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Reports

on

'Exit Meeting and Strategic Consultation'

of

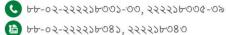
Extended Community Climate Change Project-Flood (ECCCP-Flood) Project financed by Green Climate Fund (GCF) and implemented by Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF)

[GCF Project: SAP008]



Date: February 27-28, 2024 **Venue:** Ocean Paradise Hotel and Resort, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh









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1. Background

Palli Karma-SahayakFoundation (PKSF) has been implementing the project titled "Extended Community Climate Change Project-Flood (ECCCP-Flood)" with financial assistance from the Green Climate Fund (GCF) in five flood-vulnerable districts (Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari, Kurigram, Gaibandha, and Jamalpur) in Bangladesh. The main objective of the project is to increase the capacity of the poor, marginalized, and vulnerable communities to cope with the adverse effects of climate change in flood-prone areas of Bangladesh. The total budget of the four-year project is USD 13.33 million (GCF: USD 9.68 million and PKSF: 3.65 million as co-finance). The main activities of the project are the raising of homestead plinths in clusters, the installation of floodresilient tube-wells, the construction of climate-resilient sanitary latrines, the rearing of goats or sheep in slatted houses, and the cultivation of flood-tolerant crops. The project, which started in April 2020, will end in May 2024. The Project Mangement Unit (PMU) of the ECCCP-Flood, PKSF, organized a two-day-long meeting titled 'Exit Meeting and Strategic Consultation of the ECCCP-Flood Project' in Cox's Bazar from February 27-28, 2024. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Fazle Rabbi Sadeque Ahmed, Deputy Managing Director (Environment and Climate Change), PKSF.Dr. NomitaHalderndc, Managing Director, PKSF was present as the chief guest in the closing ceremony of the meeting. Furthermore, Mr. AKMSohel, Additional Secretary and Wing Chief (UN Wing), Economic Relations Division (ERD), Ministry of Finance, representative of the National Designated Authority (NDA) of GCF, was present as a special guest in the opening ceremony of the event. Government officials, Executive Directors or Chief Executivesof the Implementing Entities (IEs), focal persons and project coordinators of the project, technical officers, accounts officers, field officers and officers of the ECCCP-Flood PMU and relevant officials of Environment and Climate Change Unit of PKSF participated in the meeting. The objective of the meeting was to discuss and share the learnings among stakeholders, find suitable exit strategies, explore ways to ensure the sustainability of the project intervention, and propose policy directions for undertaking future projects/programmes in flood-prone areas in the future.

2. Welcome Address

At the beginning of the meeting, Dr. Sadeque, welcomed all the participants and explained the background and importance of the meeting. He emphasized the importance of assessing the impact and sustainability of project activities, particularly raised homestead plinths in clusters, installed flood-resilient tube-wells, climate-resilient sanitary latrines, and goats or sheep rearing on slatted houses. He also mentioned that it is crucial to ensure the stability of the infrastructure. Therefore, having a proper exit strategy at the end



of the project period is essential. He thanked Mr. AKM Sohel for participating in the meeting and also highlighted the full support provided by the NDA to PKSF. He mentioned that PKSF is advancing to implement USD 50 million RHL project with the financial support of GCF. He expressed GCF's confidence in PKSF's project proposal preparation and implementation capacity but emphasized the need for continuous improvement. He requested all attendees, particularly the Executive Directors and Chief Executives of the implementing entities and focal persons of the ECCCP-Flood Project, for their valuable opinions on the exit strategy to ensure sustainability.











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3. Speech from the Special Guest in Opening Ceremony

Mr. AKM Sohel gave a presentation on climate financing. In the beginning of his speech, he thanked all attendees for participating in the meeting on time and thanked the PKSF authorities for giving him the opportunity to attend the meeting. Regarding the preparation of the project proposals, he emphasized thatBangladesh should acquire knowledge to prepare the project proposalsby the local resource person (local consultants) to reflect appropriately the local contexts and needs of the country. He added, Bangladesh contributes only 0.48% of global GHG emissions, but we are the 7th worst affected country in the world due to the negative impacts of climate change. There are 10



