



Evaluation Report

Name of the project

**Capacity Building of Stakeholders for Improved Planning and Management
of Forest and Biodiversity Conservation Project**

Implementing entity

Proshika

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Executive Summary

The Arannayk Foundation (AF) seeks external support to review the completed activities of the projects supported by it. At present the Foundation has undertaken an initiative to appraise the activities of 20 projects on their completion. 'Capacity Building of Stakeholders for Improved Planning and Management of Forest and Biodiversity Conservation Project', implemented by PROSHIKA is one of such projects.

The staff of Forest Department and also of the NGOs are deeply engaged in conservation, protection, restoration and management of forests in Bangladesh. The modern concept in this regard is the community approach. Most of the implementing staff lack in skill in effective facilitation, participatory development, management of community based biodiversity assessment and promotion of entrepreneurship. Such deficiency seriously affects meaningful biodiversity conservation. The project objective was thus capacity building of the Arannayk supported project implementing entities.

Four training programmes, viz., development of facilitation skill, participatory rural appraisal, organizational and management, value chain analysis were conducted by PROSHIKA for different entities who are directly involved in planning and execution of activities in conservation, protection, restoration and management of forests in Bangladesh. In addition one experience sharing study visit for seven days was arranged. The activities of the project were done during the project period starting from November, 2010 to November, 2011. The outputs of these episodes are summarized below:

- A total of 23 Arannayk Foundation (AF) supported project staffs of different level from 12 organizations were imparted training on Facilitation Technique (FT).
- A total of 29 AF supported project staffs of different level from 17 organizations were imparted training on Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA).
- A total of 24 AF supported project staffs of different level from 13 organizations were imparted training on Organizational Development and Management (ODM) of community based organization.
- A total of 16 AF supported project staffs of different level from 14 organizations were imparted training on Value Chain Analysis (VCA).
- A total of 13 participants visited community based forest protection activities in different parts of Nepal where 5 participants from Bangladesh Forest Department, 7 from NGOs and one from AF.

The participants in these events acquired knowledge and enriched their expertise that have been helping in conservation of management of forest resource. Such updating skill is a key to sustainability of the community based initiatives. The weaknesses in project implementation have been explored. Finally, it has been recommended to continue capacity building activities through demand-led training for at least three more years and arrange an exposure visit to India/ Vietnam.

Introduction (including Methodology of the Evaluation)

The Arannayk Foundation, also known as the Bangladesh Tropical Forest Conservation Foundation, facilitates the conservation, protection, restoration and sustainable use and management of tropical forests in Bangladesh. The Arannayk Foundation serves as a catalyst for the protection and sustainability of forest biodiversity in Bangladesh. It adopts an ecosystem

approach and considers the entire range of possible goods and services in order to optimize the mix of benefits for a given ecosystem.

The Foundation provides grants and other technical support to NGOs, community organizations, universities and research institutions, and other organizations working to conserve forest biodiversity in Bangladesh. The grant size is Tk 3,500,000 – 5,000,000/- for a period of 4 - 8 years. The foundation incorporates rigorous monitoring and evaluation to ensure effectiveness of its projects, and develops forward looking assessments to incorporate lessons learned and guide future initiatives.

On completion of the project Arannayk Foundation seeks external support to review the activities of the projects. At present the Foundation has undertaken an initiative to appraise the activities of 20 projects on their completion. Capacity Building of Stakeholders for Improved Planning and Management of Forest and Biodiversity Conservation Project', implemented by Proshika is one of such projects.

The present assignment was accomplished through review of relevant documents and discussion with the personnel of the implementing organization.

Context and Objectives of the Project

Community based biodiversity conservation demands good skill of the personnel involved in implementation of the activities. The staff of Forest Department and also of the NGOs is deeply engaged in conservation, protection, restoration and management of forests in Bangladesh. The modern concept in this regard is the community approach. Most of the implementing staff lack in skill in effective facilitation, participatory development, management of community based biodiversity assessment and promotion of entrepreneurship. Such deficiency seriously affects meaningful biodiversity conservation. To this end, some common training courses for the concerned staff of forest department and NGOs are needed.

Further to this, exposure visit to practically visualize the community forest activities of the neighboring countries such as India/Nepal also changes the mindset of the programme leaders to take up effective programme on community based forestry.

