poverty and injustice that everyone gets involved in effective and sustainable socio-economic development process.

## 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

## CORE VALUES

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

- Community involvement in all aspect
- Capacity building and empowering community, traditional leaders, elected representatives, public institutions and concerned stakeholders;
- Network with government, national and international NGOs on the issues of environmental justice and sustainable development;
- Policy advocacy and lobbying
- Equal participation
- Gender equity, equality and cultural diversity;
- Strong linkage and coordination with all key stakeholders;
- Ensure good governance in all level

The organization is registered with the Department of Social Services, Ministry of Social Welfare, and Government of Bangladesh on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2001. The registration no of the organization is Ban-146/2001, Bandarban Hill District, Bangladesh.

## Strengthen Civil Society and Public Institutions to address Community Resilience to adapt Climate Change

The project has been implemented in 16 villages of the 3 Unions under 2 Upazilas- Rowangchari and Bandarban Sadar- of Bandarban Hill District in partnership with Manusher Jonno Foundation funded by European Union for the period of July 2017- June 2022. Total beneficiaries of the project is 631- direct beneficiaries are 422 while indirect beneficiaries are 209.

**Project Progress & Achievements Status** (i.e. progress made towards sustainable improvements in shaping livelihoods & well-being of targeted groups).



### Status of Public Hearing

Three public hearings were accomplished during the reporting year in the assigned three unions of Rowangchari and Bandarban Sadar Upazila. The hearings were conducted with the departments of agriculture, livestock, and union Parishad. Community people attended the events. Some decisions were made between the service recipients and service providers through detailed discussions.

### CSOs and NGOs coordination meeting

Two meetings on the role of civil society in climate change adaptation were held on January 31, and June 16, 2021 at the TAHZINGDONG head office with the representatives of NGOs and civil society members under the SCSACC project. Civil society leaders and NGO representatives attended the meeting. 27 males and 8 females participated in the meeting. Participants discussed the different impacts of climate change. Participants said that people from all walks of life need to work together to tackle the negative effects of climate change.



## UDMC meeting follow up

Four meetings out of the targeted seven on the Union Disaster Management Committee were held at the three Union Parishad Office on different dates under the chairmanship of Chairman, Panel Chairman of those Union Parishad. The meeting was moderated by the Secretary of the Union Parishad. 63 male and 17 female members were present in the meeting. They said that the tenure of the council is almost at the end. Therefore, he called upon all to complete all the works in the current term. The project coordinator requested the participants for monitoring the activities of Rice Bank, IGA activities etc. of the project.



**IGA Activities:** IGA activities are ongoing in 16 community groups under the project area. The community people have become self-sufficient by investing in agriculture with loans from IGA funds. Their annual income have increased steadily.

## SOKKHOMOTA-II (Collaborate, Prepare and Resilient to Natural and Human Induced Disasters)

The Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) region of Bangladesh is highly vulnerable to the threat of disasters due to its hilly terrain, limited access to services, poor infrastructure and shelters, and limited capacity of disaster risk management structures. While flash floods are common throughout the CHT, the mostly at risk upazilas are Bandarban Sadar where approximately 50% of the total population of Bandarban district lives, and which experienced disasters at least yearly over the last five years with increasing frequency and impact. Additionally, communities are impacted by environmental degradation and the loss of natural resources and assets due to large scale agriculture and logging. This results in soil erosion and landslides further exacerbated by limited capacities to reduce risks in the CHT. In response, the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) project SOKKHOMOTA-II Collaborate, Prepare and Resilient to Natural and Human Induced Disasters working with consortium partner, Caritas Bangladesh and implementing partner TAHZINGDONG, communities and the government to address these needs. The following activities are implemented in Sadar Upazila six unions under Bandarban Hill District.



### Monthly Staff Coordination Meeting at Upazila level

This is a regular task at Union level to gear up local level staff as well as to motivate and any suggestion regarding field work. Mainly, DRR Officer assist in the meeting with the facilitation of Community Organizer respectively. Generally, challenge of the field and overcome strategy discussed at the meetings. SOKKHOMOTA upazila staff level coordination meeting held regularly at TAHZINGDONG office where all staff attend and often Executive Director and senior personnel also takes part in the meeting.



### Training of Traditional and Religious Leaders on DRM and NRM.

The groups comprise of 25 members from each union involving “Karbari” & “Headmen” along with religious leaders in six unions. This training literally arranged to sensitize community traditional & religious leaders on environment and improve knowledge on natural resources and its management. The main cause of this training was awareness raising and to train the leaders on natural resources and engage community. The roles and responsibilities in conserving the resources were discussed. The topics of the training were risk of COVID-19.



Traditional & Religious Leaders Training

And its prevention and preparation. Natural Resources and its impact on community people. Hence, the training also focused on

disaster and its impacts on human lives & assets saving, risk reduction activities of natural resources, principles of disaster, natural resource management and harmonization during disaster and natural resource management.

