

# Transforming Coastal Lives

*Quarterly Newsletter of the RHL Project*



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We are pleased to present the third issue of the newsletter for the “Resilient Homestead and Livelihood Support to the Vulnerable Coastal People of Bangladesh (RHL)” project financed by Green Climate Fund (GCF). Implemented across seven coastal districts since August 17, 2023, the RHL project aims to combat the critical impacts of climate change. The project made remarkable progress in the first quarter of 2025.

The “Activity Progress Review Workshop” in early 2025 evaluated the project’s achievements in 2024. Highlights of the quarter include an exposure visit on improved crab farming techniques, orientation of two new Implementing Entities (IEs), and a baseline survey conducted by CEGIS, an independent consulting organization. Key successes include the construction of 300 new climate-resilient homes and 5,232 slatted houses for goat and sheep rearing, the plantation of 59,396 trees, and support provided to 4,282 beneficiaries for vegetable cultivation and 2,336 beneficiaries for crab farming. The success stories of Mobasshera Begum and Sharifa Khatun illustrate the transformative impact of the project. Looking ahead, the project is poised to continue its vital work, strengthening communities and fostering long-term climate resilience in Bangladesh.

We look forward to your continued support and collaboration.



Md. Fazlul Kader, Managing Director, PKSF speaks as the Chief Guest of the Activity Progress Review Workshop

## RHL project Activity Progress Review Workshop held

PKSF implements the Resilient Homestead and Livelihood Support to the Vulnerable Coastal People of Bangladesh (RHL) project in seven coastal districts to combat climate change impacts since August 17, 2023.

As part of the initiative, the RHL project organized a three-day “Activity Progress Review Workshop” from January 30 to February 1, 2025, to assess the progress of the project’s activities over the past year (2024). PKSF Managing Director, Md. Fazlul Kader was the Chief Guest of the workshop, while the Deputy Managing Director, Dr. Fazle Rabbi Sadeque Ahmed presided over the event.

Speaking at the event, Md. Fazlul Kader emphasized the importance of resource optimization in tackling climate change challenges, stating, “We have resource limitations in combating climate change impacts. Therefore, we must utilize our resources with the utmost transparency and efficiency to improve the livelihoods of those facing extreme climate risks.”

Currently, 18 partner organizations of PKSF are implementing project activities across 20 upazilas in seven coastal districts. So far, the project’s

Implementing Entities (IEs) selected 76,639 beneficiaries for various interventions. Among them, 60,493 were female, 16,144 were male, and three were from other gender.

During the first quarter of 2025, 300 new climate-resilient houses were constructed, incorporating raised homesteads, rainwater harvesting systems, sanitary latrines, and solar power facilities based on beneficiary needs. Additionally, 5,232 slatted houses were built to enhance goat rearing practices. Besides, 59,396 trees were planted, and 4,282 beneficiaries received support for saline-resistant vegetable cultivation. To expand crab farming technology, construction is underway for three crab hatcheries and six crab nurseries. Also, 2,336 crab farmers have been provided with loan support.

The workshop was attended by the Executive Directors of 18 IEs of the RHL project, project focal persons, and project coordinators. On the workshop final day, Dr. Fazle Rabbi Sadeque Ahmed provided important recommendations on overcoming field-level challenges and efficiently implementing the project.



## Orientation of New Implementing Entities held



*Md. Fazlul Kader, Managing Director, PKSf speaks as the Chief Guest of orientation for new IEs*

“Effective and proper implementation of climate change projects requires comprehensive knowledge of the issue,” said PKSf Managing Director Md. Fazlul Kader. He made the remark while speaking as the Chief Guest of the “Training on Project Implementation and Climate Change Issues”, held on March 18, 2025, at the PKSf Bhaban, Dhaka. He further emphasized, “To fight against climate change effectively at the grassroots level, it is not enough to simply launch projects - thorough understanding is essential.” The orientation program was organized for newly joined IEs of the RHL Project.

