

Compass

Community Partnerships to Strengthen Sustainable Development Program

The USAID Community Partnerships to Strengthen Sustainable Development (Compass) program – implemented by U.S. Forest Service International Programs – takes an integrated approach to supporting natural resource management in Bangladesh. The program’s five components are designed to build competence and leadership in sustainable forest management and help youth gain the skills necessary to lead productive lives, secure employment, and positively contribute to society. All of our components promote gender equality and increased opportunities for women.

1 Youth Conservation Corps | Cox’s Bazar & Bandarban | We work with youth from underserved backgrounds to expand their work skills and build their self esteem and commitment to conservation. YCC graduates go on to lead conservation activities in schools and communities and to employ the skills they learned in YCC’s 6-month job readiness program. Graduates become tailors, electricians, teachers, and entrepreneurs in the agricultural and service industries.

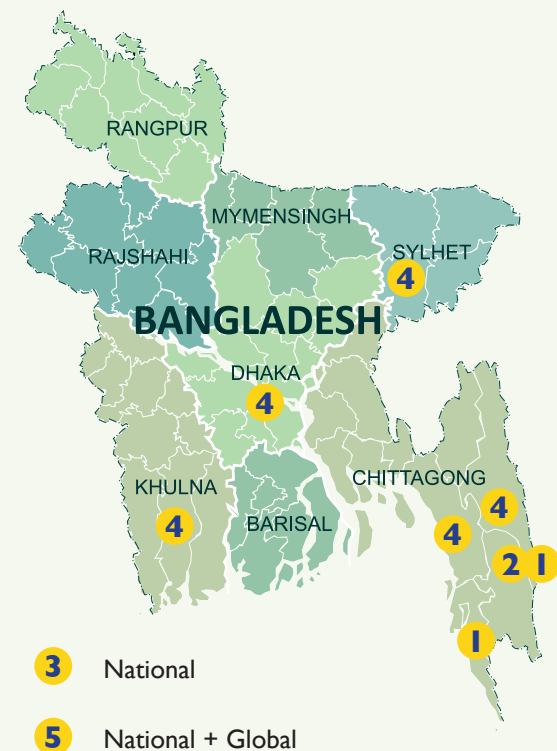
2 Forest Landscape Restoration with Communities | Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) | We work with communities and stakeholders in CHT – the most forested and ethnically diverse region of Bangladesh – to restore degraded hillsides and support environmentally friendly livelihood projects. Compass provides seedlings and training for erosion control and the protection of watersheds, and we support livelihood development. Youth volunteers from YCC contribute to training and community outreach.

3 Forest and Ecosystem Management with Bangladesh Forest Department (BFD) | National | We provide training and support informed decision making through national land cover mapping, geospatial technologies, ecosystem service valuation, and analysis of national inventory data. The Bangladesh government uses our support and information to participate in the Reducing Emission from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+) program and to implement tree planting programs, community awareness programs, and investments in reforestation based on inventory results and forest cover goals.

4 Strengthen the Capacity of Academic and Research Institutions in Natural Resource Management | 7 universities | We introduce new tools and methods for research and analysis, and we helped forestry universities modernize their curricula. Compass-supported university students are using the i-Tree assessment and inventory tool to create a tree census of the National Botanical Garden in Dhaka and to show the value of urban trees. They completed a tree inventory in Dhaka city. Their work informs BFD decision making and conservation efforts.

5 Global Exchange of Natural Resource Knowledge and Skills | National + Global | We support scholarly and cultural exchanges between Bangladesh and US-based institutions, and we create avenues for long-term technical collaborations that strengthen the effectiveness of natural resource management in Bangladesh.

Where We Work



Our Primary Objectives

Bangladesh is one of the world's most vulnerable countries to climate change, the effects of which are felt most strongly by people with fewer resources. Floods, cyclones, droughts, earthquakes, and heat waves all pose significant threats, and the mega city of Dhaka tops the charts of the world's most polluted cities by Air Quality Index.

Improved natural resource management can significantly strengthen Bangladesh's resilience to natural hazards and changing climate conditions.



ENHANCED CAPACITY

of institutions to manage natural resources and increase tree cover and carbon sequestration in Bangladesh



IMPROVED EMPLOYABILITY

capacity and career opportunities for marginalized at-risk youth



IMPROVED LIVELIHOODS

and quality of life by developing natural resources management-based community enterprises

Examples of Impact



Photo credit: Saiful Islam Shakil

“I want to create awareness with my research. To show them the results of their actions. How it affects their climate. And get them to prioritize nature.”

Tahrira Jui Era is a researcher at Bangladesh University of Professionals. She's using i-Tree to take a census of the botanical gardens in Dhaka. The census serves as an inventory of Bangladesh's most precious plants and it assigns a value to each tree, allowing people to better understand the ecosystem services forests provide.



Photo credit: Raiyan Islam

There are new fish-shaped waste bins along the coast of Cox's Bazar because of Risat Kawsar Ishan and Mizanur Rahman. The YCC graduates also built a new toilet in their village and cleaned the canal that captures fresh water. They involve school children in their environmental campaigns, teaching what they learned at YCC.

“We conducted an environmental needs assessment for our community,” said Ishan, and then they acted on it. Their actions, with community involvement, had an immediate and positive impact on the health and hygiene of their small village.

When they aren't teaching kids about littering or doing community projects, the two young men cultivate and sell oyster mushrooms to restaurants up and down the coast.



Photo credit: Raiyan Islam


“Before YCC, I didn't know how to search for a job or how to apply for one... I love teaching. I've always wanted to be a teacher.”

Farjana Mitu is now a teacher at the primary school in Cox's Bazar. Ornamental plants that she learned how to cultivate at YCC sit on her desk. She loves teaching science the best; it's when she can talk about the importance of trees.

Farjana's face lights up when she talks about YCC and the impact that it has had on her life. She says that she liked everything about it. It's where she gained the confidence to look people in the eyes and to respond to questions without hesitation. It helped her obtain the job she loves.

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U.S. Forest Service International Programs Office

The Forest Service works collaboratively to promote sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation in more than 90 countries around the globe. We offer technical expertise from more than 30,000 natural resource specialists who are responsible for the daily management of 193 million acres of national forest and grasslands in the United States. We are an experienced partner in implementing large-scale, multi-year U.S. government development programs.