### Formation meeting of Community Disaster Response Team (CDRT) and Urban Community Volunteer (UCV)

This group has formed in every ward of the each union and Pourashava to save lives instantly occurred during disasters of cyclone, flash flood, landslide, fire and earthquake etc. Usually CDRT formed comprising of 15 and UCV 40 numbers in between 18 years old age to 45 years involving Karbari, teacher, leader and TBA. Both male and females members are included in the formation. These group members equipped with various personal caring gear such as rain coat, vest, life jacket, and helmet, search light, rope, stretcher etc. Priority is usually given to those people with voluntary service attitude.



## Initial formation meeting at ward & union level to form DMC

SOKKHOMOTA II project already formed 54 groups of WDMC at Tongkaboti, Swalok, Rajbila, Kuhalong and Sadar Union along with Pourashava. Another new Union Jamchari will be formed later. Initial formation meeting date was set by respective Ward Members. Ward Member invites community people from different corner and various govt. and non govt. professional. Government's guideline is followed according to SOD 2019 in selection of committee members. Participants from different para participate here and discussed local issues and upcoming disasters. The committee is reformed every year for update.



## Training for WDMC and UDMC members

54 WDMC training covered in respective areas. The contents of the training were organizational intro, SOKKHOMOTA project at a glance, COVID-19, roles and responsibilities of WDMCs, hazards of hill tracts, structures and principles of disaster management of Bangladesh, disaster risk analysis, community based disaster risk analysis and its effect, disaster risk reduction action plan and its implementation process, safety-net, status of EWS and way of escaping, and shelter management. Everyday



nature is changing and disaster occurs frequently. Therefore, to be more cautious, skilled and recall the responsibilities training was most essential. SOKKHOMOTA project is committed to providing training all the UDMC member gradually. Hence, there were five trainings arranged in five unions. Main topics of the training include overall objectives of the training, COVID-19, UDMC code of conduct, role of UDMC, early warning system in Bangladesh and contextualization with Bandarban district, Cyclone/Flood shelter management, IRCS code of conduct and standards in disaster response and safeguarding policy. Apart from this training a leadership training was arranged one day with Union DMC. This training will help them to prepare local plan and mitigation way.

## Observance Days Celebration (International Day for Disaster Reduction (IDDR))

Participants from various corner especially, students, public, NGO staffs attended the event with the collaboration with DC Office. To raise awareness on disaster risk reduction and mobilizing the wider public to get involved and to create mass awareness and effective preparedness within all levels of the society to reduce disaster risks and vulnerabilities among people specially the persons living high risky zone, to aware people about disaster preparation and building resilience and to increase knowledge of the school students about disaster preparedness.



## Cash for Work (CFW)

The main focus of the Cash for Work is to generate employment locally and to development of local infrastructure for mitigation of disaster risk reduction. Keeping this in mind SOKKHOMOTA project implementing cash for work in five unions based on last RRAP of Sapling project and community led disaster risk management where community people from respective ward and para took part and selected different structural and non-structural scheme. The work is ongoing. Each

beneficiary is offering thirty days work and 400 taka wages per day. Both male and female getting equal wages. The project tried to engage fifty percent female labor in each scheme. The beneficiaries will be paid through mobile money transfer. Even special needed beneficiaries are included in this activities. This income will help them to survive for a few months as there is little scope to work over here. This is blessings for them. The project observed that by this earnings some of them affording their children's tuition fees, school dresses, investing in household farming, gardening and livestock rearing. A few of them returning their debts by the earnings.





## Community Mobilization and Organization, and Livelihood and Value Chain Implementation for Local Communities in and Around Select Head Water Reserved Forest, Protected Areas, and Village Common Forest in Bandarban Hill District Under CHTWCA

The project is being implemented in the area of Matamuhuri and Sangu Wildlife Sanctuaries of Alikadam and Thanchi Upazila of Bandarban Hill District focusing on the following three areas funded by UNDP SID-CHT.



### **Training on Livelihood and Community Cohesion:**

Training on livelihood and community cohesion in relation to forest-based livelihood including bamboo and other NTFPs, ecosystem management, social cohesion, gender were conducted in Alikadam and Thanchi. Upazila under Bandarban Hill District 300 participants received the training through the training participant learned about the importance of changing their income-generating source to improve their vulnerability position.

### **Training on small enterprises skill demonstration:**

Trainings conducted on small enterprise skill demonstration for women, youth, and around headwater RFs, PAs and VCFs to entrepreneur stakeholders in Alikadam and Thanchi Upazila under Bandarban Hill District. 800 participants received the training. Participants have gained knowledge on the concept of a small enterprise, clarification of SOWAT, marketing, its process, and profit.



### **Community awareness program on social cohesion:**

Community awareness program on social cohesion, conservation, gender, conflict management, GVB, human trafficking and child marriage were conducted around the area of selected VCFs, headwater RFs, and PAs. The community awareness program in Thanchi and Alikodom Upazila under Bandarban Hill District. 456 participants participated in the program.

Local communities are aware of social cohesion, gender-based violence & human trafficking. They are capable to identify conflict and resolve it.

### **Training and orientation on LVMFs:**

Training and orientation of LVMFs conducted on conservation conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, dispute resolution, community mediation, and eco- system conservation in 3 new Upazilas under Bandarban Hill District. 67 participants recieved this event and all forum members are aware of their responsibilities and committed to supporting in achieving activities.



