



Strengthening of FAO and the Government of Japan actions to mitigate the environmental impact of the refugee crisis

Project code: OSRO/BGD/901/JPN

Resource Partner: Japan

Contribution: USD 803 571

Implementation: 31/03/19 – 30/03/20

Target areas: Cox's Bazar District



Contact

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- Objective:** To strengthen the ongoing environmental actions and build the capacity of the Government of Bangladesh to mitigate environmental degradation.
- Key partners:** Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate change; Ministry of Water Resources; Forest Department; and Department of Environment.
- Beneficiaries reached:** 700 households (3 850 people).
- Activities implemented:**
- Conducted a wide-scale impact evaluation of the Reju Khal watershed in Cox's Bazar through biophysical and socio-economic surveys.
 - Prepared a national watershed management plan and an implementation framework, and presented it to the Government.
 - Employed 200 local community members through a cash-for-work activity that replanted 100 ha of degraded land that is critical to the Reju Khal watershed, with each worker earning USD 27.
 - Trained the 200 cash-for-work beneficiaries on land reforestation, covering the silvicultural method of brush-cutting, selection felling, removal of invasive species, seedling handling, line sowing, and post-planting site clearance.
 - Grew 300 000 seedlings of native tree species to transplant on degraded land.
 - Procured 21 000 bamboo seedlings, 1 000 dry bamboo sticks, 150 kg of organic manure, 120 kg of binding rope and safety gear to support the reforestation of 10 ha of land to stabilize canal banks.
 - Conducted dry season plantation experiments to determine optimal plantation protocols to extend the reforestation planting window beyond the rainy season.
 - Trained 47 nursery owners on tree nursery requirements (basic tools and materials), site selection criteria, seedbed preparation, bed construction and general management, benefiting 17 nurseries.
 - Provided five nurseries operated by the Forest Department with 45 kg of nursery polybags (roughly 25 000–27 000 bags), 100 kg of rope, eight water pumps, four water tanks (5 000-litre capacity), 20 spades, five carts with wheels and five sieves.
 - Established ten water users' groups (50 members each) and trained the 500 members on natural resource management, improved vegetable cultivation, plantation management, biological methods of disease and pest control, and effective water use.
 - Provided one solar-powered irrigation unit with a buried pipe system to distribute water to 32.4 ha of agricultural land, directly benefiting 25 members of water users' groups.

Results:

- Protected the Reju Khal watershed, stabilizing 110 ha of degraded land, mitigating soil erosion and re-establishing indigenous plant species, which will help recharge the aquifer and reduce the risk of landslides.
- Strengthened the capacity of the Government to develop a national watershed policy, providing a roadmap for implementation.
- Strengthened partnerships among local actors and the Government, facilitating land restoration work.
- Increased household incomes, with 200 households earning a total of USD 5 380.
- Improved dry season plantation protocols to facilitate year-round plantation, allowing for faster forest restoration of degraded land.
- Enhanced nursery-owners knowledge and skills, and therefore their ability to boost their incomes and provide the community with good quality planting materials.
- Improved water use management, contributing to the sustainable conservation of water resources by building knowledge and skills of water users' groups.