In a nutshell, demand-led training is unavoidable to enrich knowledge and develop skill in the management capacity of the participants. It helps the participants to identify the local problems and resolve the problems. Thus, trainings on resource management, development of facilitation skill, participatory rural appraisal, biodiversity survey, value chain analysis, etc., are demand warranted programmes. The activities of the project were done during the project period starting from November,2010 to November, 2011.

There was one objective of the project. It was:

- Capacity building of the Arannayk supported project implementing entities.

Project Activities and Outcomes

This project was aimed to enhance the capacity of field level staff of the forest department and the partner NGOs through imparting training and arranging an exposure visit to Nepal. The project organized a total of four training courses and one study visit. A total of 92 project staff from 17 organizations participated in these events (Table 1).

Table 1. Pen picture of participants in the training course and the study visit

Sl	Organization	FT	PRA	ODM	VCA	SV
1	SHED	3	3	3	1	1
2	Hill Flower	2	1	2	1	-
3	DAM	2	2	2	-	1
4	SUS	2	2	1	1	-
5	CNRS	2	2	-	1	-
6	BIRAM	1	2	2	1	-
7	HF	2	2	2	2	-
8	YPSA	2	2	2	1	1
9	Padakhep	2	2	2	1	1
10	Anando	2	2	1	2	-
11	RDRS Bangladesh	1	2	-	1	1
12	Tah zing Dong	2	2	2	1	-
13	Protyashi	-	1	2	-	-
14	Uttaran	-	1	-	1	-
15	IDO	-	1	-	-	-
16	CODEC	-	1	2	-	-
17	Juno Pawr	-	1	1	1	-
18	PROSHIKA				1	2
19	Forest Department					5
20	Arannayk Foundation					1
	Total	23	29	24	16	13

A brief description of this trainings imparted is mentioned below:

Training on Facilitation Techniques (FT)

Training course on Facilitation Techniques was organized at PROSHIKA Human Resource Development Centre (HRDC), Satoria, Manikgonj during January 9-12, 2011. Total participants in this training were 23 (Male 21 and 2 Female). All of them were the project staff from 12 organizations like SHED, CNRS, Humanitarian Foundation, YPSA, Anando, Tahzing Dong, RDRS, SUS, Hill Flower, Padakhep, BIRAM, Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM). These participants were employed in implementation of projects for biodiversity conservation supported by Arannayk Foundation (AF).

The intention of this training was to develop skills among the participants to be able to :

- explain the concept and principles of adult learning;
- create conducive learning environment and use participatory learning methods and techniques in their respective training activities;

- facilitate effective meetings by following different techniques and considerable factors;
- facilitate organizing the people, identify problems, suggest different options for solving their problem and take decisions for effective management of the problems.
- facilitate the community members to resolve their conflicts;
- build organization according to desired need and develop participatory leadership.
- manage complex situation effectively.

The training curriculum was prepared by HDT that was endorsed by AF. As per training curriculum, a handbook was prepared and copy of the handbook was distributed to all participants. The main contents of the training included

- Principles of adult learning
- Concept of facilitation
- Training Facilitation
- Training methods and materials
- Practicum on training facilitation
- Accompaniment Process
- Meeting facilitation
- Problem solving and decision-making
- Conflict resolution
- Managing complex situation

The course was satisfactorily conducted by specialized trainers from PROSHIKA Human Development Training (HDT) Department. Different training methods like group discussion, role play, field visit; use of VIPP cards, poster, etc., were used during the course.

Some practical sessions were arranged and participants' performance was recorded in video that was critically reviewed and given feed-back to the participants for further improvement. The reactions of the participants on the training include:

- The course contents are appropriate to develop facilitation skill
- The learning will help implementation of project activities
- Such kind of training are essential for development activities
- Training for a longer duration would be more beneficial
- The training facilitators were friendly and cooperative

The post training feedback was collected from the participants over cell phone. The participants recognize that as a result of the training

- Their facilitation skill has improved;
- Field supervisors have become more efficient for delivery of inputs and support;
- They are able to render training to beneficiaries;
- Conflict management has become more easier, etc

Training on Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)

Training on Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) was organized during February 6-10, 2011 at PROSHIKA Regional Human Resource Development Centre (RHRDC), Mymensingh. In this course, a total of 29 project staff from 17 organizations like SHED, CNRS, Humanitarian Foundation, YPSA, Anando, Tahzing Dong, RDRS-Bangladesh, SUS, Hill Flower, Padakhep, BIRAM, DAM, IDO, Prottashi, Juno Pawr, Uttaran and CODEC actively participated.