Orientation of LVMFs on conservation conflict prevention, resolution and peace building.

## Our Lives, Our Health, Our Futures (OLHF)

(Empowering adolescent girls and young women in Chittagong Hill Tracts to live with dignity.)

Traditional patriarchal sexual structure in CHT severely disadvantages women and girls, and restrict their social empowerment, their bodily integrity and sexual autonomy. High rates of violence against women persist here. Women and girls in CHT are exposed to sexual violence, harassment and assault. Besides, young women and girls are affected by the lack of information, means and support to manage their menstruation with dignity and fulfil their sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

The project is being implemented in joint venture with Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS) and SIMAVI with the financial support from European Union with the aim of strengthening local CSOs in technical methodological, financial and administrative capacity to effectively respond to the SRHR needs of young women and adolescent girls and foster their rights to live free from violence, coercion and discrimination. And, to empower young women and adolescent girls from CHT to make free and informed decisions about their SRHR, free of violence, coercion and discrimination.

### Community sessions with fathers:

30 preparatory awareness raising sessions in 30 girls club level on menstrual health and women's safety issues were conducted where community, traditional and religious leaders and men were involved. Total of 1143 participants participated the meetings. The participants gained knowledge on menstrual health and women's safety issues.



### Establishment of safe spaces for young women and girls in girls' clubs:

Adolescent girls and young women from 10-25 age are members of the clubs. In general 40 members form a club. They are selected according to their age as per birth certificate. They take part in monthly session of reproductive health, menstrual health and gender-based violence issues. They are aware of the issues after participation at the sessions. 30 girls' clubs received the following materials of 30 file racks, 30 tables, 300 plastic chairs, 150 plastic mats, 30 push boards, 30 water filters, 120 sets of badmintons, 120 skipping ropes, 60 ludo boards, 30 keram boards, 60 daba and reproductive health related books.





## Days Observation:

International Women Day on 8th March, International MHM day on 28th May, International Youth day on 12th August, international child Day on 11 October, 16 Days activism from 25th Nov. to 10th December, 2021 were jointly observed engaging stakeholders and networks from different concerned line departments.



## Activating Village Court in Bangladesh Project (Phase II)

TAHZINGDONG is an implementing partner for Lama and Naikhyangchari upazila of Bandarban Hill District under Activating Village Court in Bangladesh project phase-II, in partnership with GRAUS funded by UNDP, SID-CHT. The overall objective of the project is “to contribute to improving access to justice for disadvantaged and marginalized groups in Bangladesh”. Under this project, an activity is the training on case management and documentation for strengthening the traditional justice system in CHTs. The beneficiaries were 10 Union Parishad Chairmen and Members, 34 Headmen and 275 Karbaries of the two Upazilas.

### Activities Implemented in Brief:

The activities of the project are to empower and enable access to an affordable, fair and transparent justice system at the local level, particularly for marginalized and vulnerable groups. It is to educate the community members in particular the rural poor, women and marginalized groups on their rights, remedies and methods of utilizing village courts as a means to resolve disputes. Linkages were established between the formal and informal justice system to ensure a more joined-up process of justice delivery,



prioritizing the needs of the poor, women and disadvantaged persons and communities. The key activities are shown below:

- Mediation services: Meetings with household members were conducted about the local justice systems, particularly VC. Workshops on mediation techniques & VC processes were organized for CBO Members at UP level.
- Capacity building of UP personnel, field staff, CBO members, and village police. Issue-based skill development programs were held for women and other disadvantaged groups at the upazilla level.
- Upazilla level sensitization workshops were organized with Judges, Government officials, UNO, MLJPA, LGRD, etc. in order to ensure that VCs function in accordance with law and in a transparent manner for wider dissemination of information on VC.
- Technical and logistic support were provided to Union Parishads for reinforcing VCs to make it more accessible for local communities.



### **Training on Traditional Justice System:**

Based on the targeted activities, 9 training sessions on traditional justice system conducted. 244 Karbaries, 23 Headmen received trainings on case management and documentation on the traditional justice system. They gained knowledge on how to manage and document the cases they handle in respective customary system. The rural poor, particularly women are able to use their knowledge and skills to demand justice and are more aware of their rights and remedies and services available to protect themselves.



### **Training on Traditional Justice Mechanism:**

Trainings on traditional justice mechanism conducted for the elected public representatives of Union Parishads. In addition, 456 courtyard meetings were conducted by Community Mobilizers for developing the knowledge on traditional justice system. The traditional leaders play roles in resolving social disputes, family disputes, and marital affairs related conflict and land management through the customary justice system.

### **Popular Theatre Training:**

30 youths from Lama and Naikhyongchari received trainings on popular theatre. 5 popular theatre programs were arranged to raise awareness on traditional justice system. The participants have developed their capacity in organizing theatre show and enhancing skills on making good IPT scripts. The popular theatre has been able to deliver a number of important messages to the rural community in order to address issues of access to justice and discrimination.

