

Transforming Coastal Lives

Quarterly Newsletter of the RHL Project



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We are pleased to present the second edition of the “Resilient Homestead and Livelihood Support to the Vulnerable Coastal People of Bangladesh (RHL)” project quarterly Newsletter. This edition highlights the progress made by the RHL project from October to December 2024 in enhancing the resilience and livelihoods of vulnerable coastal communities.

Thanks to the efforts of Implementing Entities (IEs), local stakeholders, and beneficiaries, the RHL project has already impacted vulnerable households across seven disaster-prone coastal districts. Key initiatives, including resilient homestead construction, climate-smart agriculture, and alternative livelihoods like goat rearing and crab farming, are helping families cope with climate change. This issue also features activities such as the orientation on climate-resilient housing, GIS mapping, the formation of Climate Change Adaptation Groups (CCAGs), and beneficiary profiling.

Looking ahead to 2025, the RHL project remains focused on fostering sustainable development and community engagement, driving lasting positive change for coastal Bangladesh.

We wish you a very Happy New Year 2025!



Dr. Fazle Rabbi Sadeque Ahmed, Deputy Managing Director, PKSF presided over the orientation program on resilient housing

RHL project Orientation on Climate Resilient Housing held

The RHL is working to bring about changes in the lives of poor and extreme-poor families living in seven disaster-prone coastal districts of Bangladesh - Cox's Bazar, Bhola, Patuakhali, Barguna, Satkhira, Bagerhat, and Khulna. The objective of the project is to reduce the risks to life and property of coastal communities vulnerable to climate change and to create opportunities for improved and sustainable alternative livelihoods to tackle climate change risks. As a result of this five-year project, approximately 350,000 people living in these areas who are vulnerable to climate change will benefit.

The construction and reconstruction of climate-resilient houses and the elevation of homesteads are significant activities of the project in coastal areas. As part of this initiative, on December 5, 2024, the project organized an "Orientation Program on Climate-Resilient Housing" with Implementing Entities (IEs). The primary objective of this program

was to provide detailed information to the IEs about the already prepared core house designs and related aspects and to finalize them based on their feedback. The program aims to ensure the construction and reconstruction of climate-resilient houses are carried out with maximum efficiency at a minimal cost.

The program was presided over by PKSF's Deputy Managing Director, Dr. Fazle Rabbi Sadeque Ahmed. Also in attendance were Dr. AKM Nuruzzaman, General Manager of PKSF's Environment and Climate Change Unit, officials from the RHL Project Management Unit, and representatives from 16 IEs. In his speech, Dr. Fazle Rabbi urged everyone to work to the best of their abilities to improve the living standards of people in the coastal regions, who often live in extreme poverty. He said, "We have limited resources against the need of the most vulnerable people. Hence, we must work hard to improve to living condition of the most vulnerable people in coastal areas."

Orientation on GIS Mapping held

The RHL project objective is to enhance the resilience of vulnerable coastal communities of Bangladesh through the developing climate-resilient homesteads and climate-adaptive livelihoods for vulnerable coastal communities and enhance their capacity to plan and implement climate adaptation interventions to tackle climate change shock. Different types of services and supports are being provided to the project beneficiaries. The supports beneficiaries with climate-resilient homesteads include a raised homestead area, a cyclonic storm-resistant house structure, homestead-based vegetable cultivation, a sanitary latrine, a rainwater harvesting system and saline-tolerant fruit trees and mangrove species plantations in and around the raised homestead area. This integrated climate-resilient homestead development will protect them from coastal inundation and cyclones and help increase households' income. The project provides various livelihood options that are gender-responsive and climate-resilient, which include crab farming and trading, crab rearing, aqua-geoponics, plant nursery, homestead gardening, goat or sheep rearing in slatted houses, etc. It provides the selected beneficiaries with technological support and capacity training in promoting saline-resilient technologies and practices, particularly in the agriculture sector.

The RHL project has started locating the places where the interventions are taking place. All the places will be identified using geographical positioning data. After collecting all the data, the project will create a customized map of project interventions to display spatial data, allowing users to visualize, analyze, and interpret geographic information.

To equip the project staff responsible for the GIS mapping with knowledge and expertise,

RHL project organized a series of orientation on GIS Mapping. The concerned RHL project staff and Project Coordinators from the IEs participated in the online orientations. The first orientation was held on November 19, 2024 where participants learned on how to create GIS Map. In the second orientation, held on November 26, 2024, topics were discussed on how to set locations of interventions on the GIS maps.

Additionally, orientation on Basic Photography Skills were organized for the RHL project staff or IEs were organized on November 24, 2024.

PKSF signs agreement with CEGIS for RHL project Baseline Survey



Officials of PKSF and CEGIS after signing the agreement

Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) signed a contract agreement with the “Center for Environmental and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS)” to conduct the baseline survey for the Resilient Homestead and Livelihood Support to the Vulnerable Coastal People of Bangladesh (RHL) project on 22 December 2024 at the PKSF Bhaban.