The three-day long training was presided over by Dr. Fazle Rabbi Sadeque Ahmed, Deputy Managing Director of PKSf. 19 officials from two new IEs participated in the training, which aimed to provide an overall understanding of the project’s activities and discuss the necessary steps for effective implementation.

To extend the RHL Project’s outreach to more communities more rapidly, two new organizations, Integrated Development Foundation (IDF) and Satkhira Unnayan Sangstha (SUS), were added as project “Implementing Entity”, alongside the existing 16. Both organizations began project implementation on January 7, 2025.

IDF is implementing the project in 10 unions of



*Dr. Fazle Rabbi Sadeque Ahmed, Deputy Managing Director, PKSf with orientation participants*

Chakaria Upazila in Cox’s Bazar, covering 3,500 beneficiaries. SUS is working in four unions of Shyamnagar Upazila in Satkhira, targeting 3,500 beneficiaries.

The orientation program included discussions on the project’s implementation guidelines and detailed instructions on how to follow them effectively. In addition, operational aspects of project implementation including financial management, procurement, administration, monitoring, and reporting were also thoroughly discussed.

## Crab farmers gain hands-on Training in advanced crab culture techniques



*Participants of exposure visit. Photo: NGF*

To equip farmers with practical knowledge of improved hard-shell and soft-shell crab farming, 33 crab farmers and six project staff from three Implementing Entities of the RHL project participated in a five-day exposure visit to Shyamnagar upazila of Satkhira district from

February 23 to 27, 2025. Nowabbenki Gonomukhi Foundation (NGF) hosted the visit for Young Power in Social Action (YPSA), Social Assistance and Rehabilitation for the Physically Vulnerable (SARPV), and the Society for Development Initiatives (SDI).

Participants visited hatcheries, grow-out ponds, soft-shell processing farms, and the Aquamax soft-shell crab facility, where they learned about every stage of the crab life cycle - from hatchery operations and nursery care to fattening, disease management, harvesting, and market access.

“This visit helped bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and field-based practical skills related to crab cultivation,” said one of the visitors. Another farmer said, “Our farmers are now better prepared to manage pond systems, monitor water quality, and adopt disease prevention techniques critical for successful crab culture.”

Key lessons included identifying healthy broodstock, managing water quality parameters like salinity and dissolved oxygen, and understanding the molting cycle essential for soft-shell production. Farmers also observed how biosecurity measures, such as individual housing for soft-shell crabs and use of live feed like algae and artemia, ensure higher survival rates and product quality. Farmers also noted the need for better disease management tools and reliable water testing equipment.

To address these challenges of crab farming, participants recommended several strategies: establishing hatcheries and processing centers



Participants of exposure visit

in Cox's Bazar, providing technical and financial support to new farmers, developing local and export market linkages, and promoting crab-based value-added products. Enhancing training for farmers in packaging, biosecurity, and marketing were also emphasized.

Farmers returned with actionable knowledge and renewed motivation to implement sustainable crab farming in their communities. The RHL project plans to launch pilot initiatives in soft-shell crab production and promote mangrove-friendly practices to ensure long-term environmental and economic benefits.

## RHL project conducted baseline survey



FGD session for baseline survey. Photo: CEGIS

The RHL project conducted its baseline study in the coastal areas to collect baseline information on both the targeted and non-targeted populations (counterfactual). The objective of the survey is to assess the baseline conditions of the project area, enabling the measurement of periodic progress and performance against defined evaluation indicators once the interventions begin. The study is carried out by the independent research organization Center for Environmental and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS).

The research collected both quantitative and qualitative data through surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions across beneficiary



and control populations. This dual approach is designed to establish a clear comparison of conditions before the project's interventions. The baseline study provides a clear picture of the current socio-economic conditions, disaster vulnerability, and resilience levels of the target populations. PKSF highlighted the importance of the baseline study in evaluating the effectiveness of the project's interventions.