The training was aimed to develop skills among the participants to be able to :

- explain the definition, genesis, pillars, principles and scopes of PRA;
- identify and describe different tools/methods of PRA;
- explain the role and responsibilities of a PRA team;
- apply the PRA tools/methods in respective community;
- prepare the PRA report

The main contents of the training included

- Concept of PRA
- PRA tools/methods
- PRA facilitation
- Practicum on PRA tools in field
- PRA report preparation

This course was conducted by a team of resources persons from Human Development Training (HDT) and Social Forestry Program (SFP) of PROSHIKA as per approved course curriculum and session plan. A handbook containing the training was prepared and distributed to the participants. This handbook is suitable for the young development workers. All the participants practiced different PRA tools in class room and in the field. Some selected PRA tools like social mapping, transect walk, oral history, rapport building, key informant interview , venn diagram, problem analysis, seasonal calendar, etc were practiced during the field visit. The participants prepared a report on PRA field visit.

On conclusion of the training the participants opined that they would be

- able to apply the learning in planning, participatory evaluation and monitoring in their project activities;
- able to identify problem, opportunities and skills of the community;
- assist the local communities in biodiversity conservation;
- able to assess the practical situation of livelihood of the people

The post training feedback was collected from the participants over cell phone. The participants recognize that the training

- has been useful in project planning and get community consensus for common resource utilization;

- has made easier to draw social mapping, resource mapping, future need identification, seasonal resource collection by using PRA tool;
- facilitated collecting people's opinion, needs, priority identification and household quantitative survey, etc;
- has been useful for site selection and rapport building among different stakeholders and beneficiaries.
- helped in conservation and management of Village Common Forests (VCF) and monitoring of different activities.
- helped on income assessment, etc.

Training on Organizational Development and Management (ODM)

The training on Organizational Development and Management (ODM) was organized during April 3-6, 2011 at YPSA HRDC, Chittagong. A total of 24 project staffs (Project Coordinator and Facilitator level) from 13 organizations like SHED, Humanitarian Foundation, YPSA, Anando, Tahzing Dong, SUS, Hill Flower, Podakhep, BIRAM, DAM, Prottashi, Juno Pawr, and CODEC actively participated in this course.

The training was designed to develop skills among the participants to be able to :

- Define and explain the concept, features and essential elements of an organization and organizational development process;
- Explain the concepts, tools and techniques of basic management function such as planning, organizing, directing/supervision, monitoring, coordination, collaboration and networking;
- Demonstrate how to conduct essential organizational development and management activities of a CBO such as development of constitution, preparing of annual plan and budget, conducting meetings, writing resolution of meetings, opening and operating bank accounts, preparing financial reports and other essential documents and maintaining files/registers.

The main contents of the training were:

- Organizational Development and its importance
- Building organization
- Organizational dynamics
- Organizational Development, Governance, transparency and accountability
- Organizational policy
- Organizational constitution development
- Annual activity planning
- Data collection and preservation
- Meeting and resolution
- Problem solving and decision making
- Reporting

- Financial management
- Savings and Credit management
- .Linkage building and networking
- Accompaniment process
- Supervision and monitoring

The course curriculum and session plan on ODM were appropriately designed to develop understanding and capacity of the project personnel. The training was conducted in participatory approach. Various participatory training methods, viz., brain storming, cyclic response, experience sharing, group discussion, station learning, pair group, role play, case analysis, demonstration, simulation game and multimedia projection were followed by the facilitators. Different types of training materials (written posters, VIPP cards, worksheets, power point slides, handouts etc.) were used in the training sessions. A set of handouts was given to participants in each session. All the resource persons were from PROSHIKA, who were experts in the area.

On conclusion of the training the participants viewed that

- Such training would be more effective if it were organized at the beginning of the project;
- Each project staff needs this training for effective implementation of project activities;
- It is very useful for a field level development worker;
- The contents of the training were specific and practical;
- Duration of the training course was very limited.