Under the agreement, CEGIS will collect baseline qualitative and quantitative data for the targeted and non-targeted populations (counterfactual) on behalf of the RHL project

to measure the progress against targets and compare baseline results periodically after intervention commences.

Dr. Md. Jashim Uddin, Additional Managing Director, PKSF and Md. Motaleb Hossain Sarker, Deputy Executive Director (Operations), CEGIS, signed the agreement on behalf of their respective institutions.

On behalf of PKSF, Dr. AKM Nuruzzaman, General Manager (Environment and Climate Change), Md. Abu Nasir Khan, Project Coordinator of the RHL project, and Md. Ziaul Hoque Chowdhury, Deputy Manager (General Services), were also present at the signing event. Representing CEGIS, Md. Jahid Hossain Jahangir, Director (Additional Charge), HR & BD Division, and ATM Shamsul Alam, Director (In-charge), SEID, also attended the event.

PKSF is implementing the GCF-RHL project in seven coastal districts in Bangladesh, namely Khulna, Bagerhat, Satkhira, Barguna, Patuakhali, Bhola, and Cox's Bazar. These districts are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. The project aims to develop climate-adaptive coastal communities in Bangladesh by adopting climate-resilient housing and livelihood technologies.

RHL project forms 3040 CCAGs

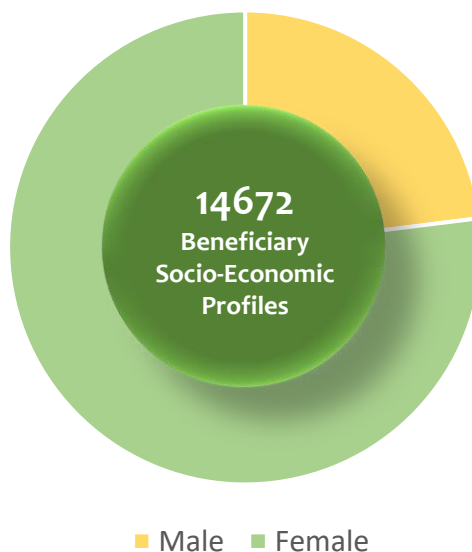
The RHL project formed 3,040 CCAGs with project beneficiaries. 69,184 beneficiaries were engaged in the Climate Change Adaptation Groups (CCAG) which include 49,895 female and 10,289 male target beneficiaries. The groups are scheduled to organize at least one meeting in every month. So far, 3,817 CCAG monthly meetings have been organized engaging 85,362 beneficiaries including 73,220 female and 12,142 male beneficiaries (with repeated participation).



CCAG formation meeting. Photo: RRF

Each of the CCAG groups are structured with a committee, including a President, Secretary, Cashier, and General Members, to foster community involvement in climate action and decision-making processes. These committees focus on the efficient implementation and management of project activities within their respective areas.

RHL project creates 14672 Beneficiary Socio-Economic Profiles



To collect detailed demographic and socio-economic information of every individual target beneficiary, the project started collecting their

socio-economic data and profiling them using KoboCollect platform. The project developed a detailed questionnaire before starting the collection of beneficiary data. Respective staff of IEs were also oriented on the questionnaire and the data collection process using the software. 14672 profiles already created on the KoboCollect platform against the target of 82,000 beneficiaries, of which 3,378 were male and 11,294 were female. The socio-economic data collection process is underway.

786 batch training for beneficiaries organized



Training on saline-tolerant vegetable cultivation.
Photo: FDA

The project organized 786 batch capacity building training for project beneficiaries. 17,561 beneficiaries participated in the training among them 14,139 were female and 3,422 were male.

Three types of training were organized for the project beneficiaries. 255 batch of training on Goat/Sheep Rearing on Slatted Houses were organized in which 5,614 beneficiaries participated, among them 4,742 were female and 872 were male.

324 batch training on Cultivation of Saline tolerant vegetables were organized, in which 7,113 beneficiaries participated, among them 5,745 were female and 1,368 were male.

207 batch training on Crab Farming and Crab Nursing were organized, in which 4,834



Training on goat/sheep rearing on slatted houses.
Photo: COAST Foundation

beneficiaries participated, among them 3,652 were female and 1,182 were male. Besides, IEs organized Training on RHL Project Implementation & Climate Change Issues for their RHL project staff.



Training on Crab Farming. Photo: CODEC



Training participants: 17,561
Female Participants: 14,139 (80.4%)
Male Participants: 3,422 (19.6%)



Participants: 7,113
Female: 5,745 (80.8%)
Male: 1,368 (19.2%)



Participants: 5,614
Female: 4,742 (84.3%)
Male: 872 (15.7%)



Participants: 4,834
Female: 3,652 (75.7%)
Male: 1,182 (24.3%)

Gender desegregated data of training participants

Design and building of homesteads



RHL project beneficiary in front her under construction resilient house. Photo: GJUS

Following the overall target for designing and building 3,200 climate-resilient homesteads, the RHL project set an initial target to construct 331 homesteads in 2024. 341 homestead were constructed during the reporting period. Along with the construction of houses, the project provided a comprehensive package of rainwater harvesting tank, an environment friendly twin pit offset latrine and a solar energy system based on the needs of individual beneficiary. 10% contribution against the total cost were born by the beneficiaries.