The findings from the study paint a picture of coastal communities living in relatively small, often overcrowded and dilapidated housing, with most families depend on climate-vulnerable agricultural labor. It also revealed that the study pointed to significant gaps in women's empowerment and vulnerability during climate-related disasters. Women, particularly in the treatment group, reported more severe impacts on their occupations due to climate events. They also faced additional challenges in seeking shelter during disasters, citing concerns about safety and harassment. The study also emphasizes the need for greater attention to women's roles in decision-making processes, especially in the context of disaster preparedness and adaptation.



*RHL Project Coordinator Md. Abu Nasir Khan speaks at the orientation for the enumerators. Photo: CEGIS*

The project aims not only to safeguard the physical infrastructure but also to empower communities, particularly women, to better cope with the challenges posed by climate change. With the baseline study, the RHL project is poised to move forward with its interventions, which will be closely monitored to assess their long-term effectiveness and impact.

This RHL project is designed in line with Bangladesh's broader climate adaptation

strategies, as outlined in national plans such as the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) and the National Adaptation Plan (NAP). By focusing on the most vulnerable coastal populations, the project seeks to contribute significantly to the country's resilience to climate change.

## Consultation Meeting with Hatchery Owners held



*Consultation Meeting with Hatchery Owners. Photo: COAST*

To foster dialogue among stakeholders and identify strategies to overcome bottlenecks in crab hatchery operations, while encouraging collaboration for long-term sector development, the RHL project organized a Consultation Meeting with Hatchery Owners in Cox's Bazar on January 21. The event brought together crab and shrimp hatchery owners, researchers, government officials, and NGOs to identify key challenges faced by crab hatcheries, share best practices, discuss viable solutions, and encourage stronger cooperation among stakeholders.

The Deputy Director of COAST Foundation Barequl Islam Chowdhury inaugurated the event with a welcome speech. District Fisheries Officer (DFO) Md. Bodruzzaman, and Chief Scientific Officer of the Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute (BFRI), Cox's Bazar Station Dr. Shafiqur Rahman were the Special Guests in the meeting. The DFO emphasized the need for synergy between the public and private sectors, suggesting that PKSF should organize training programs with technical support from

countries like Vietnam, where crab farming has seen notable success. He stressed that crab hatcheries hold vast potential to generate foreign currency and transform Bangladesh's aquaculture sector.

Dr. Shafiqur Rahman highlighted recent research and technological advancements in crab hatchery practices. He expressed concern over the low survival rate of hatchery-produced crabs and called for more focused efforts on disease management and laboratory facilities. "We invite shrimp hatchery owners to integrate crab hatcheries into their existing operations. With the right support, crab farming can become a thriving industry," he said.

Several key recommendations emerged from the discussions, aimed at strengthening the crab hatchery sector in Cox's Bazar. These included developing a widely accessible Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for crab hatcheries, organizing practical training workshops for technicians and entrepreneurs, and establishing centralized information hubs and disease diagnostic laboratories. Participants also emphasized the importance of encouraging quality-focused hatchery operations that ensure high survival rates, creating detailed cost-benefit models, and exploring innovative financing mechanisms through institutions like PKSF. Additionally, enhancing research efforts and strengthening market linkages were identified as crucial steps toward sustainable growth in the sector. The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks and a renewed commitment to collaborative action among all participants.

## RHL project organized training for 2,483 beneficiaries

The project organized a total of 109 batches capacity building training for project beneficiaries. 2,483 beneficiaries participated in the training among them 2,167 were female



*Training on saline-tolerant vegetable cultivation.*  
Photo: FDA

and 316 were male. Three types of training were organized for the project beneficiaries.

128 batches training on goat/sheep rearing on slatted houses were organized in which 1,242 beneficiaries participated, among them 1,117 were female and 125 were male. Forty-three batches training on Cultivation of Saline-tolerant vegetables were organized, in which 924 beneficiaries participated, among them 843 were female and 81 were male. 13 batches training on Crab Farming and Crab Nursing were organized, in which 317 beneficiaries participated, among them 207 were female and 110 were male.



