

**Evaluation Report**  
**On**  
**Itchari Community Reserve Forest Conservation Project**  
**Implemented by: BIRAM, Khagrachari**



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Itchari Community Reserve Forest Conservation Project has been implementing by a Khagrachari based NGO "BIRAM" with financial and technical support from Arannyak Foundation, Dhaka with a view to improving biodiversity in the hilly area and livelihood of the Itchari reserved forest conserving community. The project covers a total of 165 households of two 'Para' of Itchari village namely, Itchari Modhya Para and Itchari Vitor Para who have been protecting a forest area of 105 acres. Project activities included – i) Monthly planning & coordination meeting, community meeting, inception workshop, reconstruction of Community House, community facility development, replacement of boundary pillar around CRF, etc. for strengthening community based management system; ii) Awareness meeting with Kutukchari community, seedling distribution, weeding, etc. for promotion of sound watershed management; iii) Formation of Revolving Fund, Training on fish culture, mushroom culture, nursery and grafting, etc. for facilitating access to capital and alternative livelihood; and iv) Observation of Environment day, publishing signboard, poster, leaflet, calendar, diary, etc. for creating mass awareness and training and study visit for capacity building of project staffs. Duration of the project was June 2009 to May 2012. An evaluation of the project activities was made through reviewing project documents, bench-mark report and annual & project completion reports and conducting filed visit, FGDs with project staffs and community people (committee members and general community people, separately) and SWOT analysis on 21 December 2011.

Progress in implementation of the project activities (with an average achievement of 80%) was encouraging but not very satisfactory. Because some activities were not implemented at all while some were implemented partially. Formation of the Reserve Forest Conservation Committee, construction of community house, development of resource map and forest management plan and initiative taken by the committee for registration, etc. were good indications of institutional development in the community. A total of 3545 seedlings/saplings of different species of fruit, forest and soil binding species were distributed among the community people. Out of 3545 seedlings, 794 died and 2751 were survived i.e. survival rate was 78%. Plantation and/or conservation of plants around the water sources might have increased water content. A revolving fund of BDT 708000/- has been developed for providing loan to community people against different IGAs for facilitating alternate livelihood. So far 94 households received loan of BDT 451000/- on different IGAs of which 48 households received BDT 195000/- for small business, 28 households received BDT 112000/- for agriculture and livestock (cow and goat and pig) rearing while 18 households received BDT 144000/- for fish cultivation. Loan receivers repaying the money along with 1% of interest and community members were saving BDT 5/- per month to add to the revolving fund which was a sign of organizational development. Community people received 1-day training on fish cultivation, mushroom culture, nursery and grafting, small business, etc. Duration and management of training were not sufficient for improving knowledge and skill of the participants. Through different project activities, community people at least become aware that unwise/illicit felling of tree and jhum cultivation is harmful for environment and also for their livelihood and accordingly they have stopped such practices. Except committee members, level of awareness of general community people (men and women) was very poor about biodiversity and forest conservation. It indicates that promotional activities done so far were not sufficient to increase awareness among the community people. Some weakness regarding the project were identified e.g. poor team spirit, no/poor participation of women in project activities, inadequate bench-mark information, insufficient skill development training for community people, drop out of skilled staffs, no data keeping regarding production, consumption and income from IGAs, etc. Community people were found mentally weak or shaky as they did not have any legal rights to the land which is one of major threats need careful attention. However, considering progress and achievements of the project activities and development of a sustainable alternate livelihood for the community people for efficient conservation of the forest and watershed, it is suggested that the project activities should be continued for 2-3 years.

## 1. Introduction

BIRAM (Boudhi Investigate and Research Assembly of Men) has been implementing the “Itchari Community Reserved Forest Conservation Project” since 2009 with a view to biodiversity enrichment, sustainable management and improvement of socio-economic condition of the community people conserving forest. It has been working with financial and technical support from Arannyak Foundation (AF), Dhaka. During three years of the project period (2009-2011), BIRAM implemented various activities with active participation of the community people for achieving project objectives. An attempt was made to review and evaluate the progress and achievements of the project activities at the end of third year (2011). The ‘Evaluator’ physically visited the project office of BIRAM, some homesteads of project participants at Modhya Para and tree plantation in some selected hills. Necessary data/information were collected through FGDs (one with project staffs, one with committee members and another one with general community members, separately) using questionnaire and/or checklist on 21 December 2011.

