

REPORT OF THE FINAL EVALUATION MISSION

IUCN-DFID/GTF Project on “Improving environmental governance for sustainable management of natural resource in Bangladesh”



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² The observations and opinions contained in this report are the author's responsibility, and do not reflect those of IUCN or any other institutions; the usual disclaimer applies.

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Niaz Ahmed Khan
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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AC	= Assistant Commissioner
AIG	= Alternative Income Generation
BDT	= Bangladesh Taka (the Bangladesh currency)
BWDB	= Bangladesh Water Development Board
CBFM	= Community Based Fisheries Management
CBO	= Community Based Organization
CNRS	= Centre for Natural Resource Studies (an IUCN member NGO)
DAE	= Department of Agricultural Extension
DFID	= Department for International Development [UK]
DFO	= District Fisheries Officer
ECA	= Ecological Critical Area
FD	= Forest Department
GoB	= Government of Bangladesh
GBP	= Great Britain Pound (1 GBP = 119 BDT approx.)
GTF	= Governance and Transparency Fund
IPAC	= Integrated Protected Area Co-management
FGD	= Focus Group Discussion
IUCN	= International Union for Conservation of Nature
IUCNB	= International Union for Conservation of Nature-Bangladesh Country Office
KAP	= Knowledge, Attitude and Practice
MACH	= Management of Aquatic Resources through Community Husbandry
MP	= Member of Parliament
MSP	= Multi-Stakeholder Platform
NACOM	= Nature Conservation Management (an IUCN member NGO)
NR	= Natural Resource
NRM	= Natural Resource Management
NRG	= Natural Resource Governance
<i>Para</i>	= Hamlet
SC	= Standing Committee [of Union <i>Parishad</i>]
SEMP	= Sustainable Environment Management Programme
TNA	= Training Needs Assessment
UFO	= Upazila Fisheries Officer
UK	= United Kingdom
UNDP	= United Nations Development Program
UNO	= Upazila <i>Niarbahi</i> [executive] Officer (a public [civil service – administration cadre] official who acts as the chief executive officer at the sub-district level local government)
UP	= Union <i>Parishad</i> [council] (an important tier of the local government at the sub-national level)
USD	= United States Dollar (1 USD=79 BDT approx.)
VC	= Village committee
VCF	= Village Conservation Forum
VCG	= Village Conservation Group
VGD	= Vulnerable Group Development
VGF	= Vulnerable Group Feeding

1: Setting the Scene

1.1 The Background and Introduction to the Project and the Mission

This report documents the overall experiences, findings and recommendations of the Mission³ for evaluating the impact and results of the IUCN project titled ‘Improving environmental governance for sustainable management of natural resource in Bangladesh’ (hereafter, ‘the Project’ or ‘Natural Resource Governance – NRG – project’). The Bangladesh component constitutes an important and integral part of a larger 5-year IUCN Project on ‘Improving Natural Resource Governance for Rural Poverty Reduction’ which aims at

... improving livelihood security in selected countries through better environmental governance, including fair and equitable access to natural resources, new benefit sharing arrangements, and more participative and transparent decision making ... The outcomes expected are improvements in institutions, in policies and in decision-making mechanisms as they relate to natural resources (IUCN 2009:2)

The contextual setting and rationale of the Project in Bangladesh are summarized in the following manner:

Bangladesh is naturally blessed with resources and a diversity of ecosystems, within its small area of 144,570 km². The total area of wetlands in Bangladesh has been estimated between 7 to 8 million hectares and about 2.52 million hectares are of forest land harbouring biodiversity of the country. The people of this country depend on nature and ecological services and in Bangladesh over 80% of the total population are engaged in the primary sector of agriculture and fisheries. To secure peoples’ lives and livelihoods, it is necessary to establish a sound governance system and properly functioning institutions responsible for management of natural resources. Many acts, laws and policies have been developed to manage natural resources in a sustainable way, but those are not properly executed by the respective authority due to lack of capacity and resources To establish good governance, it is essential to ensure accountability, transparency, rule of law and participation in natural resource management. It is [imperative] to ensure reflection of community opinion in decision making and implementation for managing natural resources. Local government and administration play an important role in executing development interventions and service delivery to community people but from previous experience it was found that local government especially Union Parishad were not aware about their responsibilities, and in most cases, local administration is not well equipped to manage natural resources ... In Bangladesh during the last two decades, several projects have been piloted for improved governance of natural resources. Lessons from these initiatives indicate that the improved governance through increased access, inclusion in decision making, community based management of natural resources can enhance sustainable livelihood and conservation. In this context, IUCN Bangladesh is

³ The one-member Final Evaluation Mission consisted of Professor Niaz Ahmed Khan of the University of Dhaka. He acted as an independent and external expert, and was identified and engaged by IUCN after necessary screening. A short biographical profile of Professor Khan is appended..

implementing [the] project ... with an aim to empower local communities by strengthening the connection between the community and local authorities and thereby improve natural resource governance (*IUCNB 2012:1-2, Terms of Reference, pp.2-3*).

The Project has been conceived and implemented in the above context. The initiative is funded by the Governance and Transparency Fund (GTF) by UKaid from the Department for International Development of the Government of the United Kingdom (hereafter DFID-GTF). The Project duration has been from October 1st 2011 to June 30th 2013 (The actual field activities however was schedule to end on March 31st 2013). The Project activities spread over 10 sites in 8 districts namely Magura (1 site), Satkhira (2 sites), Chandpur (1 site), Sunamganj (1 site) and Moulvibazaar (1 site), Manikganj (1 site), Gazipur (2 sites) and Cox's Bazaar (1 site). IUCN-Bangladesh has been supported by two of its long standing member NGOs - CNRS and NACOM – implementing the Project activities.

The Development Goal of the Project is as follows: 'To improve environmental governance for sustainable management of natural resources in Bangladesh'. In line with the Goal, the Project has attempted to produce the following stated outcomes:

- i. Enhanced capacity and skill of both local communities and local government to manage natural resources
- ii. Vulnerable groups have greater voice in decision making processes and improved livelihood conditions, including access to natural resources.
- iii. Vulnerable groups and policy makers have greater awareness of governance and rights based issues.

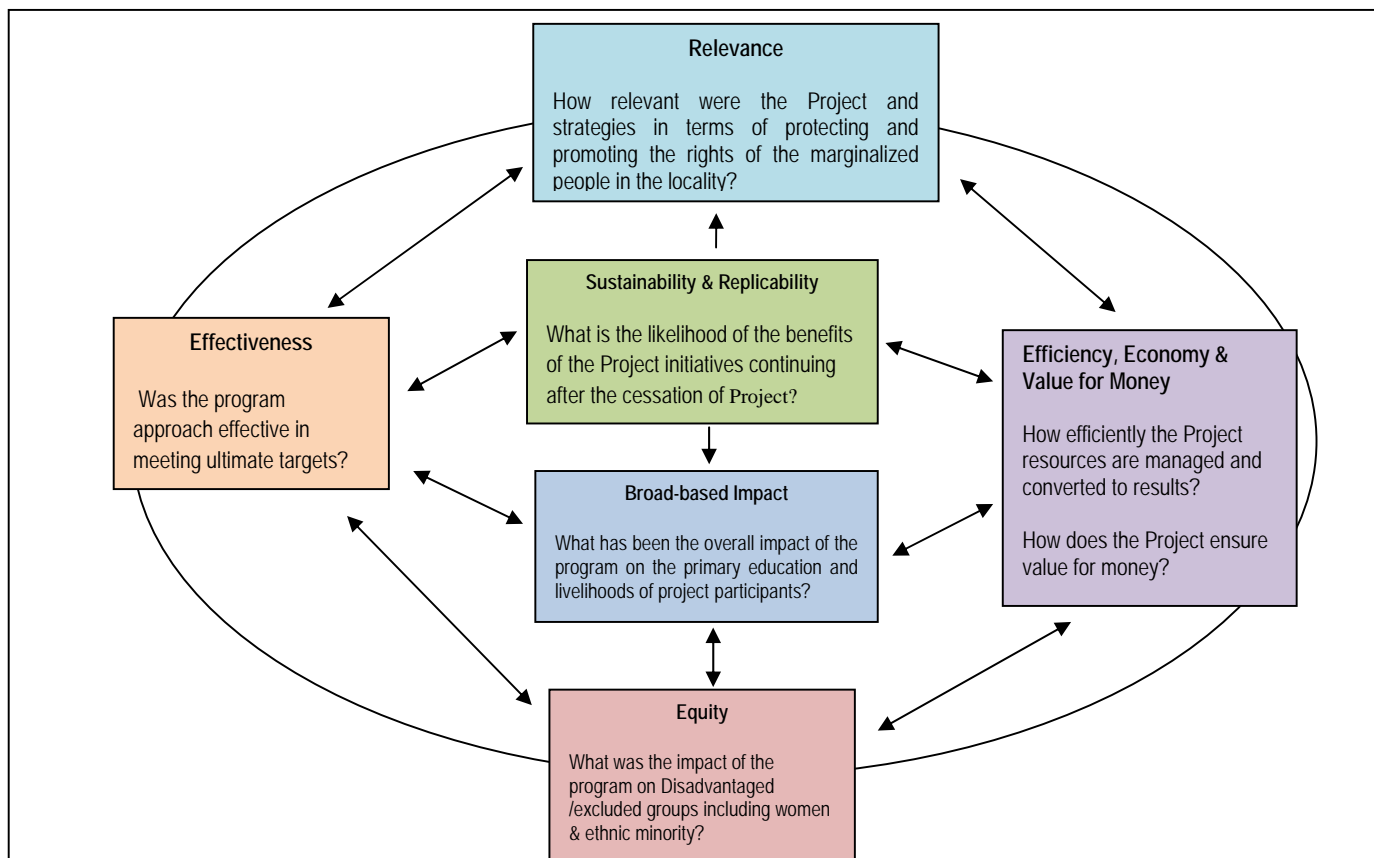
The Final Evaluation Mission was commissioned by IUCNB in consultation with the partners, and fielded in April-May 2013 with the broad aim to 'to provide an independent assessment of the effectiveness, impact, relevance and sustainability of the activities of the sub-project, attainment of purpose and outcome stated in the sub-project logical framework, and how this sub-project has contributed to the overall GTF objectives of strengthening capability, accountability and responsiveness to make governance work for the poor.' (*ToR, p.2*). The full version of the ToR is annexed.

1.2 The Scope, Structure and Methodological Considerations of the Mission

1.2.1 KEY ISSUES AND QUERIES EXPLORED BY THE MISSION

Based on the ToR, the initial desk review of the project documents, and consultations with the key stakeholders (concerned IUCNB staff, partner institution staff, selected targeted beneficiaries including local government leaders), the Mission applied and focused on the following review criteria and associated queries:

Figure 1.1: The Analytical Framework of the Review



1.2.2 THE KEY STAGES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE MISSION

Initial desk review and stakeholder consultation

The Project-related documents (periodic progress reports, midterm evaluation report, publications and promotional materials) as well as a selection of the major secondary literature on natural resource (especially wetlands) governance in Bangladesh were consulted as an initial step of the Mission's work. As a part of the orientation exercise, the Mission held informal discussions with a cross section of key stakeholders (as noted above). An inception meeting was held at this point in the presence of the IUCNB Country Representative.

Empirical investigation

Targeted Audience: The target groups for the fieldwork included the following: selected members of communities who are direct beneficiaries of the Project – notably CBO members, beneficiaries of training, MSP members, the concerned member/partner NGO staff, relevant IUCNB staff, and members of the public who have immediate implications for, and links with the operation of the Project and associated CBO activities in the given location/community, local socio-political elites, and relevant government and local government officials.

Research Tool and Approaches: The empirical data collection tools chiefly consisted of focus group discussion, informal interviews, ethno-historical analysis, and (uncontrolled) observation. For a deeper understanding, occasional case studies were done to address and observe more subtle issues such as the impact and implications of specialized training and conscientization activities, staff motivation, demands and aspirations of selected beneficiaries. Formal and rigidly structured questionnaire was avoided; instead, wherever possible, a simple check list of discussion topics guided the interviews. A field diary was used, where virtually any observed phenomenon of interest may be noted. In some cases, the interviews were tape-recorded with the permission of the respondents. Particular attention was given to observing the facial and body languages of the respondents along with the general features of the particular locality. A list of the respondents (including participants in FGDs) and other persons met during the fieldwork is annexed.

The Fieldwork: The fieldwork time was about 14 days. Given the limitation of time, it was acknowledged in the initial briefing meetings that it might not be possible to address all aspects of the Project operation and to explore the concerned issues in great details. At the end of the fieldwork, however, the Mission was expected to develop a general and down-to-earth picture of the performance of the Project and deepen the understanding of the field realities.

The Mission visited 5 out of the 8 working districts of the Project. The specific fieldwork locations were selected on the basis of

- (i) a careful review of literature (Project documents, reports, publications etc.);
- (ii) the suggestions and views of the project staff and other concerned stakeholders (e.g. local NGOs staff, local government representatives); and
- (iii) consideration of certain factors (see Table 1.1)

In selecting the sites, the following were the major considerations: nature and distinctiveness of the resource and its management; ethnic and gender composition of the groups; accessibility; opportunity to observe and meet with other stakeholders (availability of various committees and their members, NGO and local government representatives); diversity in livelihood and geographic conditions.