Training participants: 2,483  
Female Participants: 2,167 (87.3%)  
Male Participants: 316 (12.7%)



Participants: 924  
Female: 843 (91.2%)  
Male: 81 (8.8%)



Participants: 1,242  
Female: 1,117 (89.9%)  
Male: 125 (10.1%)



Participants: 317  
Female: 207 (65.3%)  
Male: 110 (34.7%)

*Gender desegregated data of training participants*

## Update from Ground

During the period, the RHL project reached 37,506 coastal people with different types of interventions and services, among them 3991 are male, 33,507 are female and, 8 are from other genders. Additionally, the project achieved the following milestones:

### Design and building of homesteads



*Family of RHL project beneficiary in front resilient house. Photo: HEED Bangladesh*

Following the overall target for designing and building 3200 climate-resilient homesteads, the RHL project set an initial target to construct 801 homesteads in January to March 2025. 6 hundred 41 homesteads were built so far. During this quarter, 300 new climate resilient houses have been constructed for beneficiaries. Along with the construction of houses, the project provided a comprehensive package of a rainwater harvesting tank, an environment-friendly twin-pit offset latrine, and a solar energy system based on the needs of the individual beneficiary. 10% contribution against the total cost were born by the beneficiaries.

### Homestead tree planting

The project has planted 59,396 climate-resilient trees in the beneficiary homesteads in the project areas. 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: COAST*

During the quarter, the project provided support to 4,282 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





*Slatted house for goat/sheep rearing. Photo: Ad-din*

To enhance hygiene, reduce disease risk among livestock, and contribute to better livelihoods for the beneficiaries, the project constructed 5,232 slatted houses for goat/sheep rearing. So far, 5,150 houses have been constructed for goat/sheep rearing. 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



*Construction of crab hatchery. Photo: COAST*

During the period, the project provided support to develop two crab hatcheries. Construction work of the hatchery has been completed. Besides, construction work for three hatcheries is underway. 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*

During this quarter, the project provided technical and financial support 2 new beneficiaries to establish crab nurseries. Altogether, three beneficiaries are provided support to establish crab nursery.

During the period, the project provided technical and financial support to 2,336 new beneficiaries for crab farming in saline ponds. So far, 7,050 beneficiaries have been provided support for crab farming. This initiative aims to enhance livelihoods and promote sustainable aquaculture practices in saline-prone areas.

## Grievance Management and Knowledge Products



*Beneficiary after submitting her grievance. Photo: Nabalok*



During the quarter, the project received 30 complaints from beneficiaries, among them 17 were submitted by female and 136 were by male. All of the complaints were resolved in consultation with respective beneficiaries. So far, 43 complaints have been launched by the beneficiaries, and all of them have been resolved.

## Orientation of IE staff

The RHL project organized Enumerator's orientation on Baseline Survey on 12 and 13 February. 32 IE staff were provided the orientation which was conducted by Center for Environmental and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS). The participants were involved in baseline data collection in their respective areas.

## 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, an open-source mobile data collection application used for digital data collection in the field. 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. In January to March, 58,459 beneficiaries' socio-economic profiles have been created on the KoboCollect platform against the target of 53,578, among them 10,951 are for male and 47,508 for female.