## 2. Context and Objectives of the project

The Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) is now one of the most backward regions in Bangladesh. The people of this region are indigenous. Most of them are poor and residing in government Khas (unregistered) land or on indigenous King’s property. A large number of people are still nomad and practicing Jhum (shifting) cultivation in fallow hills, villages and becoming victim of adverse situation. Most (80%) of the villagers are living below poverty level. Forest destruction is a continuous process in the hilly areas as indigenous people depend on forests for their livelihood through cutting trees, occupying forest lands and other underhand activities at the forest areas. Thus, most of the forest resources, non-timber forest products, medicinal plants and biodiversity are being destroyed day by day. The situation getting worse due to increase in population pressure, over use of land for cultivation, allotment of hill-lands at private ownership and improper management of the government sponsored forestation project or through declaring reserve forest. In this context, BIRAM implemented a self-financed project “Agro-HortEIs” during 2006 to 2008 involving forest dependent people. Based on the experience of this project BIRAM designed and implemented the present project entitled “Itchari Community Reserve Forest Conservation Project” for achieving the following objectives.

- I. Strengthening community based management system of the Itchari Community Reserve Forest.
- II. Promotion of sound watershed management practices among the local communities of the project area.
- III. Enhancing economic opportunities for the forest dependent families through alternative IGAs and access to capital.
- IV. Creation of enabling environment for the CRF community for the sustainable management of the CRF and livelihood improvement initiatives.

## 3. Activities and Outcomes

The project area included two *paras* of Itchari village namely, Itchari Modhya Para and Itchari Vitor Para belong to 260 no. Itchari Mouza, 2 no Kamolchari Union, Khagrachari Sadar Upazilla of Khagrachri Hill District. The number of households in Itchari Modhya Para was 36 and in Itchari Vitor Para were 129 with 165 households in total. Total population of the project area was 810 with average family size of 5. Area of the forest at Itchari is 105 acre or 43 hectare, which is managed as community reserve forest since 1970. BIRAM initiated the project activities in 2009 through organizing these Itchari reserve forest

conserving communities. Later nine households from the neighbouring village “Kutukchari” were brought under project activities.

Findings of the bench-mark survey showed that people in the project area were mostly (75%) illiterate and dependent mainly on agriculture and agro-forestry products as about 56% of total family income comes from agriculture, homesteads and hills. The people of Itchari Vitor Para are more dependent on agro-forestry activities compared to Itchari Modhya Para. A total of 69 plant species were identified from homesteads and hills of which 10 were lost/critically endangered species. The forest also rich in wildlife biodiversity including deer, porcupine, wild dog, wild boar, fox, leopard, monkey, common birds, snakes, lizards, etc. Population pressure, construction of houses, Jhum cultivation, natural calamities, lack of money/capital were the major causes for biodiversity loss in the area.

However, Observations and learning in light of the progress of implementation of the activities and achievements presented in project completion report (2009-2011), data provided by BIRAM, and through field visit and FGDs are discussed below.

### 3.1 Project office and staffs

BIRAM has its project office at Khagrachari. All project staffs including the ED are male and indigenous people. Most of them are competent and aware of project activities particularly of biodiversity and forest conservation. No gender balance among the project staffs. There is one female staff who working for other project. Some of the staffs are new as there is practice of leaving job by project staffs.

### 3.2 Activities and outcomes regarding objective-I

[Strengthening community based management system of the Itchari community Reserve Forest]

Table 1: Activities and achievements in relation to objective-I as per project completion report (June’09 – Nov’11)

Activities to achieve objective-I	Target	Implemented	Achievement (%)
1. Base line survey	1	1	100
2. Monthly planning & coordination meeting	28	27	97
3. Community Meeting	28	26	93
4. Inception workshop	1	1	100
5. Support for community house construction registration etc.	1	1	100
6. Reconstruction of Community house	1	1	100
7. Community facility development	1	1	100
8. Replace boundary pillar of CRF	10	10	100

**Observations and Learning:** A “Reserve Forest Conservation Committee” has been formed with 15 members including 2 advisors. The committee applied for registration in the Department of Social Welfare which is under process. Implementation of monthly planning and coordination meetings and also the community meetings were impressive. A community house has been constructed. A resource map and forest management plan has been developed through active participation of the community people. At present, there is no illegal logging, hunting, cultivation and encroachment in the reserved forest. Some animal species like monkey, wild boar, etc. are returning to the forest due to availability of food, shelter and no disturbance in the forest areas.