Table 1.1: The Choice and Rationale of the Major Fieldwork Areas

Name of the Sites	Rationale and Major Points Considerations
Gazipur: Gossabobeel and Nolibeel (Durgapur, Sanmania and Kamargaon Unions, Kapasia Upazila)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive low-lying floodplain area (located in the central zone of Bangladesh) • Managed by NACOM • Opportunity to observe <i>Jalmahal</i> (waterbody) leasing system and its implications for local communities • Cases of community action and lobbying • Presence of traditional <i>Hindu</i> fisher communities • Mixed performance in terms of relations with the local government offices especially Union Parishad (UP) • Presence of larger landscape-based community organisation (FRMC – continued from earlier projects in the locality) • Presence of community-based experimental fish-sanctuaries • Opportunity to observe the functioning and implications of other relevant developmental interventions by NACOM and other organisations • Ease of communication – time management • Possibility of observing the functioning of various other groups and committees (and their implications for the Project)
Magura (Sadar and Shalikhha Upazila)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seasonally inundated floodplains; connected to the coastal river systems – under tidal influence (Southwestern Bangladesh) • Continued from the Phase 1 of the Project • Managed by CNRS • Famous for selected indigenous fish species (notably <i>Sharputi</i>, <i>Pabda</i> – recently on a rapidly declining trend) • Opportunity to observe the implications of a major earlier DFID project – CBFM-2: lessons for sustainability • Presence of indigenous <i>Rajbanshi</i> and <i>Malo</i> communities • Presence of relatively poorer households • Major problems of various manifestations of manipulation and interference by local elites on local river systems leading to siltation, restrictions on community access, biodiversity loss etc. • Opportunity to observe effective negotiations by the communities with local government
Cox's Bazar (Khurushkul Union, Sadar Upazila)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coastal- Mangrove ecosystem; mudflats, salinity intrusion, salt pans (Southeastern Bangladesh) • 'Ecologically Critical Area' – declared by the government (under the Bangladesh Environmental Conservation Act 1995/2010) • Opportunity to observe various land tenure regimes including usufruct

	<p>rights (patronized by local, powerful elites; not recognised by law)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed by NACOM; Phase 2 (new site) • Cases of community action • Proactive community engagement with the local government • Relative remoteness • Presence of relevant other projects and institutions: lesson learning and leveraging opportunity
Manikgonj (Arua, Kanchanpur and Gopinathpur Unions, Harirampur Upazila)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located in the lower reaches of the Jamuna basin – experiences both aquatic and terrestrial phases (Central Bangladesh) • Managed by NACOM • (Project beneficiaries’) interactions extensive with local government officials: mixed results • Extensive relevant NGO activities in the locality • Mixed performance of CBOs: important lessons for sustainability • Weak representation of women in the group activities
Satkhira: (Munshigonj, Burigoalini and Gabura Unions; Shayamnagar, Upazila)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coastal, highly natural disaster-prone locality, adjacent to the World Heritage site of the Sundarbans (the largest mangrove forests in the world) • Notable community based climate change adaptation initiatives • Managed by CNRS; Phase 1 (old site) • Cases of migration induced by increasingly constrained livelihood • Intense NGO presence and (especially relief-oriented) operations • Interesting cases of community-led environmental actions • Introduction of a few non-traditional crops (e.g. sunflower, maize) and cropping patterns in the locality • Successful cases of alternative livelihood (e.g. poultry, handicrafts) – diverting pressure on the nearby Sundarban forests and rivers

In each of the above selected sites and spots, 4 to 9 CBOs were visited depending on the intensity of Project operation and related activities.

Validation and Sharing: The Mission shared its initial observations and recommendations in a brief be-briefing session with the local staff in each of the visited sites. A larger de-briefing meeting was held on 3 June 2013 with selected stakeholders including IUCNB and member NGO senior staff. The findings and observations of the Mission were generally well received and validated by the participants. This Report reflects all the feedback and opinions expressed in the above sessions.

1.3 Structure and Limitations of the Report

This report is organized into four chapters. After this introductory chapter, the next chapter (2) briefly examines the key development outcomes and accomplishments of the Project based on the agreed-upon analytical framework and the associated review criteria. The assessment was done (i) through a desk review of all major documents of the Project, and (ii) an empirical investigation into the achievement of the Project vis-à-vis the stated outcomes. An overall assessment of the key impact and effects of the Project interventions is also presented in Chapter 2. The third chapter begins with a strategic assessment of the Project and its working

environment through a standard SWOT (Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats) analysis. The purpose is twofold: first, to complement the Project's stock-taking of the accomplishments (in chapter 2) from a strategic perspective; and secondly, to provide inputs and food for thought for furnishing some recommendations towards possible future strategies and interventions. Besides the SWOT analysis, selected project and human resource management issues are identified and discussed in chapter 3. Drawing on over-all experience and observations of the Mission, Chapter 4 begins by eliciting several major lessons, and subsequently moves to furnish some general and specific recommendations.

Rather than a compartmentalized or stand-alone treatment, gender and participation aspects have been considered and addressed in the report as crosscutting issues that spread over all activities and areas of interventions.

Lastly, the nature and limits of the review and this report should be noted. Strict statistical representation or comprehensiveness of its coverage is not the primary thrust/consideration of the study. The report makes no claim of being exhaustive in its treatment of *all* the complex dynamics of the operation of the Project and associated institutions. The duration of the assignment was short, and the resources were limited. In this context, the Mission's humble intention has been to record, develop and facilitate a better and down-to-earth understanding of some of the salient issues affecting the functioning of IUCNB programmatic interventions and institutional partnership in the targeted localities and their surrounding contexts and dynamics, which have a direct relevance to beneficiary empowerment and welfare, and elicit some broad lessons and practical clues for further improvement of programmatic interventions in the future.

2: Taking Stock of the Project Accomplishments

This chapter attempts to make an assessment of the key development outputs and accomplishments of the Project. The assessment is based on i) a review of the major documents (i.e. official reports and publications), and (ii) empirical observations and consultations. The analysis here follows the six broad review criteria contained in the analytical framework (as noted in Chapter 1, section 1.2.1). Additionally, (in section 2.3), an overall assessment of the key impact and effects of the Project interventions is made.

2.1 Relevance

The goal and activities of the Project are topical and highly relevant in a number of ways. First, these match and correspond to the concerned key national policies and vision documents. The Project activities are also aligned to several ‘Strategic Priorities’ or ‘Pillars’ of the DFID-Bangladesh (see table 2.1).

Table 2.1: The Relevance of the Project Intervention

<i>National Policies and Plans</i>	<i>Examples of Selected Clauses, Thrusts, and Provisions relevant for the Project</i>	<i>Examples of Relevant Activities of the Project that address (or conform to) the Policies</i>
The New Fishery Management Policy 1986 and the National Fisheries Policy 1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring benefits to ‘genuine fishers’ a poverty reduction focus together with fish production. conservation of conserving biodiversity and conserving inland open water bodies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of fish sanctuaries Support to biodiversity and environmental conservation
The Jalmohals (Wetlands) Management Policy 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> decentralization and sharing of the management authority from the Ministry of Land to other institutions – including local government, line ministries (e.g. Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock and Ministry of Youths and Sports) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment, consolidation and strengthening of CBOs Support to community based governance of wetland and forest resources
The National Fisheries Strategy was declared in 2006,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sustainable growth in production, and management of open water fisheries through community participation based on gradually reserving <i>jalmohal</i> leases for supervised Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) against nominal lease payments. advocates for the environmental and fisheries biodiversity conservation through appropriate ecosystem management regimes, including conservation and restoration of wetlands and fisheries and stronger cooperation with and support from other agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant capacity enhancement (including training) support to local communities and organizations National and local level advocacy on environmental conservation, community access and voice in NRG, ‘wise

The Government Jalmohals Management Policy 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • targeting and empowering ‘genuine fishers’ organizations (cooperative societies) • recognition of local fishers’ organizations by the government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use’ of natural resources • Broad based awareness campaign conservation, community access and rights to natural resources
Sixth Five Year Plan (2011-2015)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of the wetlands’ resources and conserve its biodiversity [through] participation of the community people in management of wetlands • Considering the importance of wetlands, the Government of Bangladesh ratified the Ramsar Convention in 1992. As a signatory to the Convention, government is committed for wise use and sustainable management of wetlands according to ‘Ramsar Wise Use Guidelines’. • Through this declaration, the government has committed to conserve and manage the wetlands in a sustainable way. • Instead of continuation of traditional leasing out system government has endeavored developing co-management systems comprising of different concerned stakeholders especially the local community people for the management of wetlands; • [establishment of] a co-management system for conservation, stabilization and sustainable use of the natural resources that generates opportunities for significant improvements in the livelihoods of rural communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational development and articulation of local stakeholders’ voices and decisions • Livelihood/income generation support to the local poor • Strengthening and reactivating UP Standing Committees to act on behalf of common villagers • Provision and successful negotiation with the relevant local government authorities to include CBO members in UP Standing Committees • Community managed asset creation/renovation (e.g. plantations, nurseries, resource centres)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen ... capability and resilience so that Bangladesh can better meet the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable • ... strengthening the public’s ability to hold government and local officials to account • ... to enhance public service delivery and public safety, and to increase employment and wealth creation opportunities • Strengthen people’s ability and opportunity to earn, to improve their quality of life, to participate in decision making, and to increase their resilience to natural disaster and climate change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitation of various community action towards encroachment and elite capture of local natural and other resources

Sources of information: GoB (2010), GOB (2011), Ahsan (undated), Khan (2012), USAID (2010), Khan and Chowdhury (2010), DFID (2012).

Secondly, the Project addresses some of the immediate problems and challenges faced by the participating local communities. As an example, the following table illustrates how the Project activities are geared towards addressing major problems in three sites visited by the Mission:

Table 2.2: Relevance of the Project to Major Problems and Challenges in the Localities

<i>Site</i>	<i>Key Problems and Challenges Addressed</i>	<i>Examples of relevant Project actions and interventions</i>
Magura	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encroachment by elites into local rivers (notably the Fatki river) by erecting cross dams (<i>Aar badh</i>) and conversion of dried out river banks to paddy lands - interrupting flow of water and fish-pass • Water scarcity and biodiversity loss due to the Ganges-Kobaddak (GK) Irrigation Project in the upstream • The practice of absorbing raw jute stalks in water (<i>jak deya</i>) leading to water pollution in the rivers • Profuse growth of water hyacinth clogging water bodies • Rapid decline in famous local fish species 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community advocacy and protest against encroachment • Negotiation with local government offices • Banning the fish catch during <i>Boisakh-Joystha</i> (mid April to mid June) by building <i>katha</i> (fish refuge materials) on river and thus conserving fish stock
Cox's Bazar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elite capture and sabotage of common lands used for polders and embankments – designed to saving localities from tidal surges and storms • Conspiracy to lease out public common lands to influential elites (often politically linked outsiders) for shrimp cultivations and salt pans • Weak role of the local government offices in acting in favour of poorer and powerless communities • Increasing cases of hill cutting, destruction of mangrove forests, and indiscriminate killing of various species of fingerlings while harvesting shrimp-spawns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening and reactivating UP Standing Committees to act on behalf of common villagers • Provision and successful negotiation with the relevant local government authorities to include CBO members in UP Standing Committees • Community managed plantations • Collective protest – with active involvement of the UP and relevant line government departments – against encroachment and land use changes/ conversion • Mass public conscientization regarding biodiversity conservation, checking the local forms of environmental degradation
Gazipur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encroachment and elite capture of a major local canal system ('Ghatkuri Khal') vital for irrigation and agriculture for local communities • The challenge of sustaining and maintaining the fish sanctuary established during an earlier (SEMP) project • Lack or very limited access of poor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitated community action against the capture of Ghatkuri canal • Facilitating regular communication and functional interactions between CBOs and Upazila-level public 'line' departments (notably Department of Agricultural Extension,

	<p>communities to agricultural and associated public services in the Upazila</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of or very limited availability of technical/subject-specific expert services at the community level • Availability of public (<i>Khas</i>) land in the locality which are not properly demarcated and often remain under <i>de facto</i> control of local elites 	<p>Department of Fisheries)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revitalizing the fish sanctuary through CBO management • Formal and informal campaign to delineate and allot vacant public (<i>khas</i>) lands (especially in and around the local wetlands – notably ‘Nolibeel’) • Introduction of brood fish in the sanctuary
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As noted during the fieldwork, local communities and CBO leadership consider and conceive the above problems to be critical for the localities, and remain thankful for the Project interventions.

Third, by supporting community based natural resource management and livelihood enhancement practices, the Project has contributed, to an extent, to the local community empowerment process, and paved the way for local communities to demand their rights especially on the relevant public sector service provisions.

Fourth, the Project is also socially relevant as it attempts to reach out to the beneficiaries who constitute among the poorest and marginalized members in the localities. The activities are particularly relevant with regard to poor fishers and several traditional (often indigenous) communities who remain relegated in their social standing.

2.2 Impact

This section attempts to make an assessment of the impacts of the Project in relation to the stated outcomes and goals. Detailed accounts of the major outputs and activities of the Project in each of the visited sites are appended (see appendixes 1 through 6). Additionally, the standard Achievement Rating Scale (ARS) has also been scored and annexed (Appendix 1). Most of the physical targets have been achieved. The Mission’s key observations and findings vis-à-vis the three stated outcomes of the Project are briefly discussed below.

2.2.1 OUTCOME 1: ENHANCED CAPACITY AND SKILL OF BOTH LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO MANAGE NATURAL RESOURCES

The major activities under this Outcome included the following: (i) conduct of baseline surveys and production of reports for all new sites; (ii) technical assistance, training and associated natural resource management activities for benefits to local communities; (iii) build capacity of communities, CBOs, local government bodies and service providers and apex body in participatory planning, implementation, reflection and learning, financial management, local leadership, local customary and statutory rights and functions

A detailed account of the capacity-related training (including the information on gender composition of the participants, topics, venue and time) can be found in the appendices. A summary is presented in table 2.3:

Table 2.3 (and corresponding Figure 2.1): A Summary of the Capacity Development Training Provided to CBOs in the Visited Sites

Visited Sites	Training on Capacity Development (various topics)		
	Male	Female	Total
Manikgonj	179	24	203
Cox's Bazar	140	85	225
Gazipur	329	21	350
Magura	117	23	140
Satkhira	246	129	375
<i>Total</i>	1011	282	1293
<i>Percentage</i>	78.19	21.81	100

Source: Compiled from various office records.

