



Taungya E- Bulletin

A Bi-Monthly News Letter of Taungya

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Editorial Message:

We lately published the Volume-3 Issue-3 (May- June 2017). By this time Taungya successfully completed 2 major projects namely SPGIEP (Social Safety Net Program) and ISPPERARHT (Education Project) funded by MJF. In this volume we tried to highlight the rest of project activities focusing the major issues besides two case studies. We hope it will provide the readers some good information on the last two months of development initiatives undertaken by Taungya.

[Editorial Board– Biplob Chakma, Executive Director & Pranajit Dewan]

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Project Activities and Case Studies



Rangamati Sadar Upazila Chairman, Mr. Arun Kanti Chakma inaugurates the program



CHT VCF Network Chairperson Mr Thuiang Marma presided over the program



Chief Election Commissioner of the event Ms Nuku Chakma leads the members to make oath

Formation of Rangamati District level VCF Network Committee

On the Thursday, 29 June 2017 Taungya organized Rangamati District VCF Network Committee formation program at ASHIKA Conference Hall, New Market, Rangamati. The program was presided over by Mr. Thuiang Marma, Chairperson, Central Committee of CHT VCF Network. Mr Arun Kumar Chakma honorable Rangamati Sadar Upazila Chairman was present as chief guest in the program. CHTDF representatives Rangamati District Manager, Ms Oishwarja Chakma, Program Officer (Forest & Environment), Mr Nikhilesh Chakma, Executive Director of SAAS, Ms Nuku Chakma were also present as special guests. The program was divided into three sessions. In these sessions, the Chief Guest Mr Arun Kanti Chakma inaugurated the day long program after welcome speech delivery by Mr Palash Khisa. The second session covered the process of Election Commission formation and conduct election to select district level committee members & oath taking of the newly elected members. In this session a committee of 11 members including four women members was declared and Headman Nabadip Chandra

Dewan was elected as Chairperson & Anjil Tanchangya as GS by the participated VCF representatives. The third session was a formal ending session. A formal speech delivered by the newly formed district committee Chairperson and followed by the speech of Taungya VCF Net Project Officer, Mr Pranajit Dewan, CHTDF-UNDP representative Program Officer Mr Nikhilesh Chakma. At the end of the program the closing speech was delivered by Mr Thuiang Marma.

Hilly Flood affected PDCs of Farua visited by Executive Director of Taungya

On the 18 June, 2017 a Project Monitoring Team led by Executive Director, Taungya visited 5 hilly flood affected PDCs of Dhapshil-Lota Pahar area under Farua Union of Bileisori Upazila. The team was comprised of 6 members respectively Tripan Chakma; Sushil Bikash Chakma; Nayan Chakma from project office, Bileisori and Tanak Chakma and Pranajit Dewan from Taungya Head Office led by Biplob Chakma, ED, Taungya. The main objectives of the visit was to assess status of newly started IGA undertaken by the extreme poor PDC members at five PDCs, collect photographs of the affected sites and collect data on the flood and its affected impact on the project at the target areas. The following PDCs were seriously affected by this natural disasters:

1. Chaiindya Para;
2. Taktanala Uttar-Purba Para;
3. Taktanala Uttar Para
4. Orasori Purba Para and
5. Orasori Pashim Para PDCs

However, in this regard, focal group discussion, photo collection of the disaster, conduct interviews for case study and data collection activities were involved. It was also known by the team members that project small scale IGA intervention of the above mentioned five PDCs were seriously affected for the mountainous flood. Mr Biplob Chakma also ensured to collect details data of the affected communities along with total IGA information by the LSWM project team supervised by Tripan Chakma, PC, LSWM Project.