climate change related hazards in Bangladesh. Floods and cyclones are at the top of the score. He shared with the participants that, on behalf of ERD, he started discussions with other organizations that are willing to finance on the projects related to climate change, such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB), JICA, and the World Bank. In his presentation, he mentioned that Bangladeshis losing around 2% of GDP due to climate change. Regarding mitigation, he highlighted that Bangladesh will try to bring blended funds, bi-lateral and multi-lateral sources from involving private sectors. He focused on the financial support from GCF on both adaptation and mitigation projects. ERD is trying to develop a roadmap of partnership with the GCF. He also pointed out that the decision-making process of the GCF is very complex and timedemanding. We need to work together on how to make it quick and easier. He highlighted on the importance of climate budgets and public policies, and also, the role of private organizations and civil society organizations, largely known as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the context of addressing climate change. He expected the proper documentation and dissemination the learnings of the ECCCP-Flood project to the wider audience. As a part of post-project monitoring, he also provided an utmost importance to engage the academic institutions and local government institutions. He requested PKSF to disseminate the findings and learnings of the project to those academic institutions and other stakeholders. Finally, he acknowledged the contribution of all stakeholders, particularly PKSF and IEs, for implementing such an important project in the flood-prone areas of Bangladesh targetting extremely poor people whose lives and livelihoods are continuously threatened by the climate-induced floods and other hazards.

4. Technical Sessions

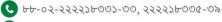
4.1 At this stage, Mr. Md. RabiUzzaman, Manager (Environment and Climate Change), gave a presentation on "Vulnerability in flood-prone areas and best practices". He highlighted ECCCP-Flood goals, objectives, working project implementationstrategy, potential aspects and overall progress (operational and financial) of the project presentation, includingthe his sustainability of the project. He discussed patterns of floods and other hazards in the working area. He also discussed what kind of assistance has been



received by project participants during the implementation of the project. He highlighted a few of the ECCCP-Floodproject's achievements, such as increased CCAG awareness (54%) andthat there have been significant achievements in improving the quality of life, technical skills of affiliates, and family income of members.











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During the discussion on vulnerability in floodprone areas and best practices, representatives from various organizations participated and shared their practical experiences. Dr. Khairul Islam from TMSS; Dr. Sazzad Hossain, Director, NDP; Mr. SM Yahia Deputy Director, SSS; Mr. Habibur Rashid, PC, NDP and Mr. Md. Pagidur Rahman, PC, ESDO were among them. The session was moderated by PKSF's Deputy Managing Director, Dr. Fazle Rabbi Sadeque Ahmed.



Mr. SM Yahia, Deputy Director, SSS stressed the

importance of continued monitoring even after the completion of the project concludes. He emphasized the importance of the issues of sustainability and exit strategies during the project proposal preparation phase. Dr. Sazzad Hossain, Director, NDP highlighted the proper selection of beneficiaries in the ECCCP-Flood project, resulting in significant achievements within a short timeframe. He mentioned active cooperation from the local administration and representatives of LGIs, facilitating smooth project implementation with community participation. Dr. Khairul Islam from TMSS suggested the establishment of local service providers to sustain project activities within the community. He also proposed a mechanism for repairing elevated houses in case of any damage. Mr. Habibur Rashid, project coordinator of NDP, noted a reduction in family violence within the project area due to the motivation and awareness building activity of the CCAG.

4.2 At this stage, Mr. Md. Wahidul Haque, Programme Officer of ECCCP-Flood Project, delivered a presentation on "Environmental and Social Management of ECCCP-Flood Project". In his presentation, he discussed environmental and social management aspects of all the activities of the ECCCP-Flood project. He mentioned that if no action was taken, the people of the community would have become sick from the lack of safe water, an increase in water-borne diseases, the



sinking of tubewells in flood water. Also, the use of open latrines caused foul odors and environmental pollution. He also mentioned that due to taking appropriate steps on environmental management for all the activities in the project, the use of open latrines has been reduced, water quality has increased, the practices of waste disposal at specific places have been improved, compost has been used, and thereby, soil quality has improved. Primary results reveal that there has been an improvement in terms of biodiveristy conservation and the quality of life of the community people including increasing awareness, increasing the use of toilets, protecting women from violence, increasing social status, and increasing nutritional security. Specifically, the use of safe drinking water has increased by 81% and the practices of hygienic toilets and the management of sewerage have increased by 77%. Water collection time has decreased during floods. In his presentation, he highlighted some challenges to ensure environmental and social management of all the activities of the ECCCP-Flood project, such as using one toilet by three families together, ensuring 30 feet of distance between the toilet and the tubewell, and the habit of throwing garbage











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everywhere. He sees the sustainable use of those practices if local branches of IEs are occasionally being involved with CCAGs and undertake sessions on behavioral change with the group memebers involving local government institutions.