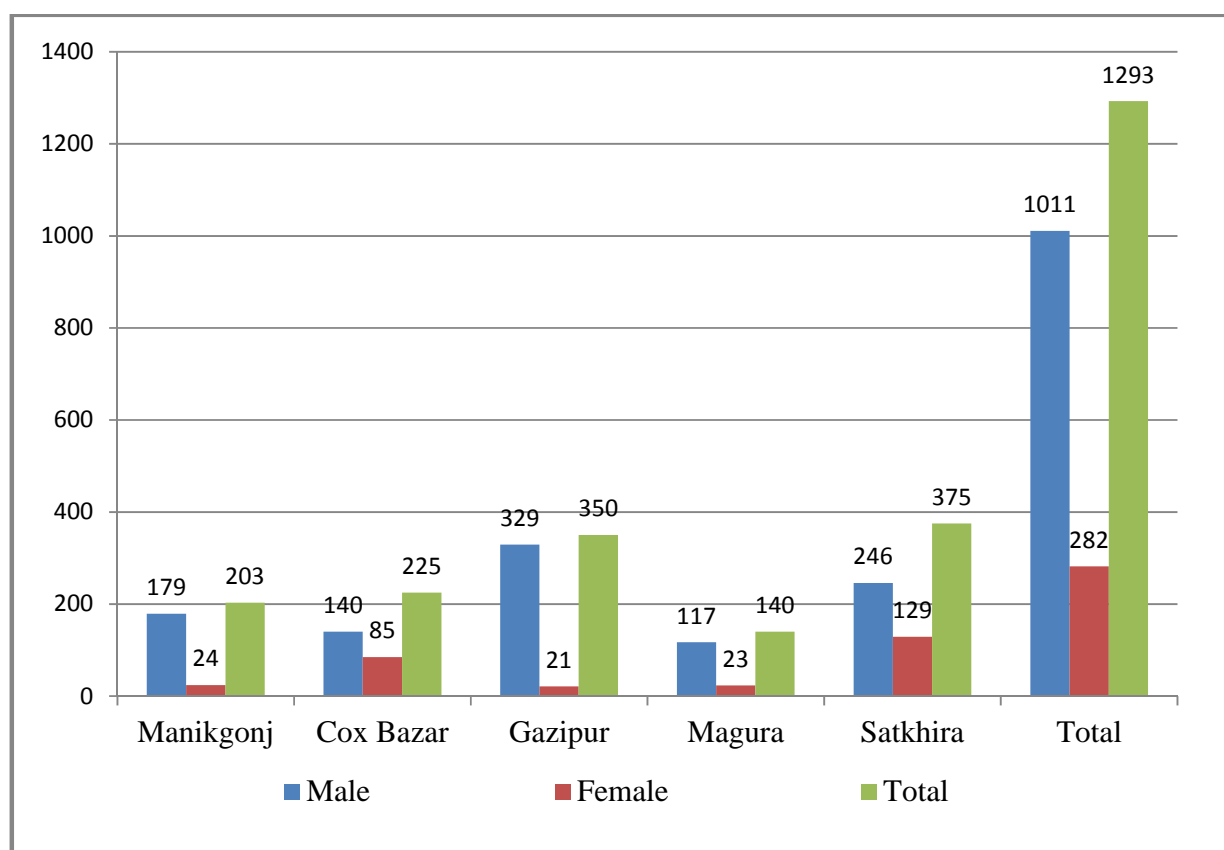


Figure 2.1: Gender-based Capacity Development Training Provided to CBOs

As revealed from the above table, women participation has been limited in the training sessions.

The baseline report has been produced; it is informative and provides a reasonable basis for project planning and implementation. The document, however, suffers from considerable linguistic and grammatical inconsistencies, and a lack of analytical rigor.

The Project has taken a number of capacity development measures to strengthen the CBOs and associated committees: (i) introduction of the practice of maintaining written minutes of meetings; (ii) encouraging a few women to take up specific important positions in the groups/committees, and thereby, facilitating the process of enhancement of women's status in the community; (iii) encouraging the practice of opening up and maintaining bank accounts and associated financial management at the community level; and (iv) targeted capacity enhancement training notably on organisational management and development, and participatory planning and conflict resolution.

The resources and physical assets generated by the CBOs (supported by the Project) in the course of pursuing livelihood enterprises (e.g. plantations, nurseries, community resource centres) are in some cases owned by private individuals or the government, and the respective groups or committees do not possess legal or official ownership documents. In some 30% of the visited cases, some form of a written agreement (often called 'contract deeds') existed between the group/committee and the actual land owner. These documents, however, are not uniform, and do not always fulfil the legal requirements of 'deed agreement' to be officially recognized in the formal quarters (e.g. courts of justice, public land or revenue offices). It is important however, to note that efforts are underway to secure formal recognition and legal documentation of some of these assets. The process, involving multiple government agencies, is typically lengthy and cumbersome.

The institutional capability of a good number (approximately 35%) of the visited CBOs is still low. Although a limited number of members have received organisational development and associated management-related training, there has been little manifestation of the absorption and translation of such training into practical action. Many leaders and office-bearers have little education, and face difficulties performing such basic group functions as preparation of proceedings of meeting, maintenance of savings and pass book without outside (especially Project staff) help.

The level of systematic interaction and communication among the CBOs and associated committees in a locality or region is still low. The lack of effective national or regional level integration and coordination of such organisations, inadequate supervision, and spatial remoteness pose a major challenge. In recent months, however, there have been some thoughts on developing wider platform for more interaction and institutional cooperation among the CBOs and committees promoted by the Project. Additionally, through such measures as exposure visits, networking meetings and MSP mobilization, the Project has attempted to intensify the communication among CBOs.

Although there are variations among the CBOs in terms of number and frequency, meetings have been regularly held. Women members have regularly participated in the meetings – although their role in the actual functioning and decisions of meetings was not always significant.

Some encouraging signs of empowerment of CBOs have been noticed on a few occasions. Examples of such manifestations include:

- a CBO successfully negotiating with the relevant local government offices in stopping encroachment (by a politically influential quarter) on a vital local canal ('Ghatkuri Khal'), and thereby ensuring smooth flow of water for agriculture (Kaligonj, Gazipur);
- successful establishment and (community-led) management of a fish sanctuary and breeding ground against active elite opposition (Shalikhha, Magura);
- successful campaign against attempts by the local elites to convert river-bank paddy lands into salt pans and shrimp spawn (prawn culture) farms (Dumuria, Satkhira); and
- convincing the government to stop leasing out part of a life-saving coastal embankment (that protect the inland local communities from sea waves and tidal surge) to private individuals, and raising and maintaining 'greenbelt' plantations for fortifying the embankment (Khurushkul, Cox's Bazar).

2.2.2 OUTCOME 2: VULNERABLE GROUPS HAVE GREATER VOICE IN DECISION MAKING PROCESSES AND IMPROVED LIVELIHOOD CONDITIONS, INCLUDING ACCESS TO NATURAL RESOURCES

The major activities under this Outcome may be classified into the following: (i) continuation and further expansion of networks of the CBOs; (ii) formation of an 'apex body' at the national level to mainstream CBOs (involving selected members from CBOs as well as a cross-section of key national and regional stakeholders; (iii) networking with partners and defining collaboration at national level by creating multi-stakeholder platforms (continuous liaison with existing MSPs and newly formed MSPs); (iv) regular meetings of the local level MSPs and an annual meeting of the national level MSP (that includes representations from all the local MSPs); (v) exposure visits to different sites for gaining and sharing knowledge amongst the CBOs, local government, and other stakeholders; (vi) carrying out site-specific Capacity Need Assessment; (vii) conduct of training and practical skill development for livelihood sustenance and Alternative Income Generation (AIG); and (viii) training of MSP members on NRG using developed manual

The key observations of the Mission regarding the above are as follows:

Some 70% of the CBOs and associated MSPs visited during the fieldwork were found to be fully operational. They maintained a degree of contact amongst themselves in the locality, and also remained in regular communication with key local stakeholders especially the respective local government offices and public line departments (notably the Upazila Fisheries, Livestock, and Agricultural departments). Meetings were held to bring together CBOs working in a particular site; the frequency and effectiveness of such meetings, however, varied considerably amongst the visited sites.

The national level 'apex body' - aimed at bringing the CBOs together and linking them to a range of regional and national stakeholders – was not formed. The reasons, as reported by the relevant Project staff, included the following: the delayed start of the field activities; uncertainty and cessation of the Project operations; and inadequate preparation and groundwork time towards establishing this high level panel (also see, section 2.4).

The MSPs have generally been well received by the visited communities. A networking meeting was organized in Dhaka which brought together selected representatives from MSPs working in different sites.

A good deal of interest and enthusiasm was noticeable amongst the CBO members regarding 'exposure visits'. Some typical comments included the following:

... although it was a short visit, we learned a lot; ... on return home, I have started practising *katha* sewing [textured, patched, fancy, hand-woven bed sheets, quilts etc.] both for family consumption and external sale (a female participant from Moukhali, Satkhira)

I never knew that common people could so impressively manage their surrounding resources [of Gopinathpur beel and Vedamara beel]; they even established [fish and bird] sanctuaries in the locality (a male participant from Kapasia, Gazipur)

... Leadership is vital for success of co-management in Shilkhali; ... we need good leaders [and have to] get the UP more deeply involved [in NRM] (a male participant from Khurushkul, Cox's Bazar)

The topics and contents of the training modules were selected primarily by the Project based on a somewhat superficial 'need assessment' carried out as part of the baseline survey (see section 2.2.1). The field staff in most cases shared and discussed with the beneficiaries in the group meetings about the need and mode of the training. The level and extent of such consultation varied from one site to the other. Generally, there is still scope for more intense discussion with the beneficiaries before finalising the training contents and mode.

A good number of the visited CBO members have received one or more of the livelihood-related training organised by the Project. The training sessions were substantially participated by women. A summary is furnished in table 2.4.

Table 2.4 (and corresponding Figure 2.2): A Summary of the Livelihood and AIG Training provided to CBOs in the Visited Sites

<i>Visited Sites</i>	<i>Livelihood-related Training (various topics)</i>		
	Male	Female	Total
Manikgonj	266	82	348
Cox Bazar	129	390	519
Gazipur	278	12	290
Magura	97	142	239
Satkhira	174	609	783
<i>Total</i>	944	1235	2179
<i>Percentage</i>	43	57	100

Source: Compiled from various office records

Although there are variations amongst the sites in terms of local communities' preference for particular training, during the Mission's discussions with the beneficiaries, the following training

topics were reported to be relatively more useful and popular among the respondent beneficiaries: organic crop (especially paddy) production, nursery raising, integrated pest

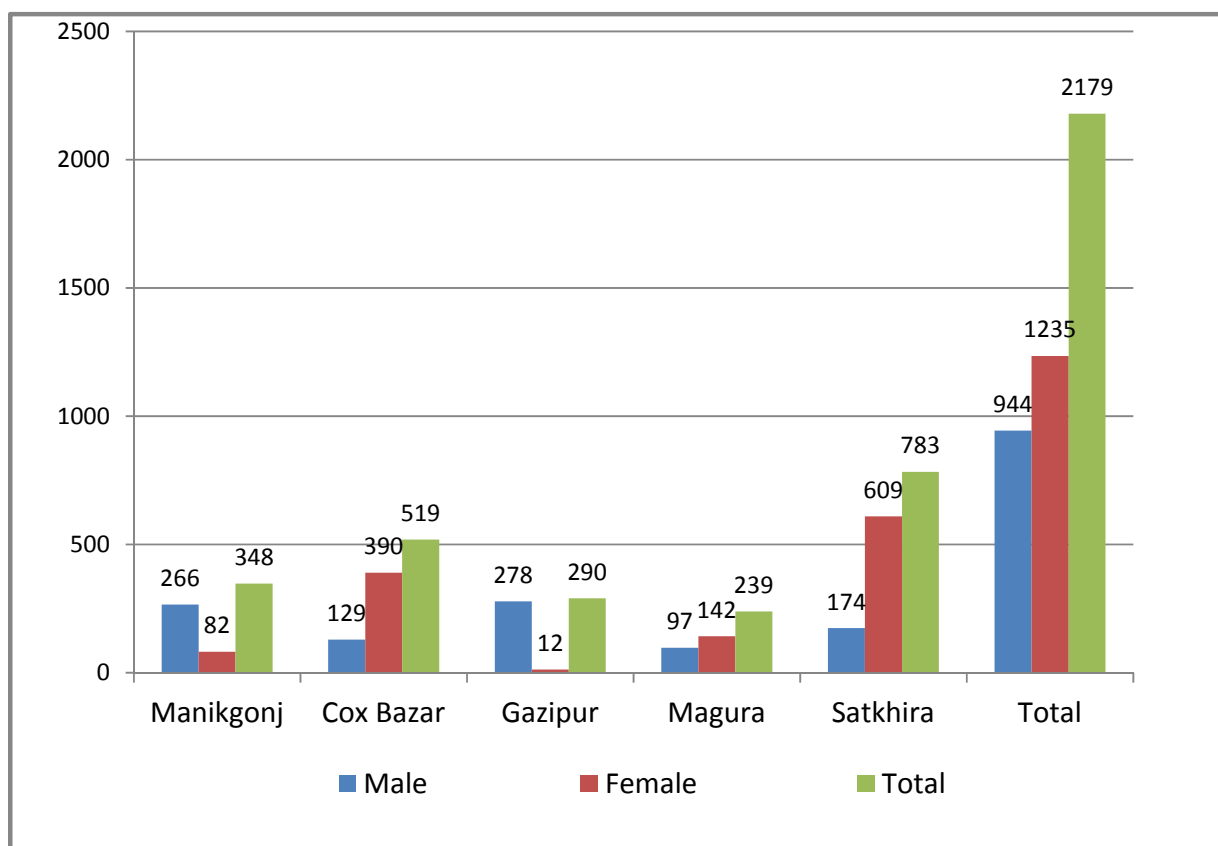


Figure 2.2 : Gender-based Livelihood and AIG Training Provided to CBOs

management, poultry, vegetable gardening, fish culture, natural resource laws and policies, and organisational management and development. The beneficiaries' liking and acceptance of a particular training topic seem to be based on the following: (i) degree of practical use and application of the training in their day-to-day life especially in terms of prospect of making an income; (ii) level of difficulty in understanding and comprehension; and (iii) distance of the training venue (from the targeted community).