**Comments:** Activities were relevant with the objective. Progress and achievements in implementation of the activities (on an average 99%) was satisfactory. The bench-mark

report lacks in information regarding total biodiversity (plant & animal), livelihood assets, and gender issues. Formation of the Reserve Forest Conservation Committee, construction of community house, development of resource map and forest management plan and initiative taken by the committee for registration, etc. bear good indications of institutional development in the community.

### 3.3. Activities and outcomes regarding objective-II

[Promotion of sound watershed management practices among the local communities of the project area]

Table 2: Activities and achievements in relation to objective-II as per project completion report (June'09 – Nov'11)

Activities to achieve objective-II	Target	Implemented	Achievement (%)
1. Awareness Meeting with Kutukchari community	5	3	60
2. Seedling distribution (with project landscape development in VCF and homestead (Apr-Jun'11)	5000	3545	70
3. Lunch with community (weeding)	3	2	67

**Observations and Learning:** A total of 3545 seedlings/saplings were distributed among the community people. There were 35 kinds of different species of fruit, forest and soil binding species e.g. Mango, Litchi, Guava, Wood apple (Bel), Stone apple (Kodbel), Agor, Orange, Khirni, Malta, Passion fruit, Nashpati, Lotkan, Coconut, BAU *kul*, *Apel kul*, Olive (Jalpai), Hog plum (Amra), Lemon (Lebu), Betel nut (Supari), Joitune, Bay leaf (Tejpata), Garjan, Horitaki, Mahogany, Champa, Baspata, Civit, Cane, Telsure, Chapalish, Sisoo, Jarul and Bamboo(baijje). Out of 3545 seedlings, 794 died and 2751 were still surviving i.e. survival rate was 78%. Plantation and/or conservation of plants around the water sources might have increased water availability for rice cultivation. Project staffs mentioned that water content in the water bodies increasing due to conservation of plants and plantation of more trees in the area.

**Comments:** Activities were more or less relevant with the objective but not adequate. Some other activities specific to watershed management could be taken. However, achievement (on an average 66%) in activity implementation was not very encouraging. Seedling/saplings were planted in April-June 2011 and thus plants were small in size. Project staffs mentioned that a good number of seedlings died but replaced later with new seedlings/saplings. So, proper care of the planted seedlings/saplings is needed. Plantation with such fruit, forest, medicinal, spices, etc. if survive will enrich biodiversity of the area as well provide food, fuel and income to community people. Watershed management through growing more plants around the water sources is essential for preserving water for alternate livelihood.

### 3.4 Activities and outcomes regarding objective-III

[Enhancing economic opportunities for the forest dependent families through alternative IGAs and access to capital]

Table 3: Activities and achievements in relation to objective-III as per project completion report (June'09 – Nov'11)

Activities to achieve objective-III	Target	Implemented	Achievement (%)
1. Revolving fund distribution	165	94	57
2. Fish culture	1	1	100
3. Mushroom	1	1	100
4. Nursery and grafting training	1	1	100



**Observation and Learning:** A revolving fund of BDT 708000/- has been developed for providing loan to community people against different IGAs. The executive committee is responsible for management of the revolving fund. The loan is issued after proper verification of the loan proposal by the committee. A member may receive a loan of BDT 2000/- to a maximum 20000/-. There is a provision of paying interest at the rate of BDT 1.00 per month and the loan to repay within one year. So far 94 households received loan of BDT 451000/- on different IGAs of which 48 households received BDT 195000/- for small business, 28 households received BDT 112000/- for agriculture and livestock (cow and goat and pig) rearing while 18 households received BDT 144000/- for fish cultivation. Committee members save BDT 5/- per month and the total amount of savings till November 2011 was BDT 12167/- including membership fee. Data provided by BIRAM showed that a total of 108 community member (104 male and 4 female) received training on IGAs like, nursery development, fish cultivation, mushroom production, grafting, accounting, small business and agriculture. Out of these 108 members only 68 were involved in IGAs (48 in small business and agriculture, 1 in accounting and 18 in fish cultivation). Alok Bikash – a community member took a loan of BDT 10000/- for fish cultivation. He cultivated fish species e.g. Rui, Katla, Silver carp, Grass carp, Telapia, Karfu, etc. in a pond of 160 decimal. He earned BDT 40000/- in two years. To him fish cultivation is very profitable and he is interested to receive intensive training on fish cultivation. Another member “Ananto Kumar” received a loan of BDT 4000/- ten months back. His wife purchased two pigs with BDT 2400/-. One of the pigs died after some days. Another one gave birth to 9 kids of which 8 are alive. Price of 8 pigs was BDT 9600/- at the time of interview. According to them fish cultivation and pig rearing is very profitable in the area.