## RHL project supported vulnerable coastal people with

Building of  
300  
climate-resilient  
homesteads



Constructing 5,232  
slatted houses for  
goat/sheep  
rearing



Providing  
technical and  
financial support  
to establish 6  
nurseries and 2,336  
crab farms



Supporting 4,282  
beneficiaries with  
saline-tolerant  
vegetable cultivation  
practices



Planting 59,396  
climate-resilient  
trees in the  
beneficiary  
homesteads



Mobasshera Begum with her son. Photo: COAST

## Story of Mobassara : A small school bag and a big dream to realize

**Beneficiary:** Mobasshera Begum; **Husband:** Md. Alam  
**Address:** Village: Chatipara,  
Union: Uttar Dhurung,  
Upazila: Kutubdia, District:  
Cox's Bazar

**“I was so worried about my youngest son. Every morning, when school time came, he stood in front of me and said, ‘Ma, I’m not going to school. I don’t have a bag. How can I carry all these books in my hands? Everyone else has one, only I don’t.’”**

“I had no answer. What could I say? I couldn’t even afford to buy a simple school bag.”

“We live beside the sea. Life here is hard. My husband works as a day laborer in the salt fields, and sometimes my eldest son Riad helps him. My second son, Jishat, also helps. Mishkat loves school the most, but he was starting to give up.”

“Then I got support from the RHL project. I received 1,672 Taka and guidance to start growing vegetables. I bought seeds and seedlings - sweet pumpkin, bottle gourd, beans, red amaranth, pui shak, eggplant - and planted them in my yard.”

“When I gave Mishkat the bag, his eyes filled with tears. He hugged me and said, ‘Ma, now I will go to school every day.’ I couldn’t hold back my tears either. That day, I felt like I had given him the whole world.”

“I thank RHL project. Without this help, I wouldn’t have seen joy on my son’s face. Poverty couldn’t take away his dream - because I had a helping hand.”



Mobasshera Begum harvesting vegetables. Photo: COAST





## Eid has never been so joyful in Sharifa's life



Eid Celebration at the new climate resilient house.  
Photo: UP

“Eid never felt like Eid in the past,” says Sharifa Khatun, her voice heavy with memories. “Our house was falling apart. The roof leaked, the walls were cracked, and there wasn’t enough space to sit, let alone welcome guests. My children stayed quiet, and I couldn’t invite anyone in—not family, not neighbors. Each Eid came and went like any other day. No celebration. No joy. Just silence.”

Sharifa lives in Madhyapara village of Pratapnagar Union, Ashashuni Upazila, Satkhira - a place where climate change often hits the hardest. Her family struggled with poverty and the constant fear of disasters. “It was hard to survive, let alone dream of celebrating something like Eid,” she recalls.

But 2025 brought something she never imagined, a new climate-resilient home under the RHL Project. “When I received this house, it felt like a second life. A house where my children could sleep safely, where I could cook and sit with pride, where we could open the door and say, ‘Come in’ without shame.”

Then came Eid-ul-Fitr. She exclaimed with joy, “This Eid was different. It felt like a festival. My family was laughing, my relatives visited, my neighbors joined us. For the first time, the house was filled with voices, laughter, and the smell of food. It was bright, open, and full of life.”

With a warm smile, she adds, “Eid means joy—and this year, we lived that joy fully. This house gave us more than shelter. It gave us dignity; it gave us pride. This Eid will forever remain in our hearts.”

### Advisors:

**Md. Fazlul Kader**

Managing Director, PKSf

**Dr. Fazle Rabbi Sadeque Ahmed**

Deputy Managing Director, PKSf

### Editorial Panel:

Dr. AKM Nuruzzaman

Md. Abu Nashir Khan

Md. Shamim Iftekhhar

### Contact:

Project Management Unit (PMU),  
Resilient Homestead and Livelihood  
Support to the Vulnerable Coastal People  
of Bangladesh (RHL)” Project, PKSf



## PALLI KARMA-SHAYAK FOUNDATION (PKSF)

PKSF Bhaban, Plot: E-4/B,  
Agargaon Administrative Area,  
Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh  
Tel: +88-02-222218331-33  
Fax: +88-02-222218341  
E-mail: [pkssf@pkssf.org.bd](mailto:pkssf@pkssf.org.bd)  
Website: [www.pkssf.org.bd](http://www.pkssf.org.bd)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/pkssf.org](http://www.facebook.com/pkssf.org)