In terms of actual utilization of the livelihood training and translating the knowhow into practical enterprises, some CBOs have been more active than others, and there are clear variations in this regard. The relative performance of CBOs, as the Mission's observation suggests, depend on the following factors: ability to develop market linkage (e.g. in the case of handicrafts, and introduction of new crop variety); leadership and commitment; clear land tenurial status; open consultation and democratic practices within the group; regular availability of technical support and devices; effective facilitation and other support by the concerned member NGO.

A number of respondents noted that they have not been able to make optimum utilization of the training and newly acquired knowhow and skills due to such reasons as lack of financial and technological support to try out the enterprise, lack of back-up service and support, and the absence of (or inadequate) refresher or follow-up training.

Several other problems, which hinder the effectiveness of training schemes, were identified during the course of intense discussions with the beneficiaries and field staff, including the following: (i) the duration of some training, especially concerning cropping technology and fish culture, was considered ‘too short’ by the respondent beneficiaries; (ii) inadequate provision for hand-on practice and trials; (iii) it was difficult for some beneficiaries to comprehend the training materials and handouts because of their low level of literacy; (iv) in some remote sites, appropriate venues for conducting the training do not exist.

A large national training workshop on NRG was held in March 2013 which brought together selected MSP members as well as other major stakeholders. The event was reported to be ‘quite useful’ by the respondent participants – although some noted that the duration (just one day) was ‘too short for [them] to absorb and capture the various dimensions of this interesting subject’.

Villagers (*para* residents) who remain outside the Project’s coverage (i.e. not included in the concerned CBO or committee membership) generally show a great deal of interest to become members, and participate in the Project activities. A sense of deprivation and neglect is also noticeable among these villagers, as echoed by a local villager (a fisherman by profession):

... What is our fault? [Aren’t] we equally deserving? Do we have more ‘rice’ in our houses than they (the Project beneficiaries) possess, or do you think, we have three hands while they have two? We are also poor and need the help ...

This feeling is particularly strong in the areas where the benefits of the Project are clearly noticeable.

2.2.3 OUTCOME 3: VULNERABLE GROUPS AND POLICY MAKERS HAVE GREATER AWARENESS OF GOVERNANCE AND RIGHTS BASED ISSUES

The major activities under this Outcome included the following: (i) preparation and validation of a communication strategy; (ii) production of ‘policy briefs’ on natural resource governance; (iii) sensitization of policy makers and enhancement of knowledge on NRM issues through consultation meetings; (iv) publication on case studies/best practices on NRG issues; (v) training manual on NRG (in vernacular language); (vi) dissemination of the publications and other promotional materials; (vi) printing and widespread dissemination of governance related messages through such media as posters, billboards, stickers and brochures; (vii) production and dissemination of a documentary video on the project; (viii) organization of national workshop at the central level (with participation of MSPs, policy makers, partners, etc.); (ix) participation at international events for dissemination of the Project outcomes and results; (x) local travel and coordination meetings; (xi) Participatory M&E; and (xii) conduct of final evaluation.

The key observations and findings of the Mission regarding the Outcome (3) are as follows:

The communication strategy document has been produced in following a reasonable public consultation and validation process. The product is of average quality.

The initial drafts of the ‘policy brief’ documents are ready. The quality is good, and the documents may serve as important tool for reaching out to important stakeholders – especially central policy and decision making quarters.

The efforts to ‘sensitize’ and reach out to the policy makers have been somewhat slow and limited. Drawing on IUCNB privileged position vis-à-vis the government, a few one-on-one meetings were held between senior IUCNB staff and selected officials of the MoEF and DoE. A dedicated national event (‘sensitization workshop’), as planned, could not be arranged. Several representatives from the policy making circuits, however, were invited to the national workshop designed for sharing overall experiences of the Project (held in March 2013).

A compendium on selected case studies on various issues related to NRG and associated community rights and access has been produced. The work is of good quality, and contains useful information.

A specialized training manual on NRG has also been brought out. This is in the vernacular language, and the contents are lucid and user-friendly. This may serve as a handy material for trainers and practitioners in the field.

A video focusing on the Project activities and crucial NRG and community access and rights issues is just about to be released.

The Project activities and experiences were shared in the World Conservation Congress 2012 (held in the Jeju islands, South Korea). The event was reported to be well received. Two trips were originally planned for the purpose of international exposure and dissemination; one was arranged as above.

Among the planned promotional materials, the posters and brochures were produced maintaining adequate quality. The dissemination and circulation, however, have still been limited; the work for wider distribution of the materials is currently in progress.

Some 70% of the planned participatory monitoring missions have been completed. There are variations in terms of the degree and intensity of participation by the concerned CBOs and local communities. A good deal of interest, however, is visible as regards these missions. The Final External Evaluation has been conducted as scheduled.

2.2.4. OVERALL IMPACT

Besides the above assessment of accomplishments vis-à-vis the key stated outcomes of the Project, in what follows, I attempt to reckon overall impact of the Project. It may be relevant here to recall, once again, that the Project bases itself on (and deeply ingrained in) the other local

projects implemented by the member NGOs. In this context, it is difficult to neatly isolate and separate out the contributions of the Project, and identify its exclusive impact. It is nevertheless possible to chart out a broad picture as regards the overall impact of the Project in its working areas:

Contribution to Enhancing Social Capital

The Project has provided for a collective platform for the targeted relatively weaker sections of the communities to come together. The various institutional structures, despite the limitations, have contributed to forging linkages among the group members. Some links have also been established with selected quarters of the government (mainly relevant line departments), local government, other local and national NGOs working in the respective localities, and other socio-religious institutions. There have been evidences of some group members negotiating direct access to these offices at the Upazila and Union levels.

Contribution to Improved Livelihood

The Project's scope in this regard has been limited to imparting training and knowhow, and not surprisingly, the impact in terms of broad-based poverty reduction and livelihood enhancement has not been substantial. Two positive contributions, however, are plain to see: (i) the various livelihood training and skills infusion activities have led to a degree of capacity enhancement amongst the targeted groups; and (ii) some 20 to 30% of the respond beneficiaries, who have been able to secure finance (from various sources) and other tangible inputs to translate their training and skills to actual income earning enterprises, benefited from an additional yearly income of up to 20%.

Securing Public Credibility and Popular Acceptance

Considerable interest is noticeable among the targeted communities about the activities and relevance of the Project. As noted above, the Project addresses some important felt-needs and problems in the localities, and the local people in most places have high expectation from the Project. They eagerly look forward to its expansion. Currently many people consider the existing level and extent of support to be generally insufficient; however, they seem to be otherwise satisfied with and appreciative of the commitment of the Project staff.

Contribution to Uplifting Social Status

There is evidence that involvement in the Project has resulted in some degree of rise in the social status and recognition of the beneficiaries. The following forms of engagement in the Project, as revealed from the Mission's discussions with the beneficiaries, have an immediate relevance for their social status and community acceptance:

- participation in collective initiatives (e.g. campaign against fish poaching and illegal encroachment of river-banks and other common-use productive lands);
- interaction with and visit of 'outsiders' (government officers, official visitors of the Project, expert trainers and resource persons etc.);
- participation in training sessions, monthly collective gatherings (meetings), and the like;
- occasional visit to 'towns' and 'important places' (e.g. to Upazila or District headquarters, member NGO head offices).

Paving the Way for ‘Empowerment’

In a rather simplistic way, the following table summarizes the Project’s impact and achievement vis-à-vis the characteristics of ‘empowerment’ as advocated and prescribed by the member NGOs, and shared by IUCNB. The assessment of the progress is based on the Mission’s experience and observations during the course of the intense consultations and opinion sharing with the beneficiaries, staff and a range of other stakeholders (e.g. development activists, local government and traditional leaders).

Table 2.5: A Summary the Project’s Achievement vis-à-vis the Characteristics of ‘Empowerment’

<i>Characteristics of Empowerment</i>	<i>Perceived (indicative) degree of empowerment (as observed during fieldwork)*</i>	<i>Manifestations at the beneficiary/community level (as observed during the fieldwork)</i>
Power of thought and articulation	3	Initial, but cogent, signs of the development of the skills in expressing and discussing their views and opinions in meetings are noticeable. Selected CBO members have moved into important local government positions; Although the extent and quality of women representation vary widely amongst CBOs and associated groups, some of these women are observed to be quite active and articulated.
Power of organization	2	Limited organized behaviour (e.g. regular meetings, participation in public events) is noticeable; Some 55% of the CBOs visited by the Mission are proactive and functional; A few community level platforms for environmental campaigns formed; Limited manifestations of effective leadership.
Access to resources	3	The Project has facilitated some access to the formal sectors and external resources (e.g. governmental facilities) by the targeted communities. Most groups also show broad-based awareness and understanding of the changing life and living conditions (in the context of resource degradation, volatile socio-political situation, limited livelihood opportunities, changes in environment and biodiversity) and their expectations from external sources of support and resources.
Resist injustice and ready for struggle	2	Some awareness about varied causes and manifestations of social inequities and injustices are found among the beneficiaries; Initial examples of organised or collective efforts to press ahead rights and demands are noticed in some communities.
Advocacy and	2	Advocacy initiatives and capacity remain somewhat

lobbying capacity		weak – especially at the regional and national levels; Although Project messages and outputs are reasonably documented, but lack wide dissemination; Efforts for forging broad-based network and partnership among the like-minded organisations are also limited.
Capable to identify their strengths and weaknesses	3	Good understanding and appreciation of the community level problems, vulnerabilities and weaknesses among the beneficiaries. However, understanding of and confidence in their own strengths and potentials are relatively low.

* Note A: 1= initial signs of development; very limited. 2=limited progress so far, but gradually developing. 3=Moderate progress. 4=Considerable progress.

Note B: The manifestations and attributes of empowerment are determined from the stated mission, vision and associated strategic statements of the member NGOs (CNRS and NACOM) as reflected in their public domain information (e.g. project brochures, annual reports, leaflets, selected meeting proceedings, official websites. These values are also broadly shared by IUCNB).

2.3 Effectiveness

The activities of the Project and the strategies applied to reach out to local stakeholders and build local capacity have broadly been effective in securing the intended outputs and results. The Project pursued a partnership approach, and devolved the responsibility of field implementation of the activities and goals to member NGOs and associated CBOs who maintain strong local presence. A careful screening procedure for selecting and choosing these institutions was used, which has enabled IUCN to engage with relatively good quality institutions.

The approach of developing constituency around key local institutions – notably local government offices and CBOs, reaching out to wider community and civil society has been effective in obtaining results and empowering local people to assume responsibility for their own future.

The use of participatory approaches and informal working style in the field has contributed to better rapport building at the community level.

Wherever possible, the Project has tried to build and capitalize on the earlier projects and past experiences of IUCN and member NGOs. In empowering the local fishers by revitalizing the community organizations, and linking communities to the relevant public ‘line’ departments, the Project’s effort to leverage the goodwill and experience of the SEMP (Sustainable Environmental Management Program) or CBFMR (Community-based Fisheries Resource Management) projects in the region is a case in point.

The dissemination of results has been through regular reports, limited national level advocacy campaigns, and occasional newspaper reports (mostly in locally-based media). The efforts in this regards, especially in terms of disseminating the results and messages to national policy and decision makers, have been limited. A few high quality publications, as noted above, have been produced, which deserve much wider dissemination.

Limited innovative ideas (e.g. locality-specific fish sanctuary and water flow management [Gazipur and Magura], community-based *pera ban* (mangrove) plantation for embankment protection and soil erosion control [Cox’s Bazar]; introduction of a few non-conventional crops and plants notably sunflower, maize and salt-tolerant paddy to areas predominantly dependent on just fishing [Satkhira]) have been experimented by the Project. The initial response of the concerned communities has been positive. The plan or strategies for further scaling up or wide replication, however, yet remains unclear.

The outputs and activities of the Project are likely to contribute to the stated results. The logical loop between activities and results is generally clear. In the design of the activities and outputs an underlying assumption and theory of change or desired transformation are noticeable. Some activities, however, are not sufficient to bring about and ‘lead’ to the stated outcomes. The current level, coverage, and volume of inputs and activities are clearly inadequate to lead to the Outcome (Number 1.3) of “...policy makers have greater awareness of governance and rights based issues”

2.4 Efficiency, Economy, and Value for Money

The financial and programmatic monitoring systems deployed by IUCN to maintain regular oversight on the Project activities have been thorough. The systems involve periodic field inspection by IUCN staff, monthly and quarterly reporting, regular communication and feedback, periodic evaluation missions, and IUCN’s yearly audit. These go a long way to efficient and economic use of resources. Some Project staff, however, noted that the reporting requirements of this Project were quite heavy, and took away valuable staff time from field activities.