Focal group discussion was conducted at



Flood affected households at Orasori Para PDC



Flood affected shop structures at Chaiindya Para PDC



Devastated community primary school at Chaiindya Para PDC



Devastating flood seriously affected Taktanala Uttar-Purba Para PDC

Compensation turned back life of Shova Ranjan Chakma, The day labor

To implement the sub project “Pansori-Bheibonsora via Shantipur Aronnyo kuthir Road” land had to acquire, house structures had to break down, paddy lands had to fill up and compensation had to pay to the different types of affected communities. So, it has been being implemented through various complex process and steps overcoming many complex challenges. But it is sure that the more the road affected to the local communities of five villages the most it developed communication system which has positively & strongly impacted on the occupational, social and financial life of the newly settled poor community peoples of the remote villages of Pansori upazila under Kha-grachari District. Especially almost all the villagers had to flee to Tripura, India during the severe chaotic communal/political situation in 1980-1983. Latter they returned to their homeland after the peace accord in 1997 and restarted everything again. So, poverty is day to day challenge for them and except very few, most of them became day labor or so to struggle against life and livelihood. But it is notable that the road was a long time desired & nourished dream for the development deprived indigenous local communities. They had been suffering for lack of road communication from inhabitation in that area. According to Doyamoy Chakma a villager of Nalindra Para, “Before the road construction villagers had to walk miles to get to the market, there was no fair price for our agricultural products, school goers had to suffer a lot especially in the Rainy season and emergency patients would not get medical treatment in time.” However, the road construction has impacted positively to all the communities in that area simultaneously it strongly influenced and contributed on some affected villagers’ life to improve their livelihood and house structures. Hence, among the affected villagers of five villages many failed to use their compensated money to improve their livelihood and develop their financial status for various reasons which they could do from this opportunity. Among the succeeded ones, son of Kalomoy Chakma & Maloti Chakma, Shova Ranjan Chakma a 31 years old day labor of Dakshin Shantipur Para stand fast for his income success and livelihood improvement by using the compensated opportunity properly.



Shova Ranjan standing right on his previous hut was where the project road was constructed

Shova Ranjan Chakma has been living with his family since he returned from Tripura, India in 1997 after the peace accord. He gets separated from his father’s family after marrying and lives in a hut on his father’s land. He with his spouse Premorika Chakma has two daughters. The eldest one is Jhorna Chakma studies in class five and the younger

Case Studies

Tremendous Hilly Flood Snatched Away the Total IGA Investment of a Poor Widow



Losing her IGA investment Bashok Puri Tanchangya has no

57 years old helpless & poor widow Bashok Puri Tanchangya is living at Taktanala Uttar Para since Adorsha Gram Activity of the Bangladesh Military in CHT during 1973. Her husband Ram Tanchangya died about seven years ago which was like a bolt from the sky and since then she has been leading more poverty stricken life. Due to be aged, physically she is not capable to work in the field so she subleased her 80 decimals of paddy land to a peasant and earns only 70 Ari (700 Kg.) paddy per year which is not sufficient against her need. Besides she has no technical or professional skills like tailoring or handicrafts work so that she could earn some money. On the other hand she never had enough capital to invest in animal raring or start a shop. So there never was any income opportunity for her to change her poor life.

She has only two sons. The elder one is separated after marriage and lives on his income and the youngest one is still studying at collage. The youngest son is the only hope and dream of her life and responsibility to Illiterate Bashok Puri. So, she tries her best to support her son to complete his education someday. At this stage of her life of financial crisis, Taungya starts to implement *Livelihood Security and Watershed Management Project*, a component of CHTWCA Project at the 17 Paras of Dhupshil- Lota Pahar area. Taktanala Uttar Para is one of the project initiated village. As per intervention strategies a Para Development Committee was formed and Bashok Puri Tanchangya becomes one of the PDC members and identified as one of the most vulnerable members.

The LSWM Project is mentionable and outstanding for its HH basis IGA support which appears like a great chance for a widow like Bashok Puri. It was as if a just project for a poor widow similar to Bashok Puri and other extremely poor & helpless ethnic communities village folks who basically depend on *Reserve Forest* resources. Time passes on and

according to selection criteria for implementing small scale income generating agro or livestock base projects, helpless widow Bashok Puri becomes selected amongst the 61 HHs out of 70 HHs in their PDC. In this regard she decides to invest her allotted money in pig raring and raring broiler chicken. So she receives a technical training at community level on livestock organized by Taungya and facilitated by a Veterinary Field Assistant from the Upazila Livestock Office of Bilaisori. Bashok Puri was allotted 6, 100/= (BDT) after the training and she purchases three pigs expending 5, 000/= (BDT) and two broiler chicken expending 1, 000/= (BDT). After couple of months she would earn at least 2, 000/= (BDT) from the chicken and end of the year at least 21, 000/= (BDT) by selling the pigs. But she is a very poor luck widow. After nearly three decades on the 12 June Monday 2017, a devastating hilly flood snatches away her all three pigs and the chickens were died for disease. Now, she is as she was before without any capital to invest for generating her income. *“The night was stormy and continuous heavy rainfall caused to quick tide of the river water from the upper stream. Everyone were very astonished to see the mud mixed thick and forceful water increasing very fast and all the shops near the river banks and houses submerged within very few hours. Everyone was trying to save their own belongings from shops and houses. But it was not easy for all the area was already inundated and was very hard to waggle against the powerful hilly tide. I saw my newly purchased pigs under my house washed away but I could not saved them for the waves were too powerful and when I realized the water was almost 4-5 feet high from the ground and was increasing in every seconds. I called for help but all were busy for saving their own belongings. Now I have no hope to increase my income from the small pig raring project I started.”* Says Bashok Puri Tanchangya with sighs!