At the end of the presentation and subsequent discussion, various representatives provided their insights. Mr. Pagidur Rahman, the ESDO project coordinator, highlighted the challenges of using common toilet by three families. Mr. Md. Moniruzzaman. focal person of PMUK. emphasized the complexity of the communication system in the project area. Commuting on foot was the primary mode of transportation due to limited access to boats or cars. He also noted the completion of activities related to flood-resilient



rice, leading to increased rice production and reduced migration in the area. Additionally, there has been a positive change in people's behavior, with increased toilet usage. Mr. Shankar Kumar Roy, project coordinator of NAZIR, discussed the challenges of riverbank erosion affecting plinth raising and emphasized the need for sustainable agricultural practices, such as wheat cultivation rather than maize and increased numbers of slatted houses for goats and sheep rearing. Mr. Mujibar Rahman, Director, POPI representative, highlighted the labor shortage for soil collection and some troublesome political influence. Mr. Saleh Bin Shams, Executive Director of PMUK stressed the importance of sustainability and exit strategy and emphasized cooperation and sincerity among partner organizations. Ms. Nigar Sultana, Director TMSS, emphasized the importance of the environment unit within each organization and advocated stronger local involvement after the project completion. Mr. Pagidur Rahman, PC, ESDO discussed the challenge of obtaining local administration cooperation and the need for community contributions and engagements for construction of various activities. The executive director of ESDO, Dr. Md. Shahid-Uz-Zaman emphasized the need for extensive cooperations and the importance of a comprehensive database for project management, highlighting the potential for additional activities in the future. Those information and learnings need to be shared with local government institutions and other stakeholders.

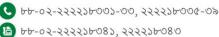
4.3 Mr. K.M. Marufuzzaman, Manager (Environment and Climate Change) and Project Coordinator, the ECCCP-Flood Project, PKSF delivered a presentation on the prospects of floodresilient crop cultivation and the implementation strategy of the flood-prone areas. In presentation, he discussed the nature of floods, andthe negative impacts of floods on crop production in the working areas. He mentionedthat 18% of the total area of Bangladesh is flooded every year, and in cases of devastating flood, it exceeds 55%. He pointed out that every year,



around 4% of the total amount ofpaddy production in Bangladesh is lost due to floods. As a result, there are some links between the status of food security in the country and the production of rice,











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where rice is the main staple food. He elaborated onsuitable crop cultivation in flood-prone areas. He emphasized that the loss to the yield of crops could be reduced, to some extent, by cultivating flood-tolerant rice varieties, short-duration wheat varieties; pumpkins in the sandy soils; and highvalue vegetablesat theirraised homesteads. He focused on various varieties of flood-tolerant rice and cultivation methods. He also emphasized integrated pest management (IPM) methods to control insects in rice cultivation. He also discussed themanure management and management of various short-duration varieties of wheat, particularlythose suitable for flood- prone areas. He highlighted the importance of sweet potato cultivation on the elevated land, which is grown in the relatively dry season in Bangladesh and is a nutritious food. In terms of nutrition security in the remote and disaster-prone area, he discussed the importance of vegetable cultivation on raised plinths. In order to continue those lessons in the working areas, he emphasized the importance of local agriculture offices to be involved in this process.

4.4 Mr. Md. Mahmuduzzaman, Deputy Manager (Environment and Climate Change) of ECCCP-Flood delivered a presentation on sustainability and exit strategy of the project. In his presentation, the focus was on ensuring the sustainability of project activities developing an exit strategy and plan. This includes maintaining all project activities in operational condition, particularly the raised plinths, tubewells, sanitary latrines, and goats in slatted houses. He emphasized the need for digital documentation of all ECCCP-Flood



project records using suitable software. Each focal person would have access to this data bank and update information every three months following post-projectmonitoring. Additionally, he proposed the assigned one officer for two years. The management unitsfrom both PKSF and IEs would also conduct field visits once in a month in the project area on a random basis to verify the status of the activities and submit a report to PKSF's Environment and Climate Change Unit. An officer from PKSF would also visit to IEs every three months to prepare sustainability reports. Microfinance activities in the project areas will continue, and that will help to get the information from the filed level. The completion report will all the data will also be provided to chairman of union parishad (the lowest administrative tier in Bangladesh) to ensure coordination, and collaboration with CCAG members, local offices of department of agricultural extension, and upazila livestock officer.