The Administrative cost (as compared to direct programmatic expense and allocation) has been generally modest (see Table 2.6).

Table 2.6: Summary of Administrative vis-à-vis Programme Costs of the Programme

<i>Member NGOs</i>	<i>Activity budget (BDT)</i>	<i>Overhead 10% (BDT)</i>	<i>Total (BDT)</i>
CNRS	5,789,000	578,900	6,367,900
NACOM	3,914,000	391,400	4,305,400

Source: Compiled from office records

The pace of field activity implementation has been rather slow; the ‘burn rate’ is about 68% (Table 2.5). This has been attributed to such reasons as:

- the delay in actual start of the field level implementation of the Project activities (this phase of the Project was officially approved in October 2011, but the field implementation began in January 2012 after completing various procedural formalities - notably the signing of Internal Agreements between IUCN offices, and IUCNB and member NGOs, and the formal briefing of the Bangladesh government);
- several incidents of uncertainty and procrastination over the (decision concerning) continuation of the Project (e.g. all field activities stalled between October 2012 and

January 2013 in following IUCN HQ advice to start winding up the Project activities, and subsequently, responding to the requirement of submitting a ‘revised budget’ and ‘re-justification’ of the Project and the ensuring complex negotiations involving IUCN and KPMG. Amidst these uncertainties, the member NGOs practically withdrew from the Project, and had to be brought back to the field after much persuasion for the remaining few months of Project’s duration in order to wind up the operations. Many CBOs also expressed their concerns to the Mission to the ‘abrupt and fluctuating decisions by the Project authorities’;

- non-implementation of a few large national level events including formation of national network of MSPs and associated activities, and facilitating a get together of policy makers’;
- There have also been cases of delays and procrastinations in the processing and release of the fund to the Bangladesh Country Office. The process involved multiple organisations, units, and tiers (including IUCN HQ, Regional and Country Offices and member NGOs with KPMG maintaining an oversight). The delay clearly had detrimental effect on the overall pace of implementation of the Project activities.

Table 2.7: The ‘Burn Rate’ of the Project

<i>Items</i>	<i>GBP</i>	<i>USD</i>	<i>BDT</i>	<i>Burn rate (%)</i>
Total Budget	169,890.00 (including overhead)	269,495.28	22,290,653.38	67.36 (whole program)
Total Expenditure	114,436.00	181,529.00	15,014,734.30	
NACOM Budget	32,633.60	51,766.49	4,305,400.00	80.85
NACOM Expenditure	26,383.83	41,852.52	3,480,859.00	
CNRS Budget	48,246.35	76,532.90	6,367,900.00	80.19
CNRS expenditure	38,689.55	61,373.01	5,106,525.00	
IUCN Budget	89,010.05	141,195.89	11,617,353.38	55.46 (IUCN individual)
IUCN Expenditure	49,362.62	78,303.47	6,427,350.30	

Source: Compiled from office records

IUCNB’s role in facilitating the Project, coordinating and monitoring the activities, and the promotion of communication between the member PNGOs has been effective. The Project staff generally expressed satisfaction over the support and advice they received from IUCNB. The Mission was informed that the concerned IUCNB staff responded to various communications and requests from the member NGOs professionally, and with reasonable promptness. IUCNB’s cooperation in allowing a degree of flexibility and discretion in field operation – were noted as examples of positive support.

The senior management of the implementing member NGOs found that empirical visits and inspection tours by the relevant IUCNB staff and other representatives useful and worthwhile. The frequency of such visits by the Project staff was, however, considered inadequate.

Although the concerned IUCNB and key member NGO staff have generally sound understanding of the risks and vulnerabilities facing the Project, efforts to systematically analyse and record the risk factors and make corresponding adjustment to Project strategies and approaches have been somewhat weak.

The Mission has not heard about any complaint or allegation as regards fund management and transparency in the field. There also appears to be a high level of credibility of the Project, especially its field staff, at the community level regarding financial integrity.

The staff deployment structure has been broadly cost effective. The Project staff salary is competitive at the local level. The Mission's impression is that the salary, especially of the field staff, is comparable to that of national NGOs operating in respective localities, but substantially lower than international NGOs.

Although a detailed inspection and audit of procurement and financial resources is beyond the scope of this Mission, the general impression suggests that the procurement of goods and services in most cases has been economical and compliant with standard IUCN procedures. The procurement process and performance have also benefitted from the yearly external audit of IUCNB.

Several other incidents – with implications for ‘value for money’ and ‘economy’ - have been identified by the Mission; examples include the following:

- The promotional materials and publications of the Project (e.g. brochures, leaflets, posters) have been produced at considerably lesser cost than originally budgeted (the use of IUCNB's internal expertise in manuscript preparation and graphic design came in handy in this regard);
- In several sites (visited by the Mission) more people (typically CBO members) were accommodated in the training sessions (especially on agriculture, natural resource laws, poultry) than originally estimated with no additional cost;
- Two large national events – the sharing and consultation workshop, and the sensitization workshop for the policy makers – were merged – saving considerable costs.
- The cost of venue has been saved on several occasions by leveraging existing partnerships (e.g. using governmental and other NGO facilities (e.g. conference rooms, resource centres) for training and meeting purposes; in many cases the saved cost has been used to support greater number of participants and/or expert resource persons
- The Project operations in the field have also routinely drawn on, and leveraged the (staff and logistical) resources of other relevant projects implemented by IUCNB and member NGOs.

2.5 Equity

The Project has a clear focus on several most disadvantaged social groups notably poor fishers, the landless, religious minorities – especially through such activities as specific livelihood training and knowhow, and mass scale conscientization on various natural resource governance-related rights and access issues.

Several other activities of the Project have positive implications in terms of social equity and outreach to the most disadvantaged members of the community; these include: (i) training and orienting selected women to take up decision making positions in a few CBOs and UP (e.g. Khurushkul-Cox Bazar, Gopinathpur-Manikgonj); (ii) consciously seeking out female-headed poor households (e.g. in Magura and Satkhira); and (iii) specially targeting traditional/indigenous communities and ethnic/religious minorities in several sites (e.g. the *Rajbanshi* and *Malo* in Magura, *Sonatan Hindu* fishers and crab-collectors in the vicinity of Sandarbans in Kalinagar, Satkhira; and *Rakhain* and *Marma* in Cox’s Bazar).

Female membership in the General Bodies of the CBOs in the visited sites varies widely - between 9 to 45% (see Table 2.8; the details are appended). The relatively low level of female participation in several CBOs is attributed to the following factors:

- socio-religious taboos and hindrances to women’s access in formal quarters;
- lower level of literacy;
- limited access to information and opportunity;
- formal activities of the CBOs (e.g. meetings, workshops, visits by external guests and officials) often clashes with the time of (overwhelming) household engagements of women.

Poorer sections – especially destitute women, however were seen during the fieldwork to be engaged in several CBO-led environmental conservation and livelihood activities – providing manual labour and other maintenance inputs

Table 2.8: Gender Composition of CBO Membership in the Visited Sites

<i>Visited Sites</i>	<i>Number of CBOs</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Magura	15	1160	238 (17.02%)	1398
Satkhira	17	845	375 (44.38%)	1220
Manikgonj	7	141	47 (25%)	188
Gazipur	6	291	31 (9.63%)	322
Cox’s Bazar	7	210	151 (41.83%)	361

Source: Compiled from office records

In a very limited number of incidences, a few female CBO members have successfully negotiated and ascended to local government leadership position – notably membership of UP and /or Standing Committees). In Manikgonj, for example, Ms Merzona Begum – a CBO member has been elected as UP Member in the Reserved Wards 1,2 and 3. She has been holding this position for some 9 years. She is widely respected in the locality for her proactive role in various natural resource governance issues, and leading several community actions (such as campaign against fish poaching and use of illegal fishing gears in the local rivers).

Among the visited sites, a few people with various forms of disability were noticed amongst CBO members. Although the Project staff and CBO leaders were positive and supportive, the Project did not have any dedicated or targeted provision for these people with special need.

2.6 Sustainability and Replicability

Long term sustainability of the Project activities and interventions remains a formidable challenge, and there is no quick-fix solution here. Facing this challenge will require careful thinking and continuous adjustments in the Project's approach and strategies. A few encouraging trends and elements in the current operations and strategies of the Project, however, are noticeable; these include the following:

- Most activities of the Project - especially some of the conservation initiatives, the livelihood training, empowerment of (hitherto dormant) local and community organisations, and support to community and collective action in facing pressing local problems - have been very well grounded in the locality – receiving considerable popular support. During the fieldwork in Gazipur, it was observed, for example, that local villagers in at least two hamlets surrounding the wetlands of Buri Beel and Bannar Beel (Durgapur Union, Kapasia Upazila) have shown keen interest, and initiated early action, in replicating the fish sanctuary 'model' introduced and practiced by the Project CBOs in Nolibeel. In Cox Bazar, similarly, the handicraft training has already been extended to a few places beyond the Project area, and the learning and enterprise have been replicated by local people who are neither direct members of the Project nor beneficiaries of the concerned member NGO. In following the CBOs' effort to negotiate with the District and Upazila Administration in realising the local wetlands (especially the Dumuria Beel and other Gabura water-bodies) from private leasehold, and bringing these vital natural resources to community management for conversion to agricultural production and maintaining flow of water, local people from at least three villages in Shamnagar Upazila in Satkhira have started a move to approach the government to free lands in their localities from elite control.
- The Project's careful selection and partnering with relatively strong local institutions have meant that local capacity exists to continue and expand the work. During the Mission's field visit, the member NGOs – NACOM and CNRS have expressed commitment to draw on the lessons and experience of the Project, and continue the work by exploring alternative funding.
- The Project's attempt to forge partnership with communities, local government, and relevant public line departments has also been useful in paving the way for sustainability. In their application for external funding and renewal for governmental registration, for example, some (Project-supported) CBOs have benefitted from strong recommendation and endorsement of the relevant line department officials (namely, the concerned Upazila *Nirbahi* Officer, and Upazila Fisheries Officer), and traditional and local government leadership (i.e. local Union *Parishad* Chairmen or members).
- Most of the PNGO staff reported that they have benefited from the new skills and capacity development activities of the Project and apply some of these experience and learning - especially the ones related to NRM laws and policies - in their other projects.

- In view of the proven interest, voluntary contribution and generally high degree of support for some of initiatives – notably fish sanctuaries or voluntary canal excavation, one may expect that these locally-specific natural resource conservation and development initiatives are mostly likely to survive beyond the Project duration.
- A degree of behavioural change amongst the local people is noticeable that has important implications for sustainability in natural resource use and management. A few examples, noted during the fieldwork, include the following: (i) villagers show greater degree of understanding and care as not to harvest fish during the drier (peak summer) months of *Baishakh* and *Joistho* by completely drying out wetlands and canals (Gazipur); (ii) not to indiscriminately destroy various species of fingerlings while collecting prawn spawns (Cox's Bazar); (iii) CBO-led organized protest and resistance against local poaching and hunting of wildlife especially birds and waterfowls (Manikgonj).
- Some 30% of the CBOs visited during the fieldwork have a 'revolving fund' facility – originated from earlier projects administered in the locality by the member NGOs. Members can access this fund by rotation for financing various livelihood enterprises. The interest rate is relatively low - compared to other formal (e.g. banks) and informal (e.g., *mohajon* or traditional moneylenders) sources in the respective localities), and the procedure is less cumbersome. The NRG Project has contributed to further strengthening of this facility by such measures as encouraging more savings by the CBO members (and subsequently, contributing to the fund), better leadership and office management, and public discussion and disclosure of the fund information and utilization.
- The skills and knowhow infused among the communities through various training and capacity enhancement interventions are expected to have long term positive impact above and beyond the immediate gains in financial benefits.

As regards sustainability, the Mission has identified some relatively weaker areas of the Project operations and strategies including the following:

- Efforts to link up the Project activities to the relevant projects of other government and local governmental agencies have been slow and limited.
- Physical assets and other resources generated by the (Project-supported) CBOs (e.g. plantations, resource centres) are not always under the direct control of the targeted communities, and sometimes remain under private ownership.
- Continuous research and exploration are required to make the suggested income generating and livelihood strategies and technologies cost effective at the community level; currently, the Project lack any substantive focus on such research.
- The Project efforts towards public dissemination and media engagement have been limited.
- National level advocacy efforts are vital especially in the context of the sensitivity and strategic significance of natural resource governance and community access and rights issues; the Project's achievements in this regard have so far been somewhat limited to be able create any broad-based impression that might help sustainability in the long run.

Chapter 3: Strategic and Project Management Review

This chapter begins with a strategic assessment of the Project and its working environment through a standard SWOT (Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats) analysis. The analysis and exercise have been based on 5 FGDs conducted in the visited sites represented by selected key stakeholders – especially senior member NGO staff, invited staff from other local development organizations, local government leaders, and invited members of Project beneficiary groups. The purpose is twofold: first, to complement the Project’s stock-taking of the accomplishments (in the previous chapter) from a strategic perspective; and secondly, to provide inputs and food for thought for more effective future interventions (attempted in the next chapter). The last section focuses on selected issues and dynamics related to project management and human resources.