### **Women and Girls Empowerment Through Education and Skills Component. “Strengthening Women’s and Girls’ Advancement Through Access to Education in the Chittagong Hill Tracts”**

TAHINGDONG, with the assistance of UNDP in collaboration with MoCHTA, is implementing Strengthening Inclusive Development in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (SID-CHT) to keep up the momentum of development process of the CHT. It aims at strengthening community land, resource and livelihood management; increase participation and influence to shape decision-making; and strengthen democratic governance with responsive institutions and effective services. As part of the integrated endeavor of inclusive development of the CHT, Global Affairs Canada’s support for **“Women and Girls” Empowerment Through Education & Skills in Chittagong Hill Tracts**” is commendable for having impact on empowerment of women and girls in the region.

It is adhered that a detailed modality for implementing activities under Responsible Party Agreement (RPA) implementing Partner “TAHZINGDONG” for accomplishing RPA activities in an effective and efficient manner.



The component of “**Women and Girls” Empowerment through education and skills in CHT**” project aims to improve quality of education and contribute to enhanced social advancement and economic opportunities for them through the following objectives:

1. Selection of community for outreach sessions, community mobilization & prepare community profiling at School and community level;
2. Conduct community outreach sessions at community level;
3. Site selection/ center selection for Safe spaces for girls in consultation with school management; and,
4. Formation of 100 Youth Clubs/Groups with two-third girls.

### **Training of Project Staff:**

Conducted trainings of project staffs on community outreach sessions & community mobilization for getting accessible, safe and inclusive education and learning for girls and adolescent girls, particularly those from ethnic minorities and with disabilities in primary and secondary schools. The staff were oriented on community outreach activities and community mobilization with regard to gender-sensitive and demand-driven technical and vocational education and training. 12 schools have been selected in Lama for safe spaces for girls in consultation with school management.



The objectives of the safe space are to make aware of the girls on menstrual hygiene, to take rest and provide hygiene kits during their emergency needs. Adolescent girls avail the opportunities. All the adolescent girls are guided by a guide teacher, preferably a woman teacher, for the activity. The girls have received the opportunities to share their experiences with each other about their menstrual related issues.

### **Community Outreach Session:**

60 community outreach sessions were conducted at community level with parents and traditional leaders in seven Upazilla of the district. The objectives of the session are for girls education in relation their hygiene and menstrual health.



### **Youth Clubs Formation:**

60 youth clubs, age from 16-30 years, have been formed in seven Upazilla of the district. The activities are gender issues, women discrimination, child marriage issues and live skill. They will play the roles of awareness raising through popular theatre.

## **Bandarban Agriculture and Nutrition Initiative (BANI)**

Communities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) have historically suffered from pervasive poverty brought on by a myriad of factors, including recurring human-induced and natural shocks and stressors that increase vulnerability and contribute to heightened food insecurity and malnutrition, which is exacerbated by inadequate social inclusion and weak systems. Changing agricultural practices and loss of forested areas have accelerated environmental degradation, increasing soil erosion, landslides and loss of productive resources and assets. Hunger periods occur in both dry and rainy seasons with chronic water scarcity and seasonal flooding being major contributing factors.

BANI is focusing its integrated program of nutrition sensitive agriculture coupled with market systems strengthening interventions in the two most densely populated upazilas (sub-districts) of Bandarban District (Lama and Bandarban Sadar). These upazilas have a high proportion of people living in poverty, large ethnic minority populations and high rates of stunting, under-nutrition and food insecurity. Working with the current participant groups, two of SAPLING's core interventions will be strengthened and extended under BANI: Integrated Enhanced Homestead Food Production (IEHFP), and Income Generating Activities (IGA) and Market Facilitation.

### **Upazilla Marketing Committee Meeting:**

Upazilla Marketing Committee meeting is part of BANI's regular activities of IGA conducted by Market Development Officer at Union and Upazilla level. The meeting is held to provide technical suggestions to them addressing their troubleshooting encountered in marketing activities. The UMC is to make market linkage



between input and output buyers for delivering advanced messages on potential crops demand and getting fair price. They also provide technical suggestions to farmers on where and how to get necessary supports.



## Refresher Training of LHW:

Refresher trainings conducted for existing LHW on primary treatment and management of poultry, livestock and business plan. LHW plays key roles in arranging trainings on making linkages between poultry farmers and line department how to receive necessary assistance with regard to rearing poultry. BANI has strengthened the pro-poor market structure by selecting market needs and contribute to diversification of income for poor or extreme poor producers under BANI project. The training is mainly conducted by District Livestock Officer and Upazila Livestock Officers.



Using folk drama presentations, information is conveyed to encourage family members to seek health care services as needed, emphasizing specific needs of PLW, adolescents and children under 5. BANI video content provides an opportunity for IEHFP to continue to support the GOB in vitamin A supplementation (VAS) and deworming campaigns, EPI, and growth monitoring and promotion (GMP) as well as promote critical healthcare services for women and children.

## Australian High Commissioners visit:

Australian High Commissioner H.E. Jeremy Bruer visited one of the BANI's implementing activities to explore project field programs on 13 October, 2021. He interacted with community people on the impact of the project in their lives. Later, he appreciated in his appreciation letter saying that *"I was most impressed to see how TAHZINGDONG's nature conservation activities are benefiting the people who live there"*.