Fish cultivation by Alok Bikash



Pig rearing by Mrs. Ananto

**Comments:** Activities were relevant with the objective but not adequate. Development of revolving fund and arrangement of training for community members were good attempts. Such activities are essential for sustainable conservation of the reserve forest and watershed as well. Dependency of community people on reserve forest will be reduced as much as they get involved in alternate source of income. Selection of IGAs, training on selected IGAs and credit support are important in this regard. Data shows that 57 percent of the total households (94 out of 165) received loan from revolving fund, 13 percent of the total population (108 out of 810) received training on IGAs. Again 63 percent of the trained members (68 out of 108) were involved in IGAs. So, it can be said that activities were not performed efficiently or the target was not determined properly. According to the FGD participants, IGAs like mushroom culture, nursery raising, etc. were not very profitable. Some of them tried these items but failed. It means training provided to them was not sufficient. On the other hand, pig rearing, fish cultivation, rice production, small business found profitable. According to women “Komor tant”, handicrafts with bamboo, cane, etc. are very profitable. Hence, a need assessment for training on IGAs and also for providing loan is required.

### 3.5 Activities and outcomes regarding objective-IV

[Creation of enabling environment for the CRF community for the sustainable management of the CRF and for their livelihood improvement initiatives]

Table 4: Activities and achievements in relation to objective-IV as per project completion report (June'09 – Nov'11)

Activities to achieve objective-IV	Target	Implemented	Achievement (%)
1. Day observation on International Environment day	3	3	100
2. Publication of biodiversity information-baseline survey	1	0	0
3. Study visit	3	2	67
4. Facilitation Skill development training	1	1	100
5. Workshop on accounts management for utilizing the revolving fund	1	1	100
6. Bill boards	2	2	100
7. Poster, leaflet, etc.	2000+1500	1000	29
8. Calendar & Diary	1000	100	10

**Observations and Learning:** Contents of the posters and leaflets were relevant with the project activities. Sign boards were prepared well but these were not placed rightly and not maintained properly. One sign board was covered with some political posters while another one was kept against wall of a hut. However, observation of international day, study visits, and publication of poster, leaflet, calendar & diary, etc. were done well but quantity was much lower. Project staffs received training on PRA, Accounts management, Organization development and management and value chain analysis mainly from PROSHIKA. Such trainings certainly had improved skill and knowledge of the project staffs to some extent.

Table 5: Participants of different meeting, workshops and training arranged by BIRAM

Name of training/workshop	No. implemented			Duration (day)	No. of participants		
	1 <sup>st</sup> yr	2 <sup>nd</sup> yr	3 <sup>rd</sup> yr		Male	Female	Children
1. Accounts management training	-	1	-	2	13	-	-
2. Technical training on Horticulture	-	1	-	1	20	-	-
3. Mushroom training	-	1	-	1	18	2	-
4. Fish culture	-	1	-	1	18	-	-
5. Small scale business training	-	-	1	1	15	5	-
6. Weaving and handloom	-	-	1	1		25	-
7. Facilitation skill development training	-	1	-	1	18	2	-
8. Nursery training	-	1	-	1	19	3	-
9. International Day observation	1	1	1	1	53	40	80+65+53=198
10. Inception workshop	1	-	-	1	57	29	-
11. Awareness meeting	-	1	2	1	34	76	-
12. Community meeting	4	14	10	1	82	102	-

It is evident from Table 5 that women had participation in different meeting, workshop, training, etc. and a good number of children participated in the observation of "International Environment Day" and thus their awareness about project activities might have increased to some extent. Except "accounts management", the duration of all other training was one day which was not adequate for developing skill and knowledge of the participants.