During the discussion, Prof. Dr. Hosne Ara Begum, Executive Director of TMSS, Mr. Alauddin Khan, and Executive Director of NDP, Mr. Habibur Rashid, Project Coordinator of NDP, Mr. SM Yahia, SSS Representative, and Mr. Md. Aminul Islam, GBK Representative participated and provided their valuable insights. Dr. Fazle Rabbi Sadeque Ahmed, Deputy Managing Director of PKSF, moderated the discussion. Mr. Alauddin Khan emphasized the need to ensure local participation and strengthen the market access and mechanism. Mr. Yahia highlighted the cooperation and support of officials of district, and Upazila levels since the inception of the project. Prof. Dr. Hosne Ara Begum emphasized the importance of soft loans to ensure sustainability. Mr. Md. Aminul Islam of GBK proposed recruiting new staff for post monitoring. He also suggested focusing on high-value crop cultivation.



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5. Open Discussion

At the end of the ECCCP-Flood project presentation, the honorable managing director of PKSF, Dr. Namita Halderndc, invited all participant to share their opinions. All attendees actively participated and provided their views, contributing to the discussion in the following manner:

5.1. Mr. Md. Mujibur Rahman, Director, People's Oriented Program Implementation (POPI)

- Suggested digitizing ECCCP-Flood project documents and creating a Knowledge Bank for easy access.
- Advocated for providing advanced level training to members of the Climate Change Adaptation Group (CCAG).
- Proposed allocating funds for one additional staff under the ECCCP-Flood project for a fixed period at the end of the ECCCP-Flood.



- Expressed the expectation of government cooperation on climate change and increasing production of high-yielding crops.
- Highlighted challenges of remote working areas, lack of income opportunities of the beneficiaries, ultra-poor, challenges of river erosion to sustain the settlements.
- Emphasized the importance of increasing awareness among CCAG members and ensuring follow-up by expanding micro-finance branches and promoting environment, and health and safety issues.
- Suggested that sustainability could be ensured by monitoring from the IEs head office.

5.2 Mr. Md. Yahia, Director, Society for Social Service (SSS)

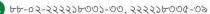
- face Challenges in mainstreaming due to the lack of post-project monitoring and the conflict between long-term strategies and short-term political priorities.
- Addressed challenges associated with projects include inaccessible working areas, logistic support such as daily boat reservations and long walks to fields, and community engagement for collecting contributions.



- Proposed to address providing salary support for additional staff under the ECCCP-Flood project to alleviate workload and logistical issues.
- Highlighted an issue that successful assimilation of project staff indicates integration and acceptance within the project environment.
- Emphasized the importance of considering sustainability in the project design by allocating financing for post-project monitoring.







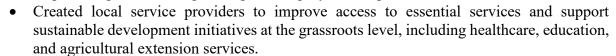




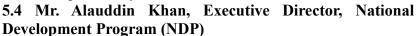
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5.3 Mrs. Nigar Sultana, Director and Sector Head, TMSS

- Established research cells at the IE level for advancing knowledge and innovation in sustainable development practices focusing on the nexus between agriculture, climate adaptation, and community resilience.
- Promote year-round vegetable cultivation homesteads to enhance food security, improve nutrition, and generate additional income, while empowering women for greater gender equity and empowerment.



Emphasized on proper sanitation practices to improve public health and well-being, reduction of water-borne diseases, enhance dignity, and foster mutual cooperation and responsibility within communities.



- Gave importance to the careful selection of project participants.
- Suggested to undertake long-term adaptation programme.