Figure 1 Australian High Commissioner H.E. Jeremy Bruer visited BANI Project.

## FNG Group Formation

One-time enrollment of participants under BANI project for the took place during the scheduled group formation meeting. The process of group formation has completed within one day. FFs use tablets for geocoding, no hardcopy register book for participant registration and future record keeping.

The MT/FFs have completed the following pre-works, with the assistance of M&E officer, completion upon which, he could arrangement of the group formation meeting.



The group formation is completed within one-day and selection of eligible participants have done through community discussion and validation. It ensured that all SAPLING-IEHFP participants and new eligible participants (PLWs and vulnerable people) were present during the group formation meeting. Also Karbari, local leaders and former CHSW attended the meeting.

In order to ensure presence of all SAPLING-IEHFP participants, contact the IEHFP group/Learning Centre (LC) leader two or a day before or well in advance the scheduled group formation meeting, ensuring that the members are informed of the meeting agenda.

Explain to FNC leader and CHSW (and Karbari) about the criteria of vulnerable participants so that they could inform and ensure the presence of any missed vulnerable participants in the group formation meeting. Then the FNG group formed.

### FNG Group Formation

Union	Para	Group	Participants
Aziznagar	58	117	1906
Faitong	48	133	2262
Fashiyakhali	100	368	8584
Bandarban Sadar	52	116	1841
Kuhalong	59	145	2318
Suwalock	49	120	2013
Tongkabati	54	68	948
Total	420	1066	17851

### Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA):

A part from BANI project, Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) activity was implemented with the aim to link to other interventions to strengthen early recovery and resilience among poor and extreme poor pregnant and lactating women. The purpose of the MPCA activity was to provide cash resources to meet immediate and urgent basic needs and prevent additional loss of assets and livelihoods. MPCA was needed to protect lives and livelihoods by meeting essential and urgent needs of 2,000 acutely food insecure PEP PLW and their families living in five of the most impacted unions of Bandarban District, representing a concentration of the most vulnerable households of the 27,120 currently assisted by BANI.



## Chittagong Hill Tracts Communities Forest Landscape Restoration Project (CHT-FLR)

TAHZINGDONG has been working with Arannayk Foundation (AF) in Bandarban Hill Districts of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) since 2009 in restoration and conservation of degraded forests and village common forests (VCF). Considering experience and reports of the Arannayk Foundation, US Forest Service (USFS) has selected the AF for field level implementation of the CFLR project in Rowangchari Upazila of Bandarban Hill District. Many participants have suggested avoiding typical afforestation with exotic species. They have also emphasized on the need for addressing livelihoods of the communities who have been using the land for either shifting cultivation or other practices. After having a baseline survey, the households were organized and the project provided them institutional development support through reorganizing their executive committee and by-laws for managing the committee. They were provided with necessary supports to document the decisions of the meeting, sharing responsibilities to members and progress made on the decisions.



For their capacity building on homestead agroforestry, 117 household members were trained on improved homestead agroforestry, 30 members on natural resources management and 10 potential entrepreneurs on nursery practices. All the trainees received support for strengthening their relevant activities and the project staff made follow up visits to ensure effective use of the materials supports including plantation in the homesteads. The main target of the CFLR during the year was to develop restoration opportunity assessment methodology (ROAM) and identification of mosaics for restoration. Institute of Forestry and Environmental Sciences, Chittagong University (IFESCU) being experienced in GIS/RS and field survey in Chittagong Hill Tracts, the AF engaged relevant professionals of IFESCU for the ROAM. The ROAM Team made necessary exploration in the field along with GIS/RS data analysis.

Based on the field level exploration of ROAM team, floral survey by an ethno-botanist and forest taxonomist, it was realized that there were need for urgent restoration activities in riparian sites where communities have been growing peanut or tobacco and some of the areas which are highly degraded but contribute to establishment of corridors for connecting the VCFs. The communities endorsed the ideas and they were engaged in planting more than 5000 trees and bamboo seedlings in the riparian areas and more than 10,000 seedlings in the mosaics. The communities of the areas are poor. Their monthly income varies from BDT 10,000-15,000. Though it looks reasonable, they are having this income from over-exploitation of forests and shifting cultivation. With increasing population, shifting cultivation is becoming unsustainable and land degradation is accelerating. Unless livelihood is addressed, it will continue and there will be further degradation in near future. One of the main areas of livelihood improvement is homestead based interventions such as promoting poultry rearing, goat rearing, pig rearing and homestead agroforestry with fruit trees and other commercially important plant species.

## Inception Workshop

The USFS Compass team jointly with Arannayk Foundation and TAHZINGDONG organized an inception workshop on the FLR program in Bandarban on June 3, 2021. The workshop highlighted the enhancing capacity of the local communities and organizations for forest landscape restoration for sustainable ecosystem services. Chairman of Bandarban Hill District Council Mr. Kyaw Shwe Hla was present in the workshop as Chief Guest. He appreciated the objectives, approach and planned activities of the CHT-FLR



program. In his speech, the emphasized on the need for promoting alternative income generating activities among the forest dependent communities to reduce their dependence on the forests and to restore the ecosystem productivity of the degraded forest landscapes in Bandarban Hill district. The participants emphasized on planting local native species in the envisaged biodiversity corridors and riparian sites.