**Comments:** Activities were relevant with the objective but not adequate. Achievement in implementation of activities was not very satisfactory particularly in case of publication of poster, leaflet, diary and calendar. However, level of awareness among the committee



members regarding forest and biodiversity conservation was good. Women (wives of committee members) and non-committee members (male and female) were not much aware about it. FGD with non-committee members revealed that they had no clear idea about the project activities. They just know that project is for their betterment through planting trees. It teaches them not to cut trees unwisely. It indicates that activities done so far did not increase awareness among the local people remarkably. Sign boards as shown in the picture were not attractive enough for drawing attention or motivating people. Some large size bill boards containing various messages on biodiversity, forest conservation and watershed management would be more effective for motivating people. Most of the project staffs were aware about project activities but not competent like those of Anando.



Placement of signboards by BIRAM

### 3.6 Observations and Learning on Gender Issues

FGD with women of Itchari reserve forest conservation community could not be done as BIRAM did not organize them. However, attempt was made to know about gender issues from 3-4 women separately during the course of field visit. More or less similar response received from women as that of women in Anando project area in Dighinala. Women do not like to participate in committee, meeting, training, workshop, etc. as they have to do many works compared to men. They think such activities are suitable for men. They are mostly illiterate and feel shy to participate with men. Both men and women feel that there is no gender discrimination. But it is fact that women works for 16 hours while men works for 11 hours a day. Women get lower wages than men for similar work. Rate of illiteracy is much higher with women. Extent of mobility of women is very low. Women have no or low participation in decision-making process. They have no/low income of their own and have no/low access to family finance. Early marriage is a common practice as more than 60-70% of women get married within 13 years of age. It indicates that gender discrimination is there and people are not aware of gender issues.

### 3.7 Observations regarding fund utilization

An attempt was made to assess how efficiently the project fund was utilized. For doing this a format was provided to BIRAM to show the approved fund and expenditure/cost according to major heads and sub-heads. They were also requested to mention reason(s) for any over or under utilization of money if occurred against any head. But the project office could not provide the data/information as they were not ready to prepare data according to the format. However, they provided a financial report (2009-2011) according to major heads (copy in Annex-1) but did not mention any reason for over or under utilization of money. From the given data, it was difficult to understand how much money was spent for which item. It was found that there was over or under utilization of money against almost all heads in each

year. If the head "Participant's skill development" is considered, the amount of fund approved was BDT 410750/- while total amount of expenditure was BDT 95484/- (Annex-1). Total no. of participants received training was 146 in 7 different training (except weaving & handloom) of 1-day duration (Table 5). It means the cost per participant was BDT 654/- per day, which was too much. Again, table presented in Annex-2 shows that total cost for seedlings (distributed among the community people) was BDT 122660/-, but the cost for 3545 seedlings @ BDT 6/seedling is BDT 21270/-. It is not clear how rest of the money (BDT 101390/-) utilized as no reason was given for this extra expenditure. In case of "Technical training on Horticulture" (as shown in Annex-2), the rate of honourarium for resource speakers BDT 35000/- for 4 speaker was very high and fund utilized in "Other cost" column BDT 301672/- (for grafting tools, Entertainment, Land, Accommodation, etc.) seems too high. There was inconsistency in data provided different time against same activity/head of expenditure. So it can be said that BIRAM did not utilize the fund very efficiently. There was scope for doing more activities e.g. more participants could be included in training and study visit, loan could be provided to more households for IGAs, more seedlings could be distributed, more bill boards could be prepared, etc. with the fund given to BIRAM if utilized properly.

#### **4. Impacts**

Nearly three years of project activities though not sufficiently but have produced some impacts on community people regarding forest conservation and developing alternate livelihood. Some impacts as observed/realized through site visit, discussion with community people and information provided in the reports are as follows.

Community people at least become aware that unwise/illicit felling of tree and jhum cultivation is harmful for environment and also for their livelihood and accordingly they have stopped such practices. It is noteworthy that neighbouring villagers also become aware and one person Mr. Nayan Jyoti Chakma from the village Ultachari Biharpara already has taken initiative to implement BIRAM project activities through organizing 64 households in his village.

Formation of forest conservation committee, reconstruction of the "community house", development of resource map, community forest management plan, process for registration of the community through Department of Social Welfare, etc. are good indications of institutional development.

Formation of the revolving fund, distribution of loan and training on different IGAs have created good impact as some of them got involved in different IGAs and trying to survive on alternate livelihood.