5.5 Mr. Saleh Bin Shams, Executive Director, Padakhep Manabik Unnayan Kendra

- Suggested to develop the adaptation project with more emphasis on integration.
- Found that the support of slatted sheds and loans from IEs for purchasing goatshelped the beneficiaries to increase their income
- RequestedPKSF for guidelines the the sustainability of project interventions.
- Agreed with other participants that every organization would benefit if they have a dedicated climate change wing.



5.6 Dr. Shahid Uz Zaman, Executive Director, Eco-Social Development Organization (ESDO)

- plinth-raising activities needs to include construction of connecting roads, the establishment of cemeteries, the development of educational institutions, afforestation on public land and roads, and the excavation of ponds.
- Advocated for additional caregiver training to promote off-farm activities in flood-prone areas that might increase adaptive capacity. It is to be noted that farm activities are continuouslythreatened by climate-induced hazards.
- Shared an experience that due to the Corona epidemic, project work couldn't be carried out for one year, but extra efforts were provided to complete it six months ahead of the project











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completion date. Many decisions were received over the phone, and guidelines were provided by the PMU.

- dynamic characteristics of the river and the scattered nature of settlements were often challenging. However, data from the Bangladesh Water Development Board were helpful to sustain the homesteads
- Drew attention of the participants that a challenge was existed in Balijhuri Union in Jamuna Char, where it takes about an hour to walk, and vehicles do not have access on that area.

5.7 Mr. Nurul Haque Sarkar, Executive Director, NAZIR (Natun Zibon Rochi)

- sometimes getting alluvial sand posed a significant challenge in implementing the project interventions for raising the plinths.
- Highlighted that project activities have fostered the development of women's leadership and entrepreneurship.
- Pointed out that incidents of domestic violence have decreased, leading to enhanced family and social harmony.



- Emphasized that the loans program should be continued for the well being and development of the project participants.
- Shared the fact that initially were not interested on goat rearing in a staled house, but gradually they became motivated and completed the task.

5.8 Mr. Sohel Rana, Coordinator and Focal Person, ECCCP-Flood, Self-Help and **Rehabilitation Program (SHARP)**

- Reinforced the fact that there was a challenge of transportation in the inaccessible char area and that there was often an issue of selling goats.
- Proposed an idea that all CCAG members should take initiatives to repair plinths, tubewells and latrines. It needs to be a formal arrangement between IEs and CCAGs.

5.9 Mr. Md. Aminul Islam, Deputy Executive Director, Gram Bikash Kendra (GBK)

Shared an experience that excavation of soil was a challenge. Proposed an idea that salaries of field-level officers are low and need to be adjusted with inflation.













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5.10 Professor Dr. Hosne Ara Begum, Executive Director, TMSS

Shared a macro issue that there has been significant structural development in our country. Now, the focus must shift towards human development. Those with the capacity should undertake the human development of the impoverished population. She hoped that through this human development initiatives people will be more resilient to any hazards or threats.



5.11 Dr. Fazle Rabbi Sadeque Ahmed, Deputy Managing Director (Environment & Climate Change), PKSF:

- Emphasis should be placed on sustainability and proper exit strategy.
- It is important to determine the extent of loss and damage due to climate change in Bangladesh.
- Bangladesh should be prepared to get the access of the recently created Loss and Damage Fund.
- PKSF is developing a Digital Knowledge Bank where all information can be accessed.
- A list of NGOs working on climate change should be compiled.
- The learning ECCCP-Flood should be deciminated and should be consulted in future projects.
- The mobile numbers of government officials should be made available to CCAG group members.
- The knowledge of climate change should be further improved

6. Closing Session

The honorable Managing Director of PKSF, Dr. Namita Halder ndc, commenced her closing speech by extending gratitude to all attendees. She thanked the partners of the ECCCP-Flood project for their successful completion of project activities and emphasized the collective responsibility to ensure the sustainability of the project work. Expressing optimism, she her belief that organization would uphold the sustainability of every aspect of the



project as per the decisions made during the two-day meeting. She requested all IEs to share their learning with local stakeholders and local government institutions. She reiterated PKSF's commitment to advancing cooperative efforts in combating the effects of climate change, highlighting the Environment and Climate Change Unit's role in this endeavor. Furthermore, she emphasized PKSF's capability to prepare, implement, and monitor project proposals, facilitating the development of target populations. Encouraging collaborative efforts for the betterment of the











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country is the crucial, she once again thanked all attendees and concluded her speech, declaring the event successful.