## Reorganizing VCF Committee:

The CHT-FLR program considered four VCF communities in Rowangchari Upazila of Bandarban Hill District. VCF is a common forest reserved by villagers nearby a village. The VCF is managed by a committee of the villagers usually led by village leader. In order to assess the present management system and capacity development needs of the VCF management committees, the CHT-FLR team conducted four separate meetings with the existing committees. Each committee was given an introduction about the Compass CHT-FLR program. It was observed that none of the VCF committees had written by-laws and there was no practice of regular executive committee meetings and annual general meetings.

They only had some unwritten practices to control community members' access and use of resources from the VCFs. The project team shared the idea of having by-laws of the VCF committee to make the committee more active and responsible. They appreciated the idea but expressed their limitation in conducting meetings and recording the discussion as they don't have adequate skill. They were assured of providing necessary support to develop their skill by the project team.

## Nursery Training

Though 95% of the land is suitable for forests, there is degradation of forests due to over-exploitation. Some of the people have planted valuable timber trees in forests taking either lease from the district administration or encroached in forest land. They are managing the





plantation for cash. They obtain permission for harvesting from the Forest Department and they clear the area when the trees become merchantable size. Due to soil disturbances, the top soil is eroded and deposited to the stream resulting in siltation of the stream. Thus, there is an urgent need for restoration of landscape with appropriate trees and commercial crops that provides best return to the dwellers.

The ROAM team identified 15 such sites where restoration may be made with local tree species. The team also suggested 20 local species which might be used in mosaic scale restoration. As there are no nurseries within plantation areas, it is essential to have good nurseries so that appropriate planting materials are available.



The project identified 10 such interested youths from the four VCFs who expressed their interests to be a nursery entrepreneur. A five day long training was arranged for the nursery entrepreneurs following a training module of “nursery establishment and propagation of timber trees, bamboos and rattan”.

Though the training was scheduled to be held in the nursery of the Institute of Forestry and Environmental Sciences of Chittagong University but due to Covid, it was organized in the Forest Department’s nursery at Balaghat of Bandarban. The trainees had excellent orientation and hands-on training in the nursery. Prof. Kamal Hossain was supported by the Divisional Forest Officer and the



Range Officer in theoretical lectures while the field staff of FD assisted the participants in soil media preparation, polybag filling, seed dibbling, watering, nursery bed management, disease management and grading. They were also trained in seed treatment and transferring seeds from germination bed to polybags.



## Community Partnerships to Strengthen Sustainable Development Program (Establish and Youth Conservation Corps in Bangladesh-YCC).

Community Partnerships to Strengthen Sustainable Development (Compass) is a 5-year inter-agency partnership, between USAID Bangladesh and US Forest Service International Programs (USFS), in which USFS will implement a technical cooperation program with financial support from USAID Bangladesh. The areas of technical assistance provided by USFS will address a wide array of natural resource conservation issues in Bangladesh. One of the major components of the Compass program is to establish Youth Conservation Corps to strengthen the capacity of youth to improve their livelihoods and conserve natural resources by developing leaders in skilled trades and environmental stewardship through experience-based training, community service, and internships. The target populations for this program are underprivileged and marginalized youth aged of 18 – 29 who have not completed secondary school in Cox’s Bazar and Bandarban district.

A five-month-long residential training and one month of internship will be provided for each cohort of YCC training. Some of the major activities implemented in the area are given below;

### Community Consultations:

The community consultation program was the initial work that TAHZINGDONG has supported to the YCC program in

Rowangchari, Bandarban. The local level stakeholders, community leaders and social & environmental activists were consulted about the YCC activities. The consultations also have sensitized the local level people about the program. The consultation helped YCC to design the YCC implementation as well as youth selection for the 1<sup>st</sup> cohort of training.



TAHZINGDONG helped the YCC members to organize the consultation meetings and events along with the stakeholder mobilizations.

### Youth Outreach and Selection for 1<sup>st</sup> Cohort:

8 Youths (4 males and 4 females) were selected for the 1st cohort of Young Conservation Corps (YCC) training from the Rowangchari. The youths were selected through a competitive process maintaining a proper recruitment process. The TAHZINGDONG has supported the interview venue arrangement, interviewee mobilizations and selections. They were selected for different domains such as driving, tailoring, nursery tec as per their interest.

### **Youth Participants Orientation:**

TAHZINGDONG has supported mobilizing the youths to orient the YCC training on 16 July 2021 before starting the online training. TAHZINGDONG has supported managing the meeting venue, food, and logistics. The orientation was on the YCC training kick-off, code of conduct, training implementation plans, the expectations from them and the dos and don'ts matter of the program after selection of the corps. The training is for 6 months provided by experts from different institutions.