Discussion with committee members (11 members participated in the FGD) revealed that some positive impacts occurred in their livelihood. About 90 percent of them mentioned that their family income had increased slightly. Nutrition intake of 67 percent of them increased slightly while increased moderately in 33 percent cases. All (100%) of them indicated that their access to training, credit and group meeting had increased moderately while slight improvement occurred in their technical knowledge and skill. Participation in IGAs of majority (67%) of them had increased moderately.

It was reported that water content of the water source (i.e. Itchari chara) was higher in last year than its previous year. During the site visit, one community people mentioned that he cultivated rice in more area than its previous year as more water was available. So it may be said that proper conservation of reserve forest, weeding, and plantation (though new) around the water source improving the watersheds.

## 5. Sustainability potentials

- Proper conservation of the existing forest and successful growth of the newly planted fruit, forest, medicinal trees in the hills and homesteads following the “Management Plan” will increase total biodiversity (plant and animal) in the project area.
- Conservation of forest and plantation around the watersheds/water sources will increase the water content therein that ultimately will help increase in agricultural production (rice, vegetable, etc.) and food security for the community people.
- The “forest conservation committee” and “community house” for organizing the community people and the “revolving fund” for developing alternate livelihood for community people if maintained properly will contribute to a sustainable conservation of the forest and biodiversity.
- Highly skilled individuals/groups to be developed such that they can carry out the project activities and IGAs even after phase out of the project.
- Strengthening BIRAM as a supervising organization through establishing its own office campus, recruitment of some permanent staffs (maintaining gender balance), enhancing financial and technical capabilities might exert a good impact in overall development of the area.
- Ownership of land is a great concern with respect to sustainability. Community people were found very shaky mentally as they do not have any legal right to the lands. Some of them opined that no project support was needed for planting trees or IGAs if only the lands were provided to them legally on lease or a permanent basis. So, an initiative from the government side may be taken to find a better solution of this problem.

## 6. Weakness/Areas that need to be strengthened

The weakness and strength of the project as well as opportunities and threats regarding the project were determined through SWOT analysis. Findings are presented below in a tabular form.

	HELPFUL (for your objectives)	HARMFUL (for your objectives)
<b>INTERNAL</b> (within organization)	<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Coordinator is competent</li> <li>• All project staffs are indigenous</li> <li>• Staffs are more or less skilled</li> <li>• Organizational policy</li> <li>• Strong Management Committee</li> <li>• Sufficient logistic support</li> <li>• Activities are relevant to respective objectives</li> <li>• Provision for capacity building of project staffs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weakness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have no own office</li> <li>• Have no permanent staffs</li> <li>• Drop out of staffs for low salary structure</li> <li>• Irregular election of management committee</li> <li>• Have no financial and gender policy</li> <li>• Poor management</li> <li>• Weak team spirit</li> <li>• No/poor participation of women in committee, training, meeting, etc.</li> <li>• Insufficient skill development training for beneficiaries</li> <li>• Inadequate training management</li> <li>• Inadequate bench-mark information particularly regarding livelihood assets, gender issues, animals and birds present in the area, etc.</li> <li>• No data keeping on production, consumption and income from homestead production (after intervention)</li> </ul>
<b>EXTERNAL</b> (Outside organization)	<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aranyak Foundation – for financial and technical support</li> <li>• PROSHIKA – for supporting human development</li> <li>• BARI, DAE, DOF, CHT Board – for providing input (seed/seedling) support</li> <li>• Krishi Bank – for credit support</li> <li>• Local government – for administrative and legal support</li> <li>• Political commitment</li> <li>• Huge natural resources for work</li> <li>• Supportive traditional institution</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Socio-political unrest prevailing in the area</li> <li>• Conflict between tribal &amp; Bangali</li> <li>• Flash flood</li> <li>• Tobacco cultivation</li> <li>• Jhum cultivation</li> <li>• Weak communication system</li> <li>• Land conflict and lack of land ownership</li> <li>• Extreme poverty among the community people</li> <li>• Low literacy rate</li> </ul>

## 7. Recommendations

Considering the strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats regarding the project and the implementing organization and progress and achievements in project implementation, following recommendations are made.