3.1 Assessment of the Project Environment through SWOT (Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats) Analysis

STRENGTHS

At the community/beneficiary level

- The Project operations have a clear grassroots focus and appear to be well-grounded in the targeted communities. It has attempted to develop and consolidate community level organisations.
- A considerable degree of local acceptance and credibility is noticeable; the Project services have generally been well received by the communities.
- Wherever possible, as a matter of policy, the Project has hired and employed the field staff from the specific/targeted communities.
- The Project has identified and addressed some vital local demands and (long outstanding) issues on a priority basis, most notably, greater community access to surrounding wetlands and related natural resources, opportunities of better livelihood and alternative income generation, effective negotiations with local government offices.
- The Project has been able to secure reasonable support from local leadership and other influential persons through such institutional mechanisms as the UP Standing Committees, and other activity-specific community level committees.
- The Project bases itself on other larger and wider interventions of the member NGOs in the localities, and can draw on the strengths of these holistic, rather than compartmentalized, development initiatives.

At the staff/management level

- The Project has put a particular emphasis on financial and programmatic monitoring and stringent feedback system. This has contributed to a more efficient fund management and greater degree of transparency at the field operations.
- The Project operations appear to have adopted a ‘step by step’ (gradual) approach development as opposed to sudden rapid expansion.

- Good and friendly interaction and communication (through field visits, rapport building at the household level etc.) of the field staff with the targeted beneficiaries.
- Respect to site-specific culture, norms and socio-religious practices during the Project operations (e.g. personal contact with socio-religious leaders, paying attention to religious/cultural etiquettes and norms).
- The Project has established offices and ensured regular presence of staff at the sub-national and community levels, and encouraged access to these offices by the targeted beneficiaries and local community people.

WEAKNESSES

- The Mission's observations suggest that many beneficiaries still look on to the Project services as 'help or grant', rather than their 'rights and entitlements' (in the meetings, beneficiaries frequently referred to the Project interventions by using such words and expressions as *Upakar, Sohay; Daan, Sahajjo* etc.). This may somewhat undermine the basic premise and philosophy of the 'right based approach' to development.
- Some of the services (e.g. livelihood/income generation training) are limited and confined to 'software' inputs (such as awareness raising, motivation, quick orientations), rather than more tangible and direct hardware support (e.g. provision of appropriate equipments and raw materials, market linkage for materializing the acquired knowhow to practical action and enterprises). Such services are presently nominal and too thinly spread.
- Despite the great local demand and potential, there have been limited efforts as regard local demand-led income generating activities (especially in the non-farm sectors) and entrepreneurship development. Currently, such initiatives (e.g. handicrafts [mat weaving, handbag manufacturing] and sewing in Cox's Bazar and Magura) are in an experimental and nascent stage.
- In many cases, effective linkages have not been established between the beneficiaries who received training (from the Project) and the relevant markets.
- In consideration of the difficult terrain conditions, inaccessibility and large territorial coverage, the level of effective supervision of field staff in some sites has been inadequate.
- The logistics and equipments (e.g. transports, computers, office supplies), concerning the Project operations, are presently at a basic and scarce level.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Further scaling up and consolidation of the local credibility and support that the Project currently enjoys. In this regard, the current efforts for leveraging the experience and resources of relevant other projects may prove very effective in terms of producing synergistic results.
- The groundwork has been done, and a reasonable platform exists to enable long term planning and strategizing for improved and extended natural resource governance in the localities.
- Within the current working area, there is still plenty of scope to include local communities and groups that remain outside the Project intervention.

- Further exploration and utilization of indigenous knowledge and local practices especially in relation to avenues of land and agro-based income generation and livelihood.
- Forging wider partnership with relevant other development organisations and existing networks especially in the more delicate areas of the Project operation – e.g. fishers’ right promotion, encountering elite domination and capture of local resources, etc.

THREATS

- During the course of its years of operation and existence in the field, the Project has raised the expectation and demand of the local people. There is now a clear demand and need for follow-up and more concrete material support and services at the community level. If this is not forthcoming, the groundwork and hard- earned rapport, created by the Project in all these years, may prove to be somewhat redundant or even, useless. The sudden closure of the UNDP-supported SEMP in project Manikgonj is a case in point.
- There is some degree of uncertainty and discontent among the field staff, especially as regards the contractual/interim nature, differences in the pay structure within the various project staff of equivalent status and responsibility within an organization, and the prospect of career development through continuation of the Project.
- During scaling up of the Project operations in the future, the ratio of field staff to number of beneficiary groups needs to be carefully considered especially in light of geographic coverage and terrain conditions, so that rapid expansion may not jeopardise the required close interaction and supervision of the groups.
- Some senior management staff of member NGO and other respondents (e.g. local government leaders) opined that the Project – given its human rights and governance emphasis - would eventually need to address more sensitive and ‘political’ issues - notably resource use and access rights, assertion and recognition of occupational identity, community representation and voice in local government institutions - which may prove to be ‘too hot to handle’, unless the Project can forge partnership with other concerned institutions and make a strong footing at the national level.
- A number of factors, such as heavy workload, difficult terrain conditions, and wide territorial coverage, may constrain the maximization of the potential of the Project human resources.
- Interference and manipulation of local elites and intermediaries.

Table 3.1: Summary of the SWOT Analysis

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Weaknesses</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear grassroots focus • Local acceptance and credibility • Identified and addressed some vital local demands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right based Approach is not properly understood or practiced • The Project services as ‘help or grant’ , rather than their ‘rights and

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bases itself on other larger and wider interventions of the member NGOs • Particular emphasis on financial and programmatic monitoring and stringent feedback system • Respect to site-specific culture, norms and socio-religious practices • Ensured regular presence of staff at the sub-national and community levels 	<p>entitlements’</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project services (e.g. livelihood training) are limited and confined to ‘software’ inputs • Effective linkages have not been established between received training relevant markets. • Logistics and equipments basic and scarce • Better coordinated work planning and scheduling (including info sharing) required
<p><i>Opportunities</i></p>	<p><i>Threats</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term perspective project planning • Further scaling up and consolidation of the local credibility and support • Groundwork, reasonable platform to enable long term planning • Exploration and utilization of indigenous knowledge and local practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The raised expectation and demand of the local people • Uncertainty and discontent among the field staff, • Contractual/interim nature, discrepancy in their pay structure, and the prospect of career development • Human rights and governance emphasis - concerning the CHT Accord, may prove to be ‘too hot to handle’. • Heavy workload, difficult terrain conditions, and wide territorial coverage, may constrain the maximization of the HR potential. • Interference and manipulation of local elites and intermediaries.

3.2 Project Management and Human Resources: Selected Issues

As noted earlier, the IUCNB has followed a rigorous screening process in selecting the member NGOs, and this has paid well in the long run. The member NGOs – NACOM and CNRS visited during the fieldwork have demonstrated capacity to handle community-focussed natural resource management projects in the localities involving disadvantaged communities.

Both the organisations are strongly rooted in the local contexts. They maintain a healthy programme portfolio, and have a track record of successful management and delivery of a number of donor-assisted projects over the years.

As noted above (section 3.1), the Project in particular has a number of comparative advantages both at the community/beneficiary and staff levels.

As noted earlier (Chapter 2), there have been several incidents of procrastination and uncertainty over major decisions – especially concerning the continuation of the Project. Based on the Mission’s observations, the following factors may explain this situation:

- the process and associated bureaucracy concerning major decisions of the Project (including approvals, fund release and vigilance) involved multiple and complex organizations, units and tiers;
- the communications amongst these organisations have not always been effective;
- it also seems that there has been differences in the understanding and perceptions of the concerned staff (working at various levels and organisations) regarding the priorities of the Project and the ground realities.

The field staff composition and associated characteristics, as observed during the fieldwork, are summarized in the following table:

Table 3.2: Summary of Field Staff Composition and Associated Characteristics in Selected Sites

<i>Sites</i>	<i>Designation</i>	<i>Education (highest degree)</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Subject specific knowledge</i>
Gazipur	Site Facilitator	MSc (Physics)	1	0	Considerable
	Community Organiser	HSC	1	0	Basic
Magura	Governance Officer	BSS	1	0	Basic
Manikgonj	Community Organiser	SSC	1	0	Basic
Cox’s Bazar	Site Facilitator	MSc (Zoology)	1	0	Moderate
	Community Organiser	BCom	1	0	Moderate
Satkhira	Project Officer	MSS (Political Science)	1	0	Considerable
	Project officer	MSS	1	0	Moderate
		<i>Total</i>	8	0	

Notes: The indicative assessment of the ‘subject specific knowledge’ is based on the Mission’s interactions with the concerned staff together with the consideration of their educational status. The knowledge of community mobilization skills and community-based natural resource management was particularly considered.

Nearly all field staff in the visited sites have been men. They typically received a short (1 day) training on ‘natural resource governance’. Although most staff have strong links to their respective locality, they have little formal training on community mobilization and community-led natural resource governance.

The number of staff is clearly inadequate – especially when considered in light of the working area coverage, the demand for close communications with the communities, and the difficult terrain conditions in most sites. This inadequacy has not, however, caused a major problem in the management of the Project so far due to the fact that staff from other projects of the member NGOs operating in these sites have routinely helped and contributed to this Project.

There has been practically no or very limited representation of woman in the management positions concerning the Project. Several reasons were identified during the Mission's interviews and discussions with the staff regarding the low degree of female representation in the Project workforce. The reasons include: (i) Limited availability and interest on the part of appropriately qualified women to work in the field sites. (ii) Limited opportunities for relatively better qualified women for long term career progression and exposure opportunities. (iii) Lack of secured housing/accommodation facilities in the field. (iv) Large territorial coverage and the difficulty of transportation/conveyance in the field. (v) Restrictive social taboo and environment in some locations

The majority of the staff is drawn from the locality; as a strategy, this helps the organisations in securing local support and community acceptability.

The workload especially in the field has been quite substantial (examples from two sites are presented in Tables 3.3 and 3.4). There is a general feeling amongst nearly all levels of the field staff that the current interim nature of their job and the salary/emolument structures do not commensurate with the heavy workloads and responsibilities.

Table 3.3: Typical Daily Work Schedule of a Community Organiser in Cox's Bazar

06:30	Rising up from bed , Morning chores
08:45	Reporting to Site Facilitator, Morning prayers, Getting prepared for morning meetings
09:30	Leaving the Site Office and moving out to field for field meetings, house-to-house visits, and associated activities
10:30	Reaching to the field, visit the nearby site and checking out various components of site, inviting participants for the meetings; supervision of CBO meeting; informal visits to local government leaders
12:30	At the end of the meeting, helping the CBO office bearers in recording the proceedings (including preparation of the attendance list, writing up the resolution); visit the nearby site and checking out various components of CBOs; Supervision AIG activities, and associated reporting
14:00-15:00	Lunch and prayer break
15:30	Time needed to come to the office, or moving on to the next site. Reporting to the Site Facilitator or office coordinator; planning for the next day's work
16:00	Meeting with the Site Facilitator on various components of Community activity, Supervision of CBOs – on the basis of feedback received during earlier visit .
17:00	Regular office work like (record maintenance, ledger posting, various reporting – coordination meeting , follow up of 7-16 CBOs and associated groups, preparation of meeting notices and other documentation, etc.
20:00	Preparation of dinner and night time chores

Source: Based on personal interviews with a Community Organizer (or equivalent staff), and the Mission's field observations on the Cox's Bazar operations.

Table 3.4: Typical Daily Work Schedule of a Governance Officer in Satkhira

05:00	Rising up from bed , Morning chores, Morning prayers
09:00	Reporting to Project coordinator, Attendance
09:15	Preparing for and moving out to Field to supervise, inspect CBO functions and activities
09:45	Visit the nearby Village Resource Center (VRC)/Community Based Organizations(CBO) and checking out various components of project, Supervision of - SMC meeting, MG Meeting , training attendance, register maintenance, attendance , salary disbursement ,TNA activities etc.
12:30	Visit the nearby Embankments and shrimp cultivation firms ,checking out various components of CBO, Supervision of - CBO meeting, fishermen meeting, MG Meeting , Training attendance , salary disbursement , AIG activities etc.
14:00	Time needed to travel on foot- for office or to next CBO to be visited .
14:30	Lunch break
15:00	Re-visit the nearby CBO/VRC and checking out various components of Resource Center, Supervision of TNA exercises – on the basis of feedback received during earlier training sessions.
16:00	Return to the office for such routine tasks as communications to the head office, record maintenance, ledger posting, and various reporting
18:00	Leaving office for home
19:30	Preparation of dinner and night time chores

Source: Based on personal interviews with two Governance Officers, and the Mission's field observations on the Satkhira operations.

A number of human resource (HR)-related problems were reported; these include:

- Most staff considered the salary structure at a basic level; there were no provisions of provident fund or other termination benefits in the Project; this caused a sense of discrimination when the Project staff compared themselves with their peers in other regular or core positions in their respective organisations.
- Given the difficult terrain conditions and limited accessibility to a significant part of the working area, the conveyance and daily allowance was considered grossly inadequate.
- Although most staff received some basic orientation training, this was considered superficial and inadequate especially in terms of such subjects and skills as community mobilization, interpersonal skills, negotiation and facilitation, advocacy, and project planning and reporting.
- There have been some, although limited, safety and security concerns raised by staff.
- A field worker/staff on an average supervises some 7 to 15 CBOs (and various associated committees) -- spread over a large area. Effective monitoring and close interaction between the staff and the beneficiaries and other institutional members often, therefore, become difficult. In many locations, the terrain conditions and monsoon render transportation extremely difficult, and the fieldworkers can only move on foot.

The Project's general monitoring and reporting systems, as noted earlier, appear to be generally sound and comprehensive. Due to the already heavy workload of the field staff, however,

reporting, monitoring, evaluation and fund management activities are often seen as additional burden.

Both the visited member NGOs routinely maintain reasonable organisational and personnel standard policies including Human Resource/Personnel Manual, Financial Management/Procedure Manual, Financial Rules, Procurement Policy, Gender Policy, and Service Rules. The actual level of compliance and adherence to these documents in the field, however, vary considerably.

