



USAID BANGLADESH

Community Partnerships to Strengthen Sustainable Development (Compass)

Enhancing capacity of institutions and communities to **manage natural resources** and improve livelihoods **through evidence-based scientific technical exchange**



Bangladesh has sustained robust economic growth for the past three decades and is on track to become a high-income country by 2041. Despite rapid socio-economic progress, fast and unplanned urbanization and industrialization coupled with lack of proper natural resource management is straining Bangladesh's natural environment.

In Bangladesh, at present forests cover is 12.8% of the total country area. To foster economic growth, while

supporting the livelihoods and health of its people, the Government of Bangladesh has invested in sustainable initiatives to protect its natural forests and biodiversity.

The USAID Community Partnerships to Strengthen Sustainable Development Program (Compass) – implemented by the United States Forest Service, International Programs builds the capacity of Bangladesh's institutions so that they can better manage their forests and

natural resources in the face of increasing demand from a fast-growing population which is at present over 160 million.

The Compass program will work to improve employability and career opportunities among marginalized at-risk youth; inform decision making that leads to increased tree cover and carbon sequestration in Bangladesh; and improve livelihoods by developing natural resource management community enterprises in targeted areas.

¹ Forest cover in Bangladesh: Bangladesh Forest Inventory 2019, Bangladesh Forest Department, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change



FIVE INTEGRATED COMPONENTS

1. Establish a Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) in Bangladesh:

To engage marginalized and vulnerable youth, including women, in natural resource management. The program will build capacity on environmental stewardship and others to increase employment opportunities for engaged youth.

2. Strengthening community capacity and promoting public participation:

Partner with community-based and non-governmental organizations to raise community awareness of environmental stewardship, encourage participation in income-generating environmentally sustainable activities, develop technical capacity of forest dependent communities in an effort to maintain quality forests and conserve biodiversity.

3. Technical Cooperation on Forest and Ecosystem Management:

Compass will continue to build on ongoing partnership with the Bangladesh Forest Department (BFD) for improved forest and ecosystem management. Efforts will focus on reinforcing the institutionalization and

application of National Forest Inventory, strengthening technical capacity for remote sensing and satellite imagery applications, and ecosystem valuation and investment strategies.

4. Strengthen the capacity of academic and research institutions in natural resource management and resilience:

Compass will utilize science-based technical expertise of US Forest Service by fostering institutional partnerships between various Bangladeshi and US universities to contribute to global sustainability and forest management.

5. Promote global exchange of natural resource knowledge and skills:

Compass will promote global exchange of knowledge and skills in natural resource management, particularly through USFS seminars and regional exchanges.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

1. Increase employability skills and career opportunities for marginalized at-risk youth

2. Enhance capacity of institutions to manage natural resources, including tree cover and carbon sequestration

COMPASS PROGRAM IN BRIEF

The United States Forest Service (USFS) provides support to the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Compass Program through a Participating Agency Program Agreement (PAPA).

LOCATION

BANGLADESH – Southwestern Region (Meghna River belt and Sundarbans), the Southeastern Region (Chittagong Hill Tracts and Cox's Bazar), Northeastern and North Central Regions, with emphasis on Cox's Bazar, Bandarban, and Dhaka District.

BUDGET

\$10 million (subject to availability of funding)

DURATION

July 2019 – July 2024

KEY PARTNERS

Academic universities, communities, and government bodies, including the Bangladesh Forest Department

CONTACT

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3. Improve livelihoods and quality of life by developing natural resource management-based community enterprise.

The Compass program strengthens Bangladesh's resilience to natural hazards and responsiveness to climate change in line with the USAID/Bangladesh Country Development Cooperation Strategy. It also addresses a USAID education priority of helping youth gain the skills necessary to lead productive lives, secure employment, and positively contribute to society.