- Project activities are now at a stage that trees planted in hills and homesteads are just growing; some community members (beneficiaries) are trying to earn income through different IGAs for maintaining livelihood out of forest product and Jhum cultivation. So, continuation of the project activities for providing support and supervision to community people may be helpful towards achieving the ultimate objectives of the project.
- There is lack of information in the bench-mark report regarding livelihood assets (human capital, physical capital, social capital, financial capital, etc.), animal biodiversity and gender issues. Data on total plant-biodiversity is also lacking. Another baseline survey is needed in the present pilot site for generating data in these regards that can be used for measuring impact on livelihood, women's empowerment and changes in plant and animal biodiversity afterwards.
- Attempt should be taken to collect and multiply planting materials of all lost/endangered plant species and grow them in all possible places including the hills/valleys and homesteads.
- In addition to Jarul and bamboo, extensive plantation of cane around the watershed would be more beneficial from environmental and economic point of view.
- More promotional activities like, awareness meeting, workshop, special day observation, bill board, poster and leaflets with appropriate messages, etc. is needed for increasing awareness among community people. Frequent visit by project staffs to community households is required for motivating them in different activities particularly for IGA.
- There is a need for establishing "Samity" (like Anando project area) at each Para for organizing community people more efficiently. Attempt may be taken to form a number of small samity (5-10 members) based on different activities particularly on IGAs. It will facilitate organize more people and ensure their active participation. For members of all samities/groups, there will be some common tasks like, protection of forest, weeding, taking care of trees planted in hills and around the water sources, etc. The "forest conservation committee" may act as a supervisory and coordinating body for these samities.
- Trainings should be given to community people in more organized and effective way. In case of training on IGAs, participants should be selected on the basis of their interest and feasibility for particular IGA. A training need assessment can be done prior to this. Duration of training on each IGA should be such that participants can learn it properly. Attempt can be taken to develop skilled groups on different IGAs. A group may contain 5-10 members. Specific group will receive intensive training on that specific IGA such that each group member attains proper knowledge and skill to operate the IGA independently and successfully. It will help develop occupational diversity in the community. Later members of one group may share knowledge from other group to run IGA of their interest. It will also facilitate marketing of the produces within the community.
- Active participation of women in all project activities i.e. meeting, workshop, training, study visit, activity implementation, etc. should have to be ensured for sustainable development of the community. A female staff may be appointed for motivating women and ensuring

their participation in project activities. For organizing women, increasing their awareness about gender issues and involving them in IGAs, one women samity at Modhya Para and another at Vitor Para can be formed.

- A study may be taken for measuring tribal women's level of empowerment and their extent of participation in IGAs which will help measuring changes in their level of empowerment and extent of participation in IGAs due to project interventions.
- Skilled project staffs are strength of an organization and essential for efficient implementation of the project activities. So, appropriate measures should be taken to stop drop out of skilled staffs. Besides, a good team spirit is needed for efficient implementation of project activities.
- Data recording on different aspects particularly on production, consumption or utilization and sale of homestead produces (both agricultural and non-agricultural) is very essential. Project staffs should visit each of beneficiary households at least twice a week for recording data.
- Measurement of biodiversity using Shanon-Wiener index (H) or Simpson index (D) would be needed for a better scientific presentation. Proper data collection is required for computing such index. Training can be provided to project staffs on biodiversity measurement and data collection procedure.



**BIRAM** (Boudhi Investigate and Research Assembly for Men)  
**Itchari Community Reserved Forest Conservation Project (ICRFC)**  
 Financial Report  
**Period of June 2009- June 2010**

Sl #	Head of expenditure	Amount approved (Tk.)	Amount spent (Tk.)	Balance (Tk.)	Remarks (if any)
1	Staff cost	419000	384752	34248	
2	Other Direct Cost				
2.01	Program Administration	498570	364522	315318	
2.02	Program development, field supervision and	282500	329070	46570	
2.03	Staff capacity development	25500	193896	168396	
2.04	Participants skill development	150400	11473	138927	
2.05	Input support	790000	477097	312903	
2.06	Promotional activities	87745	267625	179880	
	<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>1834715</b>	<b>1462413</b>	<b>372302</b>	
	Total Project Cost	2253715	1847165	406550	
	Overhead Cost (@ 10%)	225371	184716	40655	
	<b>Grand Total=</b>	<b>2479086</b>	<b>2031881</b>	<b>447205</b>	