The visited communities expressed general satisfaction about the concerned Project staff, and often used such terms as 'friendly', 'trust worthy', 'helpful' while referring to the staff behaviour and interactions.

Chapter 4 Lessons and Clues on Improvement

This concluding chapter begins by eliciting several key lessons drawn from the overall observations of the Mission. The second section then furnishes some (general and specific) recommendations.

4.1 Lessons

It is imperative to engage with local leadership organisations — both traditional and local government (UP)-based mechanisms – for successful functioning of community platforms and committees/CBOs promoted by the Project. In areas where the local institutions are relatively well functional, and the respective CBOs have made it a conscious strategy to work closely with these institutions; the results have been encouraging.

Gender equity requires systematic efforts in gender mainstreaming within community and local government institutions (e.g. CBOs, UP Standing Committees) which in turn calls for active commitment and involvement of the top leadership (especially the chief executive and executive committee members) senior management, as well as specialized skills and approaches.

It is strategically wise, if not always ‘noble and brave’, for community platforms and committees to avoid any major confrontation or clash with the powerful social and political forces in the locality. In other words, an incremental and palliative approach, rather than radical encounters, serves the purposes of community development and management better.

Recruitment of trainers from local community helps reduce language barriers and improve communication with, and presence of the targeted beneficiaries.

Relative homogeneity in terms of socio-economic and demographic composition of the members makes it easier for CBO leadership to exercise of authority and implement decisions.

Community development activities have better prospect of public acceptance and grounding in areas where the local people have some earlier exposure to relevant projects. In a few Project sites, the participating local communities have had some earlier experience of working with participatory, right-based initiatives (e.g. CBFM in Magura; IPAC in Satkhira; SEMP in Hail Haor – Sreemongol), and this has been to the advantage of Project’s community level operations.

The Project’s community level committees and associated platforms need to ensure greater inclusion and voice of the relatively disadvantaged sections (e.g. women, smaller ethnic groups, disabled, and poorest of the poor) of the local communities. Currently a form of negotiated alliance or compromise is noticeable; although in some CBOs, for example, the membership includes substantial representation from the local ‘power circle’ – local government leaders and dominant (powerful) socio-cultural elites, maintain generally good terms with the relatively powerless and disadvantaged sections, and are open to the idea of wider inclusion of such sections.

One key reflection of vibrancy of the committees is the frequency and functioning of meetings. In majority of cases, CBO meetings, for example, are enthusiastically arranged and participated. Although the discussions are generally lively, and a good number listen and show interest - a few relatively dominant members raise and discuss the salient issues. Some reasons for this relatively well attended CBO meetings include the perceived honour associated with such meetings, an opportunity to interact with visiting public and non-government officials in a public setting, and prospect of participating in some local activities that are generally viewed be worthwhile.

The involvement of concerned public line departments (notably Department of Fisheries, Department of Livestock Resources, Department of Agricultural Extension) in various community development work (such as training and awareness campaigns) has been useful; this has, among other things, improved relations between the government and local communities.

The regulatory documents (e.g. CBO constitution, major decisions as recorded in the meeting minutes and proceedings, relevant government circulars) need to be disseminated to common members and any interested person in the community in a language and manner that is understandable to the local people.

Regular and frequent financial and programmatic evaluation and monitoring are essential, and go a long way towards improved governance of development work in the localities.

Successful CBO and other committee leaders depict a high degree of interpersonal and negotiation skills – although the application of such qualities is limited.

Market linkage and making most of the supply chain in connecting the producer with the ultimate consumer are vital, and these areas require much greater attention.

Capacity of local and community-level institutions remains generally low; efforts in this regard must continue unabated.

Membership in various Project committees and platforms is often viewed as a ‘prestige position’ in the locality, and a way ‘to get closer to the government’. This Social Capital formation process is widely valued, and remains a major attraction for local committee leaders.

Women, youth and relatively powerless sections of the community people are still not significantly represented in the major decisions of important committees and platforms.

Training and skill enhancement initiatives need to be locally specific, tailor made to local demand and context. Handling development (e.g. IGA) projects contributes to CBOs’ confidence and skills enhancement. A high degree of interest and enthusiasm is noticeable amongst CBOs and participating local communities as regards taking up development projects.

Local people’s sound ‘popular wisdom’, especially in analyzing performance of development projects in their locality, is worth noting and exploring further. The experience and results of various enterprises at the community level have been mixed. The team visited both successful

and failed cases of income generating initiatives. Local communities, as revealed in the course of detailed interviews and FGDs, have sound knowledge of (and are capable of examining) the reasons of relative success and failure.

Participating women require greater recognition and opportunities to access formal avenues of income and decision making. Although women remain heavily worked at the household and informal levels, their opportunities for participation and movements in more ‘formal’ sectors of paid work and public office premises are stills limited. Most women respondents have emphasized the need for more IGA related training and skills development opportunities as well as access to information and start-up capital/credit.

CBOs have potential for serving as effective platform for local conflict resolution and peace building. A good number of CBO members are socially related with the local conflict resolution processes and mechanisms. This serves as an added advantage in the functioning of CBOs.

Although formal documents including ‘constitution’ of most CBOs exist, actual knowledge and understanding of these documents is marginal amongst most of the observed general members of the CBOs and broader communities. This remains a constraint on forging a shared purpose and common vision in the Project operation.

Clear tenurial status and documentation of the resources (e.g. fish sanctuaries, plantations, resource centres) generated through the Project go a long way towards ensuring community participation, and building better NGO-community relations. Although some tenure agreements are considered generally clear and fair, not all such agreements are fully understood by the participating communities.

In reaching out to the local government, it may make good sense to link up to, and take advantage of the already existing (government recognized) forums and platforms, notably the various Standing Committees at the Union level (including the committees on education, disasters and health).

4.2 General Recommendations

The Project, despite some weaknesses and limitations (as noted in Chapters 2 and 3), has generally been on track in terms of reasonable achievements of its stated goal and outcomes, and has maintained an acceptable level of progress.

- There are clear signs of the Project’s progress towards creating a positive impact especially in terms of local acceptability and credibility, a degree of community mobilization in support of greater voices in decisions regarding local natural resource use and management, piloting of selected natural resource management activities, relevant capacity enhancement of local stakeholders, and a degree of contribution to the enhancement of social capital and empowerment (Chapter 2).

- There is good rationale for continuation and further expansion of similar programmatic interventions in the region – provided that the following recommendations are addressed to. There are many deserving communities (including smaller indigenous and/or religious minority groups) in the localities that still remain unattended. The Mission recommends gradual extension of the services to these equally deserving people. In this regard, program selection for different communities should be carefully designed based on present learning and needs of the communities.

4.3 Specific Recommendations

This section presents some agendas of possible strategies and actions with the broad aim of improving the situation. These suggestive agendas draw on (a) the experience and observations of the fieldwork; (b) views expressed by the project staff and other key stakeholders; (c) recommendations of selected earlier reports; and (d) feedback from the various briefing and debriefing sessions.

The strategies, modalities and actions are not meant to be universal or infallible; they are essentially suggestive and indicative. The aim is to explore and furnish a range of ideas, which the Project in close consultation and collaboration with the field staff and beneficiaries may consider and implement after careful consideration of the particular context, condition and realities of the field.

- The contents and mode of delivery of various training and capacity development initiatives should more clearly focus on (and geared towards) a ‘right based approach’ as distinct from mere philanthropic orientations.
- The cases of failure in capacity enhancement and livelihood interventions require proper local level documentation and analyses, which may offer important lessons for any future Project.
- Follow-up services (such as medi-care for livestock; technical know-how on agricultural technologies, equipment and logistics for handicrafts) need be carefully planned and adequately executed.
- Greater efforts are needed in linking the community level livelihood and training interventions to other locally available services and provisions (e.g. the governmental services available in the Upazila offices, similar relevant interventions by other NGOs, etc.).
- The local ‘success stories’ concerning particular CBOs need to be more effectively disseminated and shared at the community level; cross-visits and sharing of experience among various CBOs and associated communities may be considered; this may help instil a better sense of ownership of these efforts by the concerned communities, and thereby, enhancing the possibilities of long term sustainability.
- As far as possible, the training contents and literature should use visual and pictorial materials as well as physical demonstrations, where applicable. Other experimental models of training and learning, practiced by other projects/institutions in the region, may provide valuable lessons in this regard.

- The following topics should (continue to) receive priority in community level training and capacity development efforts: ‘beef-fattening’ (livestock rearing), pest management in agriculture, fish culture, existing NRM laws and policies, handicrafts (especially sewing), poultry, homestead gardening/forestry, and nursery raising.
- Wherever possible, the training sessions should be arranged and organised locally -- close to the targeted communities based on the beneficiaries’ convenience and opinion. This has often been the case so far, and need to continue.
- Systematic and regular consultation with the target beneficiaries should be done by the concerned staff before designing and/or implementing any training scheme especially its contents, time and location.
- Livelihood skills development interventions should combine and consider the following: quality inputs and production, regular product development training, and establishment market linkages.
- Women should be given preference or at least equal opportunity in availing various skills development training and associated inputs and facilities.
- The Project may help to link the beneficiaries with other government and non-government initiatives towards enterprise development and income generation
- The Project may strengthen its material and back-up support for enabling the beneficiaries to put their skills and trainings to practical use. Such support may include establishing market linkages, flexible and easy to repay credit for acquiring specialized equipments, tools and/or inputs for livelihood and income generation.
- While promoting new and innovating technologies (e.g. pest management through organic means) and strategies (community-managed sanctuaries), it may be strategically important to link up to, and engage with relevant other government and non-governmental initiatives; promotional materials are best disseminated at the local/community level public places (such as weekly bazaars, local government institutional premises).
- Special care must be taken to ensure that all infrastructures and physical facilities or assets (e.g. resource centres, sanctuaries, boats) developed and supplied through the member NGOs are locally grounded and rooted in terms of legal ownership and management by the targeted community members.
- Exposure and ‘cross’ visits may be further expanded involving more zealous group and committee members (as well as relevant local government and traditional leaders) in order for them to visit and benefit from the experiences of better functioning situations and cases. Essentially, the purpose of these visits is to facilitate cross fertilization of good practice idea and create a demonstration effect.
- The efforts to record and document the existing best practice examples of off-and on-farm avenues of livelihood and income diversification should be continued, and correspondingly reviewed for possible replication and further promotion.
- There are several relevant initiatives (by a number of local organizations including IUCN members and partners) in the Project’s working areas. There is a clear need to coordinate these rather disjointed efforts. Careful thoughts are needed to contribute to this end.
- Efforts must continue to engage with the relevant line and local government offices at the District, Upazila and Union levels as well as traditional local government offices as the community level in terms of sensitization on the Project goals and activities and linking

their services to the communities. Maintaining continuous dialogue with these offices is vital, and required time and resources should be planned and provided for this purpose.

- In view of the sensitivity and complexity of the natural resource governance and community rights issues, the Project (or any future intervention in this regard) should attempt to develop networking and regular liaison with other local government bodies and associations (e.g. the UP chairpersons' forum, Human rights and good governance activists) and institutions active at the national/policy level.
- As a sensitization strategy, the concerned field staff, based on their personal experience, suggested that it may be more effective to hold one-on-one discussion with selected public officials and local government leaders, rather than formal, full-house meetings.
- Particular care should be taken for timely, secure and smooth release and delivery of funds to the field.
- Targeted affirmative action for smaller indigenous/traditional communities, destitute women, and the disabled may be considered.
- Local and national level advocacy efforts must continue and further expanded; in this regard some preferred topics and issues (as revealed from various FGDs and stakeholder consultations) include the following: (i) conservation of endangered species of flora and fauna in the project localities (including conservation of 'iconic' spp. – e.g. Sharputi in Magura, Chital in Hakaluki/Sreemongal); (ii) community ownership/management in lieu of private exclusive leasing of natural resources; (iii) protection and conservation of natural resources of critical community use and common value – such as road and embankment sides ('strips') and slopes, canal/stream 'head' (and associated flow conservation), common wetlands; (iv) expanding national level advocacy for policy and institutional reform for greater community rights and access to natural resources.
- Wherever possible, local knowledge and wisdom (including some of popular agroforestry, fisheries and cropping technologies observed during the fieldwork) may be analysed, documented, disseminated and promoted.
- Greater emphasis should be given on forging network and partnerships. A number of leaders of various groups and committees (notably, UP Standing Committees, Fishers' Groups) have requested the Project's support in linking up to the national level – e.g. to the national media and television networks – for projecting the site-specific NRG challenges and problems, and promoting community rights and access to natural resources.
- In relation to the above point, use of alternative and indigenous media of dissemination such as folk songs and street theatres should be further explored.
- Some concerned staff and other development workers, based on their personal experiences, suggested that dissemination and documentation efforts should be geared towards such socially recognised, long standing institutions as local educational institutions, religious seminaries and other faith establishments, and bazaar committees.
- The relevant promotional literature and publications may be translated in vernacular language, and widely disseminated locally; involving local educational institutions may be particularly useful in this respect.
- For any similar Project in the future, the staff composition may be carefully reviewed for reasonable gender balancing by exploring means of bringing on board more appropriately qualified women – where possible.