Recommendations:

- Allocating funds for a staff for each Implementing Entities (IE) for a fixed period.
- Ensuring active cooperation from the local administration and representatives of local government for facilitating smooth monitoring and expirty of the tenure of the project.
- Recognizing the importance of proper documentation and dissemination the success of the ECCCP-Flood project.
- put more emphasis of sustainability and exit strategy during the project preparation phase.
- Ensuring local service providers involvement with the community.
- Establishing mechanisms for repairing elevated settlements
- Taking initiatives to establish the environment and climate change unit within each organization (IEs)
- Ensuring cooperation with the local community and government officials.
- comprehensive database for sustainablity and future project/programme.
- Ensuring local participation and strengthening the market access and linkage.
- Providing soft loans for beneficiaries to establish new economic activities.
- Digitizing ECCCP-Flood project documents and creating a Knowledge Bank for easy access for all
- Advanced level training to members of the Climate Change Adaptation Group (CCAG).
- Strentheing research unit of PKSF for advancing knowledge and innovation in all aspects of cliamte change adaptation, mitigation and Loss & damage.
- Undertaking long-term adaptation prorgamme.
- Focusing on human development as there has been significant structural development in our country.

Learning:

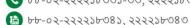
- Proper selection of beneficiary is crucial for successful implementation in the ECCCP-Flood project, resulting in significant achievements within a short timeframe.
- Sufficient time is needed to promote learning and action with full community participation, to enhance local adaptive capacities and strengthen the resilience of communities, and to learn from these actions.
- Ensuring awareness and sensitization to the climate change impacts issues, it is important that all community members, both women and men, agree on and are clear about the process. To overcome the social and cultural barriers for communities to fully embrace gender equality.
- Farmers are better able to adapt to climate change and variability when they engage with and apply climate information. Scientific seasonal climate forecasts information is mostly supply driven at the national level and does not reflect understanding of user needs.
- Project achievements derive largely from the strength and dedication of the entire project team and the participating community members. Thus, active participation of all stakeholders will always remain very important for any project success.
- Involving local authorities and public service agencies will strengthen community adaption. Involving policymakers at the early stage of a project allows them to appreciate the benefits themselves and help identify resources to sustain useful practices identified



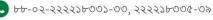














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through the project. CCAGs can play an important role in advocacy to peruse policymakers and the local administration including public representatives.

- Promotion of year-round vegetable cultivation in households is very important to enhance food security, improve nutrition, generate additional income and women empowerment.
- Creation of local service providers to sustain the implemented activities
- sustain the sanitation facilites.
- Proper information is required to understand the dynamics of the river course.
- damaged activities should be repaired and maintained through the leadership of CCAG
- The mobile numbers of government officials should be made available to CCAG group members for getting the essential government support from them.
- Pre-project rigorous study on climate change is needed an effective post-project "exit plan" is necessary
- More adaptation support is necessary like off-farm activities to combat with climate
- Assessing the local socio-political complexities before the initiation is required

Challenges:

- The remoteness of the project locations was challenging to make regular communication to implement the project activity.
- The project area is a difficult terrain and landscape escalating incremental vulnerability of communities living due to climate change induced seasonal extreme events like; frequent and high intensity floods and flash floods, long dry-spell and cold spells that make communication, contacts extreme difficult for the program proponents.
- The project activities especially would be in the form of repair and maintenance of the raised plinths, tube-wells and sanitary latrines to keep them operational.
- Ensuring to get labour/worker particularly for plinth raising.
- Political influence in some areas
- The working areas are remote, and thus limited income market opportunities
- Settlements are affected frequently by river erosion.
- Extreme poverty in the working areas
- Inaccessible working areas, getting logistic support lacking of road communication (walking is the only option) and collection of communicty contribution are other challenges
- Dispute over land ownership and earthwork
- Distinct challenges related to land stability •
- Disruptions due to the COVID-19 pandemic since its inception
- The Social-Cultural challenges are mostly embedded into their cultural norms and traditional beliefs & values, especially on gender integration into the project that integration and active participation of women. Male partners may not see that women can play a very important role in overall resilience and adaptation against Climate change and usually considers this as men's job.









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