The post training feedback was collected from the participants over cell phone. The participants recognize that the training

- Developed capacity of the participant for organization build up , writing of meeting resolution ;
- Helped in solving problems, making decisions, facilitation more efficiently;
- Can contribute in efficient financial management and preparation different statements etc;
- Smoothened organizing of CBOs;
- Supported development of leadership ,etc

Training on Value Chain Analysis (VCA)

Training on Value Chain Analysis (VCA) was organized at Poultry Research and Training Center (PRTC) of Chittagong Veterinary and Animal Science University (CVASU) from 10-13th October, 2011. A total of 16 participants from different organizations like SHED, Hill Flower, Humanitarian Foundation, Tahzindong, Anando, CNRS, Shablomby Unnayan Sangstha (SUS),

BIRAM, Uttaran, Juno Pawr, YPSA, RDRS-Bangladesh, Padakhep and PROSHIKA participated at this training course.

The training was intended that on successful participation, the participants will be able to:

- Define the concept of value chain, understand the method of analysis, identify the constraints, opportunities & suggest interventions
- Prepare a value chain report
- Understand the concept of rural entrepreneurship development
- Identify threats and opportunities of enterprise promotion
- Prepare business plan, production and marketing plan
- Explore market opportunities
- Organize and manage an enterprise

The main contents of the training were:

- Concept and mapping of value change
 - o Concept and issues of value chain analysis
 - o Definition of value chain and difference between supply chain and value chain
 - o Mapping the value chain
 - o Definition of value chain and difference between supply chain and value chain
 - o Mapping the value chain
- Concept of rural entrepreneurship development & forms of business
 - o BDS for rural enterprise promotion
 - o Problems and prospects of rural enterprise development
 - o Identification of agro-business opportunities
 - o Agro-based project selection
 - o SWOT analysis
 - o Introduction to business plan, agro-based marketing plan and production plan
 - o Organization and management of an enterprise
 - o Preparation and presentation of business plan

Various participatory training methods, viz., brain storming, cyclic response, experience sharing, group discussion, pair group, role play, fishbowl, demonstration, field exercise, simulation game and multimedia projection were used for the training by the facilitator. Different types of training materials on value chain (written posters, VIPP cards, worksheets, power point slides, pictures, dots, colors, etc.) were used

This training was conducted by Dr. Saleh Ahmed a well-known value chain specialist in Bangladesh. The course provided a brief introduction on the concept of value chain,

understanding method of analysis, identifying the constraints, opportunities and suggest interventions, and strengthen institutions that support sustainable rural development through market-oriented agro-enterprises in an area based context.

On conclusion of the training the participants viewed that

- Concept of the VCA training has changed their understanding positively towards product development, value analysis and market development;
- They would be able to realize that more new employment and income can be generated especially for the women with concept gained through VCA training;
- This training is very useful for agro-enterprise development and all development workers who are concerned with AIG activities must know concept of the VCA;
- In the certificate awarding session, Prof. Dr. A.S. Mahfuzul Bari, VC of CVASU, Chittagong commented that selection of this training for the participants has been is time warranted. He thanks PROSHIKA and Arannayk Foundation for arranging such a nice and timely initiatives.
- More practical session/field practice might be incorporated.

The post training feedback was collected from the participants over cell phone. The participants recognize that the training:

- Facilitated earning more income for project beneficiaries and product marketing
- The trainees are capable to provide beneficiaries basic knowledge and skills to develop the management capacity for different AIG activities.

Study Visit to Nepal

PROSHIKA organized a 7day-long study visit to Nepal for Arannayk supported project entities. This visit was held from 17th to 23rd April 2011.

A 13 members team from different stakeholders participated in this study visit. Among the participants 5 participants were senior forest officials of Bangladesh Forest Department, 7 from different organizations like SHED, DAM, YPSA, RDRS-Bangladesh, Padakhep, Proshika and one from AF.

The visit was a seven day programme during 17-23 April, 2011. It started on attending in the briefing session of Forest and Soil Conservation Department of Nepal and concluded with feedback session. During the visit, participants were able to interact with high official of Nepal Forest Department, district level forest officials, community people and their different activities.