- The field staff should be adequately trained and oriented with (i) relevant community mobilization and development (including group formation and nurturing), (ii) participatory methodology and approaches (including community-led critical/problem analysis); and (iii) supervision and monitoring tools and techniques (including field-based reporting).
- The pay structure and associated emoluments of the Project staff should be periodically reviewed for competitiveness in order to retain high quality human resources. In the long run, the issue and problems associated with the interim or contractual nature of the positions will also need to be carefully reviewed.
- The current level of workload should be scientifically examined and reviewed in order to ensure rational and equitable distribution.
- Further support to transportation and conveyance (including an allowance for long range travel on foot in locations where no other mode of transport is available) for field staff may be considered.
- During the course of the Mission's consultations with the staff, a number of training topics were suggested that have an immediate relevance in the field:
 - Facilitation,
 - Conflict management and dispute resolution,
 - Interpersonal Skills,
 - Monitoring and Evaluation (including report writing),
 - Office Administration and Management,
 - Human Rights Approach to Development,
 - Community Governance (Community-focussed Leadership Development and Project Management),
 - Practical Agriculture and Agro forestry (including popularly used agro-technologies – e.g. grafting)
 - Project Planning and Proposal Drafting
 - Cultural and heritage conservation (with a focus on relevant national and international policy and legal framework and obligations),

Appendixes

The appendixes are placed in a separate file. The file contains the following:

Annex 1: Achievement Rating Scale

Annex 2: Information on the Major Activities of Project in the Gazipur Site

Annex 3: Information on the Major Activities of Project in the Cox's Bazar Site

Annex 4: Information on the Major Activities of Project in the Manikgonj Site

Annex 5: Information on the Major Activities of Project in the Magura Site

Annex 6: Information on the Major Activities of Project in the Satkhira Site

Annex 7: Consolidated information on Training

Annex 8: List of Persons and Institutions Met and Consulted

Annex 9: Literature Consulted and/or Cited

Annex 10: The Final Evaluation Mission Terms of Reference (ToR)[appended to the PDF]

Annex 11: Selected Photographs on the Mission's Fieldwork

Annex 10: The Terms of Reference of the Final Evaluation Mission

NAME: <name>

ASSIGNMENT: To evaluate results and impacts of the project titled “**Improving Environmental governance for sustainable management of natural resource in Bangladesh**”

IUCN REPORTING MANAGER: Mr. Ishtiaq Uddin Ahmad, Country Representative, IUCN Bangladesh Country Office.

LOCATION: Dhaka, Bangladesh

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Project Context

The governance of natural resources relates to the interactions among structures, processes and traditions that determine how power and responsibilities are exercised, how decisions are taken, and how citizens or other stakeholders have their say in the management of natural resources. In Bangladesh during the last two decades, several projects have been piloted for improved governance of natural resources. Lessons from these initiatives indicate that the improved governance through increased access, inclusion in decision making, community based management of natural resources can enhance sustainable livelihood and conservation.

In this context, IUCN Bangladesh is implementing sub-project titled “Improving Environmental governance for sustainable management of natural resource in Bangladesh” as part of a broader global project of IUCN titled “Improving Natural Resource Governance for Rural Poverty Reduction”. The projects are being funded by Governance and Transparency Fund (GTF) by UKaid from the Department for International Development of the Government of the United Kingdom (hereafter DFID-GTF). The sub-project duration is from October 1st 2011 to March 31th 2013.

Bangladesh part of the project has the following goals, purpose, outcomes and outputs in mind:

Goal: To improve environmental governance for sustainable management of natural resources in Bangladesh.

Purpose: To increase the participation of CBOs and women in community based management of natural resources and strengthen capacities to promote equal and legitimized participation of local authorities and communities in NRM.

Indicator 1: CBO (Community based organizations) representatives participate in Union Parishad /Upazila level decision-making

Indicator 2: At least a 50% increase in women participating in CBOs and local level committees

Outcome 1.1: Enhanced capacity and skill of both local communities and local government to manage natural resources

Indicator: Number and type (gender) of CSO representatives and government personnel with enhanced natural resource governance skills

Target: At least 300 local government representatives, community members, apex bodies, service providers, CBOs, etc. trained on natural resource governance and at least 50% of the participants are women by March, 2013.

Outcome 1.2: Vulnerable groups have greater voice in decision making processes and improved livelihood conditions, including access to natural resources.

Indicator: Number of MSPs established and meeting regularly.

Target: 2 new local level and one national level MSPs established by December, 2011. Local and district level MSPs meet twice a year and national level MSP once a year to project end.

Indicator: Number community members benefitting from improved access to natural resources and income.

Target: 750 community members by end of 2012.

Indicator: Number and type of participants from CBOs in MSPs.

Target: At least 2000 participants at least 33% of whom are women by March, 2013.

Outcome 1.3: Vulnerable groups and policy makers have greater awareness of governance and rights based issues.

Indicators: Number of CBOs, poor people (by ethnicity and gender) and decision makers with increased awareness of governance and rights based issues.

Target: 5000 by March, 2013. Milestone: 500 by March, 2011

Project Management

The project is coordinated by the IUCN country office in Bangladesh, based in Dhaka and implemented by two experienced and well established NGOs which are members of IUCN: NACOM (Nature Conservation management), CNRS (Centre for Natural Resource Studies). The organizations are well informed of each other's actions and meet on a monthly basis to exchange experiences with meetings coordinated by IUCN Bangladesh. Mr. Nasim Aziz, Senior Programme Officer is acting as Project Leader and Md. Ahsanul Wahed is assisting him to implement the project from IUCN Bangladesh Country Office. Bangladesh program is overseen from IUCN Head Quarter in matters relating to coordination and financial issues.

Project Site

As field implementing partners, CNRS and NACOM has been supporting IUCN. CNRS has been implementing project activities in the districts of Magura (1 site), Satkhira (2 sites), Chandpur (1 site), Sunamganj (1 site) and Moulvibazaar (1 site). NACOM has been working in the districts of Manikganj (1 site), Gazipur (2 sites) and Cox's Bazaar (1 site). Focal points from CNRS and NACOM are Mr. Mahabubul Hasan and Mr. Abdul Mannan respectively, maintaining regular contact with Mr. Aziz and Mr. Wahed on project technical and financial issues.

PURPOSE OF EVALUATION / CONTEXT OF ASSIGNMENT

Bangladesh Country Office is mandated under the Governance and Transparency Fund (GTF) to commission independent Final Evaluation during project end which forms a part of the Project Completion Report (PCR).

The main purpose of the final evaluation is to provide an independent assessment of the effectiveness, impact, relevance and sustainability of the activities of the sub-project, attainment of purpose and outcome stated in the sub-project logical framework, and how this sub-project has contributed to the overall GTF objectives of strengthening capability, accountability and responsiveness to make governance work for the poor.

More specifically the purpose of the Final Evaluation is to:

- Identify the impact of the sub-project and ways that this may be sustained
- Record and share lessons
- Account to local stakeholders for the program's achievements
- Improve future program design and management
- Verify funds were used effectively and efficiently to deliver results
- Enable DFID to evaluate the performance of the GTF as a whole, making sure the overall portfolio has increased accountability and responsiveness.

The evaluation should provide IUCN Bangladesh Country Office with useful information, analysis and recommendations, thereby enabling the organisation to engage in effective policymaking, planning, programing and successful implementation in future.

SCOPE OF WORK AND METHODS

The evaluation should cover the overall assistance provided by IUCN-HQ (DFID-GTF through KPMG) in the period of October 1st 2011 to March 31th 2013. The main perspective of the evaluation is to provide an end of project review.

The methodology will include:

1) **Desk studies:** As general background, the consultant should study relevant material in the NRC, such as Country information, the NRC country strategy for Burundi, action plans, project applications, correspondence, agreements and reports

- Project document, logframe and budget
- Annual reports
- Mid-Term Review
- Other key documents (e.g. baseline documents, training and communication materials produced, etc)

2) **Field visits to Project sites:** In addition, the consultant should visit project sites based on appropriate sample (see table below for complete list of project sites). These visits should include visits to specific area where natural resources are located. Purpose of the visit is to gain insight of dependency on natural resources, livelihood, practices, access to resources, socio-economic and political context within which the project has been operating.

Table 1: List of project area				
Sl. No.	Union	Upazila	District	Partner
1.	Kanchanpur	Harirampur	Manikganj	NACOM
2.	Gopinathpur			
3.	Durgapur	Kapasias	Gazipur	
4.	Sanmania			
5.	Kurushkul	Sadar	Cox's Bazar	
6.	Fenarbak	Jamalganj	Sunamganj	CNRS
7.	Sachna Bazar			
8.	Beheli			
9.	Jamalganj sadar			
10.	Sadar	Chandpur sadar	Chandpur	
11.	Bishnupur			
12.	Hanarchar			
13.	Rajrajessar			
14.	Ibrahipur			
15.	Sakua	Magura sadar	Magura	
16.	Ragabdair			
17.	Mogi			
18.	Kuchiamora	Shalika		
19.	Talkhari			
20.	Arpara			
21.	Dhoneswargati			
22.	Bonagati			
23.	Gangarampur	Sreemongal	Mouluvi	
24.	Kalapur			

Table 1: List of project area				
Sl. No.	Union	Upazila	District	Partner
25.	Sreemongal		bazar	
26.	Mirzapur			
27.	Bunabir			
28.	Giasnagar			
29.	Burigoalini	Shymnagar	Shatkhira	
30.	Gabura			
31.	Munshiganj			
32.	Ramzanagar			

3) **Interviews with stakeholders:** Interview in the field will be held with all relevant stakeholders: CBO members, beneficiaries of training, MSP member, project staff, representatives local governments. Through these visits the consultant should assess project activities. In this respect, it is important to assess whether the governance issues raised and sensitized, capacity building efforts supported, network / linkage formed have been the most relevant ones for the beneficiaries / CBO members.

The consultant will ensure (1) broad participation – the interested parties should be involved when relevant/ possible and reliability and independence of the evaluation i.e., should be conducted in a manner so that findings and conclusions are correct and trustworthy.

Issues to be covered

In the Final Evaluation, the emphasis should involve a final statement of what has been achieved and what can be learnt. The standard review criteria must include:

- a) Relevance:** Details of the program’s significance with respect to increasing voice, accountability and responsiveness within the local context.
 - How well does/did the programme relate to governance priorities at local, national or internal levels?
 - How well does/did the program relate to DFID’s country assistance plans
- b) Impact:** Details of the broader economic, social, and political consequences of the program and how it contributed to improved governance and transparency outcomes and to poverty reduction. The articulation of the CAR framework within the GTF is through the GTF program logframe as set out in Annex 1 of these guidelines. This section should also include a verification of the most significant results identified by the program and, as far as possible, a deepening of the analysis around the key parameters. It is also the progress in relation to the program’s ARS indicators which we are particularly interested in hearing about.
 - What was the programme’s overall impact and how does this compare with what was expected?
 - Did the programme address the intended target group and what was the actual coverage?

- Who were the direct and indirect/wider beneficiaries of the programme?
 - What difference has been made to the lives of those involved in the programme?
- c) Economy:** Has economy been achieved in the implementation of program activities
- Could the same inputs have been purchased for less money?
 - Were salaries and other expenditures appropriate to the context?
- d) Efficiency:** How far funding, personnel, regulatory, administrative, time, other resources and procedures contributed to or hindered the achievement of outputs.
- Are there obvious links between significant expenditures and key programme outputs? How well did the partnership and management arrangements work and how did they develop over time?
 - How well did the financial systems work?
 - How were local partners involved in programme management and how effective was this and what have been the benefits of or difficulties with this involvement?
 - Were the risks properly identified and well managed?
- e) Effectiveness:** Assessment of how far the intended outcomes were achieved in relation to targets set in the original logical framework.
- Have interventions achieved or are likely to achieve objectives?
 - How effective and appropriate was the programme approach?
 - With hindsight, how could it have been improved?
- f) Equity:** Discussion of social differentiation (e.g. by gender, ethnicity, socio-economic group, disability, etc) and the extent to which the programme had a positive impact on the more disadvantaged groups.
- How does/did the programme actively promote gender equality?
 - What is/was the impact of the programme on children, youth and the elderly?
 - What is/was the impact of the programme on ethnic minorities?
 - If the programme involved work with children, how are/were child protection issues addressed?
 - How are/were the needs of excluded groups, including people with disabilities and people living with HIV/AIDS addressed within the programme?
- g) Value for money:** Good value for money is the optimal use of resources to achieve the intended outcome.⁴
- Is there an optimum balance between Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness?
 - What are the costs and benefits of this programme?
 - Overall, did the programme represent good value for money?
- h) Sustainability:** Potential for the continuation of the impact achieved and of the delivery mechanisms following the withdrawal of DFID support.
- What are the prospects for the benefits of the programme being sustained after the funding stops? Did this match the intentions?

⁴ For advice on measuring value for money in governance programmes see DFID's Briefing Note (July 2011) [Indicators and VFM in Governance Programming](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Indicators%20and%20VFM%20in%20Governance%20Programming), available at: www.dfid.gov.uk

- How has/could collaboration, networking and influencing of opinion support sustainability?
- i) Replicability:** How replicable is the process that introduced the changes/impact? Refer especially to innovative aspects which are replicable.
- What aspects of the programme are replicable elsewhere?
 - Under what circumstances and/or in what contexts would the programme be replicable?

OUTPUTS / DELIVERABLES

The consultant is expected to deliver an evaluation report following the format below::

An evaluation report that contains following contents

- 1.1. Title page including Program identification details
- 1.2. Table of contents
- 1.3. Abbreviations/acronyms
- 1.4. Executive summary (maximum 3 pages)
- 1.5. A short introduction to program
- 1.6. The evaluation methodology
- 1.7. Findings in relation to standard review criteria
- 1.8. Innovation and lessons learned
- 1.9. Summary of Recommendations

Annexes must include

- Achievement Rating Scale
- Terms of reference for final evaluation
- Evaluation schedule/timetable
- List of people met
- Documents consulted
- Details statistical data such as updated baseline surveys