Approved budget = **2479086**  
 Fund Received from AF = **2130602**  
 Loan form BIRAM= **1000**  
 Total Expend= **2031881**  
 Closing Balance= **98721**

Financial Report  
**Period of July 2010-June 2011**

Sl #	Head of expenditure	Amount approved (Tk.)	Amount spent (Tk.)	Balance (Tk.)	Remarks (if any)
1	Staff cost	752000	692077	59923	
2	Other Direct Cost				
2.01	Program Administration	116400	118263	1863	
2.03	Program development, field supervision and	231000	135515	95485	
2.04	Staff capacity development	41000	43774	2774	
2.05	Participants skill development	181900	66658	115242	
2.06	Input support	754470	390083	364387	
2.08	Promotional activities	350000	44000	306000	
	<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>1674770</b>	<b>798293</b>	<b>876477</b>	
	Total Project Cost	2426770	1490370	936400	
	Overhead Cost (@ 10%)	242677	149037	93640	
	<b>Grand Total=</b>	<b>2677147</b>	<b>1639407</b>	<b>1038396</b>	

Approved budget = **2677147**  
 Fund Received from AF = **1624931**  
 Opening Balance Cash at Bank= **97721** (On the previous year)  
 Total Expend = **1638751**  
 Closing Balance= **88740**

Financial Report  
**Period of July 2011-December 2011**

SI #	Head of expenditure	Amount approved (Tk.)	Amount spent (Tk.)	Balance (Tk.)	Remarks (if any)
1	Staff cost	360300	292682	67618	
2	Other Direct Cost				
2.01	Program Administration	63000	36452	26548	
2.03	Program development, field supervision and	122000	69626	52374	
2.04	Staff capacity development	3000	2920	80	
2.05	Participants skill development	78450	17353	61097	
2.06	Input support	116000	79700	36300	
2.08	Promotional activities	0	0	0	
	<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>382450</b>	<b>206051</b>	<b>176399</b>	
	Total Project Cost	742750	498733	244017	
	Overhead Cost (@ 10%)	74275	49873	24401	
	<b>Grand Total=</b>	<b>817025</b>	<b>548606</b>	<b>268419</b>	

Approved budget = **817025**

Fund Received from AF = **603701**

Opening Balance Cash at Bank= **88740 (On the previous year)**

Total Expend = **548606**

Closing Balance= **168650 (Up to November 2011)**

Financial Report  
**3 years together (up to November 2011)**

SI #	Year	Amount approved (Tk.)	Amount spent (Tk.)	Balance (Tk.)	Remarks (if any)
1	June 2009- June 2010	2479086	2031881	447205	Fund Received from AF = 2130602
2	July 2010-June 2011	2677147	1638751	1038396	Fund Received from AF = 1624931
3	July 2011- December 2011	817025	548606	268419	Fund Received from AF = 603701
	<b>Grand Total=</b>	<b>5972258</b>	<b>4219238</b>	<b>1754020</b>	<b>4359234</b>

## 1. Fund utilization for participant's skill development

Name of training/workshop	Duration (day)	No. of resource speaker & Honourarium/ Speaker (Tk.)	No. of participants			Allowance/ participant/ day	Other cost (if any)	Total cost (Tk.)
			Male	Female	Children			
1. Accounts management training	2		13	-	-			11286
2. Technical training on Horticulture	2	35000 (4 person)	20	-	-	8000 for 8 person	301672. (Grafting Tools, Entertainment Land, accommodation etc.)	344672
3. Mushroom training	3	5400 (2 person)	18	2	-			18243
4. Fish culture	1	5400 (2 person)	18	-	-			15186
5. Small scale business training	1		15	5	-			12200
6. Weaving and handloom	1			25	-			no cost
7. Facilitation skill development training	1		18	2	-			15000
8. Nursery training	1		19	3				8000
9. International Day observation	1		53	40	198			10935
10. Inception workshop	1		57	29	-			29192
11. Awareness meeting	1		34	76	-			76715
12. Community meeting	1		82	102	-			91411

## 2. Fund utilization for input support other than revolving fund

Item	No./Amount distributed	Cost/unit	Other cost (Tk.)	Total cost (Tk.)
1. Seedling	3545	5-6 Taka		122660
2. Community facilities		4000 Taka		164988
3. Baseline survey				50000
4. Study visit		1500 Taka per/head		24791
5.				