

The Forestry and Climate Science Exchange Program (FoCaS)



The USAID-funded and U.S. Forest Service International Programs-implemented Community Partnerships to Strengthen Sustainable Development (Compass) Program takes an integrated approach to address natural resource management challenges 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, ensuring gender equality and increased opportunities for women. Compass connects innovative learning and technologies to a global audience through targeted knowledge-sharing events.

What is FoCaS?

The Forestry and Climate Science Exchange Program (FoCaS) is aimed at increasing the capacity of natural resource management (NRM) research and education in Bangladesh. Compass partnered with the College of Life Sciences and Agriculture (COLSA), University of New Hampshire (UNH), USA, to design and implement this. The FoCaS activities include learning visits, virtual programs, and graduate studies involving academics, researchers, students, and practitioners in the USA and Bangladesh. The exchange has strengthened bilateral ties between the two countries, creating long-term opportunities for collaboration in education, research, and technical capacity enhancement in NRM.

From Bangladesh to U.S.

Experiential Learning Visit: Nine Bangladeshi undergraduate students from the forestry and environmental sciences discipline visited the state-of-the-art research facilities in laboratory and natural settings, and natural resource management best practices of US-based institutions, including the UNH, the U.S. Forest Service research stations, National Parks, and other forest management institutions in the US in July 2023.



High Level Meeting: Delegations from the U.S. Forest Service and the MoEFCC, including the Secretary, MoEFCC; Director General, Department of Environment (DoE); Chief Conservator of Forests, BFD; Director, Bangladesh Forest Research Institute (BFRI); and Bangladeshi forestry university representatives met in Washington, D.C. in July 2023, and aspired future collaborations for a sustainable and greener future.

FoCaS Visiting Fellows: Six Bangladeshi academics and forestry practitioners completed a six-week fellowship between June and July 2023, under the mentorship of experts from the UNH, to co-design research projects and implement them through their home institutions in Bangladesh.



FoCaS Higher Study Collaboration: Two Bangladeshi students have enrolled in a 2-year research-based Master of Science (MSc) programs at the UNH with funding through this collaboration. In addition, Shahjalal University of Science and Technology and the UNH are currently designing a program to support graduate and undergraduate students to research climate change and forestry issues in Bangladesh, such as the Sundarbans mangroves, forest landscape restoration, and watershed management.

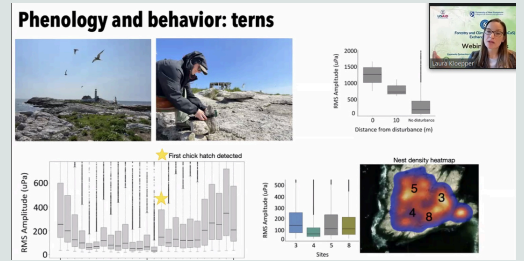
From U.S. to Bangladesh

UNH Visits Bangladesh: In January 2024, a 14-member team of graduate students and faculty from the UNH visited academic and research institutions, forest-dependent communities, hill forests, mangrove forests, and historical sites in Bangladesh to understand the NRM practices in the country better and explore areas of research collaboration.



U.S. Embassy in Bangladesh Greets FoCaS: Leadership from the U.S. Embassy in Bangladesh met with FoCaS participants, representatives from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Bangladesh Forest Department (BFD), and forestry universities in Dhaka. They reiterated their commitment to work together for environmental conservation across borders for future generations.

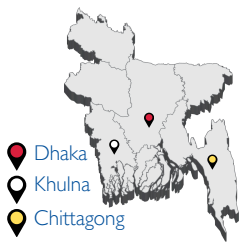
FoCaS Webinar Series: FoCaS facilitated a six-episode webinar series that brought together students, academics, researchers, and decision-makers under one knowledge-sharing platform. A total of 328 participants from Bangladesh and the USA attended the series.



"Whether in mountains, islands, farms, or urban centers, witnessing the U.S. people actively engaging in resource-conscious practices and crafting models to harmonize with nature for sustainable living broadened my understanding and transformed my perspective on resource efficiency" - **Bangladeshi student on participating in the experiential learning visit in the US**



Washington D.C.
New Hampshire



"Participating in FoCaS created invaluable opportunities for personal and academic growth. The program enriched our worldview, fostered a deep cross-cultural understanding of forest management, and enhanced our capacity to design an improved academic curriculum and engage in collaborative research of national importance. Overall, FoCaS equipped us with a global perspective, empowering them to make meaningful contributions to society and become responsible global citizens." - **FoCaS Fellow.**

FoCaS Partners



FoCaS Resources

Photo



Video



More information

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