According to an aged PDC member of their village Mongshi Marma, *“I only saw once such devastating flood in my life. It was may be in 1973. This year flood was very fearful just like that one. You know in 1998 or 1999 there was also another flood but that this time water level increased too high that everything flashed away so instantly that we could not saved most of our houses especially those were built on river banks and low ground.”* It is

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(after first page) The compensation turned back life

one is Bristi Chakma studies in their nearest Para Kendra School. Shova Ranjan Chakma has been struggling against poverty for many years and never found peace for financial crisis. He worked as a farmer at his father’s paddy field in season and worked as day labor rest of the year. The portion he would get from this labor was not enough to look after his own family besides educational expenses of his two daughters. So, poverty was day to day challenge. At this time of life, he heard that a road will be constructed over his hut. He becomes very sad to hear the news. Shova Ranjan Chakma says *“I came to know the news from our villagers that there will be a road on my hut. I was already suffering from financial crisis so if my hut has to break, how can I build another one? My mental situation was very painful. I couldn’t sleep well for days. Then one day a local NGO known as Taungya called a meeting & like other villagers I decide to attend. After attending some meetings I came to know that those who will be affected will be compensated from the project. I also came to know that the money is more than I can imagine. I was nonetheless happy to hear the news and found new hope then. Latter, I received total 2, 66, 464.2/- (BDT) as compensation for my household structure from DC Office and 33,308/- (BDT) as transfer grant, 33,308/- (BDT) as reconstruction grant, 26,646/- (BDT) as land development cost in total 93,262/- (BDT) from Khagrachari Hill District Council. So from the both offices I received total 3, 59, 726.2/- (BDT). The amount of money I have never seen before in my whole life. Like me my brothers, uncles also receives compensation either land, HH structures or trees etc. However, I dream to do many things, I discuss with my family members about it. Everyone develop many ideas to do with their money but thought that If I fail to use it properly there will be no money left. It is the chance to invest some money to improve my livelihood.”*

Shova Ranjan Chakma spends 3, 00,000/- (BDT) to build a tin shed semi-pacca house to live and buy a *Tom Tom* to drive and earn. Buying a *Tom Tom* was a very intelligent idea for him because there were very few vehicles to ride and he eared enormously from it. Latter he used some of it to build his house and bought 3 acres of land with 1, 10, 000/- (BDT) and created a teak orchard which present value is about 2, 00,000/- (BDT). And if everything goes well after fifteen years he will be able to earn about 15, 00,000/- 16, 00,000/- (BDT) from this teak orchard.

After nearly two years, his *Tom Tom* business gradually collapsed and many like him bought *Tom Tom* to earn money. Besides he had to mechanic shop frequently for repairing purpose. So he again decides to sell it and buy a milk cow with calf by spending 40, 000/- (BDT). Again he decides wisely because he will earn at least 25, 000/- (BDT) for the calf after a year or two and he will also get more calves and the cow will give milk which will provide nutrition demand for his two daughters besides earning a little income from selling milk.

According to Shova Ranjan Chakma- *“The road surely did many good to the entire villagers but to me the road brought a prosperous change into my family, occupational and financial life. I consider it as a blessings and I feel proud that my decision was right so that I could earn more or less 3-4 lacs from the Tom Tom which helped me to have a very potential teak orchard with permanent 3 acres of land. Everyone that got compensation money in our village, no one earned like me. But I am an illiterate person. I grew up in the refugee camp in Tripura so could not get education there. We lived there miserably and deprived of everything. Now my whole future is changed. I am confident that my two daughters will be educated and I will be able to provide financial support for it. If it would not happen I would still live in my previous hut and serve as a labor at others paddy lands or day labor or so. Though I could not complete my new house and have to spend more about 1, 50,000/- (BDT) but I am confident that I can manage it from my income. Now I have dreams to develop my occupational life. May be going to buy another Tom Tom or start small business. On the other hand I will try my best to assist my children to complete their education and get job someday. Above everything, I surely am grateful to Taungya for this positive change in my life.”*



Shova Ranjan with his fate changing tom tom that helped him to improve his livelihood for three years of very good income



Shova Ranjan stands happy before his new build semi-pacca house with the compensation money



Shova Ranjan and his wife now look after their cow and a calf which he bought by selling his old tom tom