Integrating community based adaptation into Afforestation and Reforestation Programmme in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is on the way to achieve the status of middle-income country by 2021. However, climate risks have the potential to delay the achievement. The county is frequently subjected to cyclones, floods, extreme weather events, and storm surges. It affects the lives and livelihoods of one fourth of country's coastal population.

The Government of Bangladesh is acutely conscious of the country's vulnerability to climate change. The National Adaptation Plan of Actions (NAPA) and Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) have identified coastal afforestation with the participation of local

Coastal mangrove plantation in Bangladesh   Photo: UNDP Bangladesh

community as number one adaptation priority for coastal area. Moreover, the Seventh Five-year plan has set a target of 30,000 ha. coastal afforestation between 2016 and 2020.

Bangladesh has planted over 1400 ha of mangroves since 1960s. But there are a number of barriers in realization of the full adaptive potential of coastal greenbelts, including limited level of livelihood diversification, lack of species diversification in the coastal forest, weak sectoral coordination, and limited community's participation in coastal greenbelt management along with limited incentive for communities to ensure their long term maintenance.

UNDP in partnership with the Department of Forest, under the Ministry of Environment and Forest has implemented the country's first LDCF project 'Community Based Adaptation to Climate Change through Coastal Afforestation (CBACC) Project' from 2009 to 2015. The CBACC project has carried out 9,000 ha of mangrove afforestation, increased country's carbon sink capacity of 637,200 tons per year, and benefitted over 20,027 coastal people through livelihood diversification.

For further improvement of coastal greenbelt UNDP has taken up the 'Integrating Community Based Adaptation into Afforestation and Reforestation (ICBA-AR)' project to be implemented from 2016 to 2020. The project is funded by GEF (LDCF) which worth US $ 5,650,000.00. The project is being implemented in four especially vulnerable coastal districts, i.e., Patuakhali, Barguna Bhola and Noakhali with the objective of reducing vulnerability of communities to the adverse impacts of climate change through participative design, community-based management and diversification of afforestation and reforestation.

The project will carry out livelihood diversification activities for coastal communities and link that with forest stewardship. The project is aiming to increase species diversity in the coastal forest which will result in enhanced socio-economics benefits to local communities from the forests. Local communities and other stakeholders will be made aware of and involved actively with forest management and adaptation activities. Thus improving local people's benefit and ownership will contribute to sustainable management of coastal forests. Communal assets of coastal communities will be protected from extreme climatic event through strengthening early warning and cyclone preparedness program. It is expected that over 60,000 vulnerable coastal people will benefit from ICBA-AR project. The project will contribute to long-term resilience of coastal communities and ecosystems against changing climate.