Homestead tree planting



Beneficiary is watering her coconut tree. Photo: UP

During the period, the project planted a total of 61,587 climate-resilient trees in the beneficiary homesteads in the project area against the

initial target of 49,024 trees. The plantation included a variety of species such as coconut, guava, sapodilla, wood apple, betel nut, and neem, contributing to both environmental conservation and the livelihood needs of the communities. To support the healthy growth and protection of these trees, beneficiaries were also provided with garden trellis nets, ensuring enhanced care and sustainability of the planted trees.

Cultivation of saline tolerant vegetables



Beneficiary at her vegetable garden. Photo: FDA

The project provided support to 4,123 beneficiaries with saline-tolerant vegetable cultivation practices in homestead areas. The support included seeds, plants, nets, and watering cans for cultivating vegetables using the bed method. Beneficiaries have begun growing a variety of crops, including tomatoes, eggplants, red amaranth, kangkong, and turnips, aimed at enhancing food security and livelihoods in areas affected by soil salinity.

Construction of slatted houses for goat/sheep rearing

To enhance hygiene, reduce disease risk among livestock, and contribute to better livelihoods for the beneficiaries, the project constructed 2,317 slatted houses for goat/sheep rearing against the initial target of 25,000 houses.



Slatted house for goat/sheep rearing. Photo: FDA

Prior to the construction, beneficiaries were systematically selected and provided with training on the effective use and maintenance of the structures. The construction materials include concrete pillars, bamboo, wood, tin etc.

Development of crab Hatchery

During the period, the project provided support to develop one crab hatchery. Construction work of the hatchery has been completed. Additionally, the project is working

With hatchery owners in Cox's Bazar for developing crab hatcheries.

RHL project supports Crab Nurseries and Farmers



RHL supports crab farmers. Photo: NGF

The project provided technical and financial support 4 beneficiaries to establish crab nurseries.

During the period, the project provided technical and financial support to 1,265 beneficiaries for crab farming in saline ponds. This initiative aims to enhance livelihoods and promote sustainable aquaculture practices in saline-prone areas.

RHL project supported vulnerable coastal people with

Building of
341
climate-resilient
homesteads



Constructing 2317
slatted houses for
goat/sheep
rearing



Providing
technical and
financial support
to establish 4
nurseries and 1,265
crab farms



Sporting 4123
beneficiaries with
saline-tolerant
vegetable cultivation
practices

Planting 61587
climate-resilient
trees in the
beneficiary
homesteads

RHL project succeeds cultivating saline-tolerant vegetable in sandy soil

Cultivating vegetables in high-salinity and sandy soil is an immense challenge, particularly in coastal regions of Bangladesh. The excessive salt content in the soil hinders seed germination, stunts plant growth, and often leads to premature wilting and death of crops. Additionally, sandy soil has poor water retention capacity, causing essential nutrients to wash away quickly, making it unsuitable for traditional farming. Due to these harsh conditions, most farmers in these regions had abandoned vegetable cultivation, believing it to be impractical.

To address this challenge the RHL Project of PKSF initiated to test the feasibility of growing vegetables in saline and sandy soil. The project selected 25 beneficiaries, providing them with training, salt-tolerant seeds, and continuous technical support. The project guided them on soil preparation, organic fertilization, and efficient irrigation techniques, ensuring the plants received adequate nutrients despite the adverse conditions.

With dedicated effort and expert supervision, all 25 vegetable growers successfully started harvesting crops from their homestead gardens, proving that vegetable cultivation is possible even in challenging coastal soils.

Sufia Begum: Empowering Coastal Women Through Saline-Tolerant Vegetable Cultivation on Sandy Soil



Sufia Begum. Photo: BASTOB

Sufia Begum, a 26-year-old housewife from Bahar Chhara village in Moheshkhali, lived in poverty and struggled to feed her family. Her husband, Md. Nazir Hossain, a fisherman, spent most of his time at sea, leaving their family with an irregular and insufficient income. She tried to cultivate vegetable in the small piece of land at her courtyard. But due to high-salinity and sandy soil, she could not cultivate.

The turning point came when Sufia joined the Bahar Chhara CCAG group under the RHL Project.

The project provided her training in growing vegetables in high-salinity soil, including land preparation, organic fertilization, and efficient irrigation techniques. It also helped her with seeds and constant guiding to grow healthy vegetables.

With this newfound knowledge, Sufia used organic fertilizers, ash, and controlled irrigation to successfully cultivate eggplants, chilies, tomatoes, spinach, and radishes in her homestead yard. She earned over 1,500 BDT by selling the vegetables while meeting her family's nutritional needs. On the merge of her success she said, "With the training and motivation we decided to start cultivating vegetable. Finally, we succeed as we get the way out, seed and constant guidance from the RHL project." Today, Sufia's success not only provides for her family but also inspires others in the village to try growing vegetables in sandy and saline soil. She now dreams of expanding her garden and become a change maker in her community.

Transforming lives through Climate-resilient Housing: Photo story of Nasir Pondit



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