### **Forming Team and Office Set-up:**

After signing the cohort wise contract, TAHZINGDONG has formed a small team to create continuous support for the YCC program. One project officer and one finance officer were designated to the YCC project related works in the TAHZINGDONG office, Bandarban.

### **Selected Trainee Mobilizations:**

TAHZINGDONG started supporting the YCC youth participants who have been selected from Bandarban. To attend the online training initially in August 2021, TAHZINGDONG provided logistical support to the youths. Youths have received sim cards, internet top-up support, technological troubleshooting supports, etc.

Once the training shifted to the in-person modality in September 2021, TAHZINGDONG helped to transport the YCC youths to move from Bandarban to Cox's Bazar.

TAHZINGDONG has maintained close communications with the youth participants and their families to keep up their confidence and trust. The Executive Director of TAHZINGDONG has visited the training in Cox's Bazar in November 2021. He met with the youths and conducted a discussion session on the effectiveness of the training and plan after returning to the training.



### **Youth Outreach and Selection for the 2nd Cohort:**

The outreach and selection process for the 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort was started from 15 November 2021. YCC team shared the announcement, application templates with TAHZINGDONG. TAHZINGDONG has circulated that announcement in the community through social media and hand to hand communication. In this regard we have had conducted a meeting with different tire of stakeholder like UPz Chairman, UNO, Union Chairman, UP members, Community Leader (Karbari, Headman) and other line departments. Around 50 applications were collected and 30 of them were shortlisted for the interview. The interview was conducted in December 2021 and finally, 10 participants from Bandarban was selected.

**“Support to Peaceful Coexistence of Diverse Ethnic and Religious Communities”.  
Partnership for a Tolerant and Inclusive Bangladesh (PTIB).**

TAHZINGDONG implemented the project of Partnership for a Tolerant and Inclusive Bangladesh in partnership with UNDP for the period of December 2020 - May 2021 at Bandarban Sadar Upazila under Bandarban District. The purpose of the project is to promote advocacy through sensitizing community people on community cohesion and peaceful co-existence of different community so that community people can play active role in bringing inclusivity, tolerance and peaceful co-existence. The activities of the project were inter religious dialogues, street drama with cultural programme at union level, sports for peace football tournament and youth orientation on awareness on safe social media.

**Peace football Tournament:**

Peace football for boys and girls were arranged for high school level on 29 March, 2021 through consultation and engagement of upazila level stakeholders. 16 teams- 8 teams for boys and 8 teams for girls- participated the tournament match. The peace tournament helped promote interaction, communication and building friendly relationship between different ethnic groups. It has enhanced social cohesion,



reciprocal exchange of culture and system among different communities. Hon’ble Upazila Chairman of Bandarban Sadar Upazila Parishad was present as Chief Guest at the opening match while Mayor of Bandarban Poursava was present as the Chief Guest during the closing and prize giving ceremony.



Under the project, an inter religious dialogue was organized with different religious leaders and community of different religions on 22 Nov. 2020 to promote social cohesion. Each religious leaders expressed their commitment to build social solidity and peace building by respecting each and every religious values and norms. Everybody expressed that we can sit together for a while social bonding peaceful life leading. Hon’ble Chairman of BHDC, Mr. Kyaw She Hla was present as Chief Guest at the dialogue meeting.



## SOKKHOMOTA- I Collaborate, Prepare, and Resilient to Natural and Human Induced Disasters.

This project was implemented in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) of Bangladesh where community people are vulnerable due to hilly terrain, limited access to services, poor infrastructure and shelters, and limited capacity of disaster risk management structures. Flash flood is common throughout the CHT, especially Bandarban Hill District where approximately 50% of the total population of Bandarban district lives, is at risk of the impacts. Environmental degradation and the loss of natural resources and assets.. In response, the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) project SOKKHOMOTA-I Collaborate, Prepare and Resilient to Natural and Human Induced Disasters working with implementing partner TAHZINGDONG to address these needs. The following activities are implemented in Alikadam Upazila and Naikhyongchari Upazila under Bandarban Hill District during the period of April, 2019- April, 2021. Some key activities implemented under the project are as follows-

Monthly UDMC meeting was held at the Baishari Union Parishad presided over by the UP Chairman of the Union. At the meeting, all the UP members and concerned stakeholders were requested to assist to all COs in maintaining and developing HH level plans for disaster risk management. In addition, the following concerns were usually focused in the meetings. Protecting potential damage from major disasters; the need for pre-preparedness in disaster risk reduction; provide necessary supports at the social and family level during disaster occurrence; discuss to protect equipment, search and rescue items, and distribution plan for CDRT.



### DRM Session:

DRM Session one of the most important activities in SOKKHOMOTA I project. This training basically helps community to get prepared for upcoming disaster. During this time how they will cope with learning shared each other in the session. All Community organizers have successfully completed the HH level of DRM session during this reporting period. The COs conducted these sessions at para level by forming groups as per their plan. They used flip charts and flash cards during the sessions maintaining proper social distance and maintaining hygiene.