The objectives of the study visit were to:

- observe the biodiversity activities such as biodiversity repository, conservation and management
- observe on-site experience of land resources management systems
- observe high value forest product and value chain
- observe access to bio-diversity forest and wetland to share idea on bio-diversity

The observations and lessons learned from the visit include:

Community Forestry:

- Acquired knowledge on conservation and sustainable use
- Got idea of supportive government policy
- Learnt facilitating and service providing role of FD: pro-people
- Observed that pro-poor community forestry user group (CFUG) has strong institutional capacity
- Rational & equitable resource allocation is available within CFUG
- Revolving fund is an effective means of sustainable poverty alleviation program of CFUG

Soil and Water Conservation:

- Conservation of natural forest is the best way
- Bio-engineering approach is more appropriate than mechanical measures of check dam protection
- Removal of big trees may help reduce land slide on gullies
- Land terracing is an effective way of controlling soil erosion

Protected Area Management:

- Tourism development is the most effective vehicle of Protected Area (PA) conservation
- Environmental, social and entrepreneurial education is prerequisite of tourism promotion
- The institutional arrangement of involving Buffer Zone Forest Users' Committee in local planning and coordination is effective
- Clear delineation of core zone – buffer zone and limiting tourism activities to buffer zone are effective strategies

REED

- Project development approach is comprehensive: thematic technical support is by ANSAB, FECOFUN and ICIMOD
- Uncertainty exists about market access and profitability of carbon trading (required minimum size, international negotiation skills, consultant/brokers' fee)
- CFUF members are concerned about potential risks of losing peoples' rights/access to forest resources, livelihood of the poor

Community Forestry Networking:

- FECOFUN is a strong network throughout the country at district and national level
- FECOFUN has played a significant role in empowering CFUGs
- Conflict exists between group interest and national policies and rules
- A gap is growing between the national apex body and local CFUGs

Impacts (especially on awareness and capacity development, livelihood, institutional development and forest and bio-diversity conservation)

Awareness and capacity development: The training programme itself is an event to interact among the participants that creates awareness. So the interaction in the training forum made the participants more aware on the value of conservation of bio-diversity.

Capacity development: The activities promoted capacity of twenty organizations listed in Table 1 on different aspects related to conservation, protection, restoration and sustainable use, and management of forest through training and exposure visit to Nepal. With these training events, capacity on facilitation technique, participatory rural appraisal, organizational development and management, and value chain analysis of NGOs implementing AF supported projects was enriched. As a result the trainees are able to address the issues of the communities more effectively. The exposure visit to Nepal has helped the participants to get an idea of community forestry management, soil and water conservation, protected area management, REED, community forestry networking in Nepal. The lessons learnt will be the instrument to improve the forestry practices in Bangladesh.

Livelihood improvement: The project activities are not directly related to livelihood improvement. Nevertheless, enhanced knowledge acquired through training will facilitate to interact with the communities more resourcefully thereby improving the livelihood.

Institutional development: The project is not aimed at the development of the implementing institution.

Forest and bio-diversity conservation: The project activities are not directly related to forest and bio-diversity conservation. Nevertheless, enhanced knowledge acquired through will facilitate to interact with the communities more resourcefully thereby improving forest and bio-diversity conservation.

Sustainability potential

Acquisition of knowledge is the key to do away with the weaknesses and short comings in any intervention thereby ensuring sustainability. In this context the project achievements have an important effect.

Weaknesses

- Project tenure is very short
- Instead of pre-selected theme, the training programmes should be more driven on appraisal the need from the field
- The short training programmes had limited scope for more practical exercise and field activity
- Lack of assessing post training feedback
- The trainees group consisted of heterogeneous qualification rendering difficulty in facilitation
- Training should be given soon after inception of field based programme.

Recommendations

It is recognized that learning is the best way in making progress. In this backdrop the capacity building activities through the project is highly valuable. However, the programme only for one year is too short to make things visible. Therefore, the training facilities should be sponsored for at least another three years. The following training programmes are recommended:

- Refreshers workshop for those who are already trained
- Workshop for training need assessment
- Advocacy for resources management
- Gender empowerment
- IGA
- Credit management to utilize as revolving fund
- Effective utilization of fuel to minimize environmental pollution
- Attitudinal change of personnel in key organizations in natural resources management
- An exposure visit to India/Vietnam should be arranged to eye opening of the personnel at the planning level of key stakeholders, etc.