



On 10 June 2013, FAO organized the “**CHT Strategy Meeting: Moving forward on Sustainable Agricultural Development in the Hill Districts**” working session in Ruposhi Bangla Hotel, in light of the recent agricultural strategy formulated for the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT). This strategy was devised upon request from the Government of Bangladesh and with technical support from FAO. A wide range of institutions with shared interest in the agricultural development of the region were represented in the meeting.

FAO has performed an initial assessment of the region upon request from the Government. The assessment highlights areas of potential for agricultural development with regard to its natural resources in CHT. Thereafter, the agricultural strategy was formulated with donor support from UNDP, a partner with long-standing presence in the region. The strategy serves as a guide to improve the institutional capacities of the Hill District Councils (HDCs), with particular focus on the technical capacity of the line departments transferred under the HDCs.



The meeting was chaired by Mr. Naba Bikram Kishore Tripura ndc, Secretary, Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs. After the opening remarks by the chair, a presentation was delivered by Mr. Mike Robson highlighting in detail the key recommendations of the strategy. Since his arrival in Bangladesh in February 2013, the FAOR visited the CHT twice, in order to witness firsthand the agricultural scene and to scope the functions and potential of the relevant institutions and systems in the region.



The strategies' recommendations were very well received by the participants representing the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs, Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board, Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institution (BARI), Department of Fisheries under the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, Department of Agricultural Extension under the Ministry of Agriculture and the Hill District Councils. Further discussion led to recommendations on how to increase coordination among the present stakeholders, who share interest in achieving agricultural development in the region.

The key issues addressed were the lack of funding of the HDCs, dissemination of new and appropriate technology to achieve agricultural development, need for in situ conservation sites for genetic resources, need for increased coordination in the management of Kaptai Lake



and continued collaboration between FAO and UNDP and all development partners. Eventually, all activities related to agricultural development will be transferred under the umbrella of FAO within its sole mandate of achieving agricultural development worldwide.

The next steps involve formulation of investment plans for the HDCs, which will help ensure that there is no further duplication of projects in the region, and

also enable resource mobilization through identification of investment needs and gaps. FAO will continue to provide assistance to the region in this process.