### Implementation:

As per plan, a close out meeting of the project was arranged at upazila level with Upazila Red Crescent Youth (RCY) Volunteers on 14 August 2021 at Naikhongchari sadar union parishad conference room. Nurul Absar Emon, Chairman of Naikhongchari sadar union parishad was present as Chief Guest at the meeting while Chai Nu Prue Marma, Upazila Coordinator, Shokkhomota project presided over the meeting. 31RCY volunteers - 25 males and 6 females- of the Upazila participated the meeting including RCY team leader. They received knowledge on First Aid, Search & Rescue, Disaster Risk Management and Early Warning System.



At a glance of CFW schemes activities done including mitigation cost:

During the project period SOKKHOMOTA-I implemented thirteen schemes in nine wards where around 275 beneficiaries worked for 30 days.

### Gender Responsive Education and Skills in CHTs.

The Chittagong Hill Tracts is covered with distinct cultures and traditions of the diversified ethnicities, history and governance system,

hilly topography and enriched with its own cultural background, festivities, norms, values, rites and rituals. In addition, CHTs remains a conflict-affected and poverty-ridden region, despite all the development efforts put by the GOB and different NGOs. Women and girls of ethnic communities are mostly affected by multiple dimensions of poverty due to their roles and position within and outside their societies. Therefore, BRAC in partnership with TAHZINGDONG has taken innovative initiatives in Bandarban Hill District focusing on youth and adolescent development.



### **Program Implemented:**

6 workshops on Yearly Planning at 6 government primary schools and 1 at non- government primary school were conducted by 31 December' 2021 by the GRESP team of TAHZINGDONG, Alikadam, Bandarban Hill District. The workshops were conducted as per GRESP workshop guideline and schedule. School teachers, SMC members and members of Guardians participated the workshops. They gained knowledge on gender responsive education and skills.

GRESP team of the project conducted 2 Stakeholder Dialogues at Alikadam & Thanchi by 31 December, 2021 with the participation of school teachers, Bazar Committee, Local administration/line department, students' guardians of BRAC skills program, NGO representatives & local allies. Total 137 participants were present. Where Male-81, Femal-56 at the Dialogue meeting. The meeting was chaired by Head Teacher, Chompot Para Govt. Primary School for Alikadam while UNO was present as Chief Guest, Upazila Social Welfare Officer & Training Officer were present as Special Guests. Participants were sensitized on gender responsive education.

### **Leadership Training:**

GRESP team of Tahzingdong, Alikadam, Bandarban Hill District conducted 2 Youth Leadership Trainings for five days at the Tahzingdong Upazila Office of Alikadam and Thanchi. 2 youth leaders, who have received the TOT of youth leadership from BRAC, facilitated the trainings. 12 (m-6, F-6) local youths of 4 different ethnic communities from each Upazila from (Male-6, Female-6) received the trainings. They were oriented on gender responsive education and skills.



## Case Study: “Daiyang Mro established the rights of the backward Mro people”

Mendui Para is a remote village in Taracha Union of Roangchhari upazila. 30 families live in Mendui Para. The Mro ethnic group lives at the Mendui Para. The Mros are disadvantaged in all aspects including education, socio-economic, medical services and communication system in the hilly areas. Despite the gradual development of civilization, the visible change of development in their way of lives is hardly seen. In July 2017, in collaboration with the Manusher Jonno Foundation, TAHZINGDONG decided to implement the project "Strengthening Civil Society and Government Institutions to Increase the Adaptability of Local People to Climate Change" in Taracha Union, Roangchhari Upazila. Mendui Para is included in the preliminary and final survey. Daiyang Mro joined as a member of the community group from the beginning of the project. He is determined to making his dream come true. By joining the project, he attended regular monthly meetings to learn about adaptation to climate change, disasters, actions to be taken to prevent violence against women, rights, access to services from government agencies. Jum farming as well as adapting to climate change with the use of new technology-dependent agricultural activities found to be successful. Later, many villagers of him were inspired to use the new technology dependent activities. At the end of 2019, Daiyang informed us that he would run as a member in the 2021 at the local government election. He has already gained knowledge of accountability tool, like public hearings, community scorecards and interface meetings. He finally took part in the election and was elected uncontested as no one else was contesting in the Ward of the Union. He has recognized his participation of this project helped to be successful.





## A Case Study: Dreams to be an Elected Member

“I can raise my voice now,” said Menu Ching Marma who is an inhabitant of Kemalong para of 1 no. ward under Kuhalong Union of Bandarban District. She is actually a house wife. She passed HSC. Husband is a service holder. They have no child yet. After completion of household work she used to do voluntary work in the area. Community people especially women respect her as she is working for the vulnerable, distressed women and child. She is an active member of Women & Child violence committee in her area.



Having this experience she thought to engage in UDMC as well as WDMC. Now she is a general member of both two committees. She feels very proud to be a member of this group. She doesn't feel shy to talk in the large group. WDMC has given her chance to meet with various types of people whom she did not talk ever. Disaster management training has enriched her and she can make aware others now. She has learned how to protect environment and social development. She feels much empowered now. She participates all training whenever she gets opportunity from anywhere as well as she participates every WDMC and UDMC meeting too. Her dream is to become a UP member in the future.













