

## Chunoti Co-management Committee

### Project background

#### Species of focus:

- Elephant

#### Country/Countries:

- Bangladesh

#### Site(s):

7,764-hectare Chunoti Wildlife Sanctuary, which serves as a corridor for Asian elephants migrating between Bangladesh and Myanmar.

#### GPS coordinates:

No data

#### Project web site:

No data

## Summary description:

In the early 2000s, local communities living adjacent to the sanctuary began to work in cooperation with the Forest Department to promote co-management of the protected area. The process began quite organically, with the committee forming through community meetings and discussions and developing into an official Co-Management Committee in 2004-5.

Chunoti Co-Management Committee (CMC) protects the once-degraded Chunoti Wildlife Sanctuary and mainly focuses on reducing the overexploitation of timber and non timber forest products. Though, the committee does coordinate volunteer patrols to prevent and discourage illegal logging and wildlife poaching. Patrol teams are often comprised of women and poorer members of the community, and have received additional support for the creation of alternative income generating opportunities.

## Land management type:

State managed protected area

## Product(s) in trade:

- Ivory

## Product value at site level:

No data

## Types of poachers:

Unspecified

## Details of 'other' poacher type:

No data

Project  
implementation

## Is the project implemented by an external party?

Yes

## Implementing organisation:

Local communities in cooperation with the Forest Department.

## Name of funding organisation(s):

The Committee was formed under the USAID Nishorgo Support Project (NSP), which works in Bangladesh to enhance protected area stewardship through comanagement arrangements. NSP provided technical support to the Committee from 2004 to 2008. From 2008 to 2013, the Chunoti Co-Management Committee has been run with reduced support under a complementary initiative – the USAID Integrated Protected Area Co-Management (IPAC) project – which has provided technical advisory services and other support over a five-year period to the government agencies responsible for the conservation of protected forests across Bangladesh. The German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) has contributed funds to the initiative, specifically to support the creation of alternative income generation options for the community patrol group members.

## Community organisation(s) involved:

Approximately 9,400 households benefit from the co-management initiative.

## Was the project established specifically to engage communities in combatting IWT?

No

## Year the IWT project or component started:

No data

Ongoing

## Project status is currently:

2013

## Case study information is up to date as of:

Community engagement

## Approach taken to community engagement and its rationale:

Community members are provided with livelihood alternatives in lieu of wildlife use

## Details of 'other' community involvement approach type:

No data

## Financial:

Patrol teams are often comprised of women and poorer members of the community who receive a stipend of US\$ 50 for joining the program. While the stipend provides an incentive for participation, the patrols are essentially volunteer-run. Many women community patrol group members have used their volunteer stipends to purchase cows which provide milk for consumption and sale.

## Non-financial:

*Not specified.*

**The community engagement project is** Stand alone initiative

## **Details of wider response:**

No data

## **Do community guards carry firearms?:**

No data, possible values:

- Yes
- No
- Not known
- Not applicable

## **Do community guards conduct joint patrols with formal guards?:**

No data, possible values:

- Yes
- No
- Not known
- Not applicable

## **Are community guards unarmed, without armed backup?:**

No data, possible values:

- Yes
- No
- Not known
- Not applicable

## **Do community guards have rights of arrest?:**

No data, possible values:

- Yes
- No
- Not known
- Not applicable

## **Do community guards have specialist training:**

No data, possible values:

- Yes
- No
- Not known

- Not applicable

## **Are community guards covered by military law in the case of someone being killed or wounded?:**

No data, possible values:

- Yes
- No
- Not known
- Not applicable

## **The community has traditional authority to sanction poachers from within their community?:**

No data, possible values:

- Yes
- No
- Not known
- Not applicable

## **What “rules of engagement” for working with communities does the case study address?**

Include local people in wildlife monitoring and enforcement networks

## **Other key principles for engaging communities emerging from this case study:**

No data

## **What has been the impact on poaching/IWT?**

Don't know/Case study/project has not assessed impact on poaching

## **What has been the impact on wildlife populations?**

Not known/not documented

## **Further detail about the impact on poaching:**

Anecdotal observations report an increase in the number of elephants within the sanctuary.

What worked and why?; What didn't work and

why?

## **What worked about the community engagement approach and why?**

The lot of women in particular has been improved a great deal by the work of the initiative – a considerable achievement in a religiously conservative region, where women's participation in decision making processes is not the norm. Women in the region are largely uneducated and homebound, with their roles limited by tradition. The empowerment of female community members through the creation of women-led community patrol groups, which patrol the forest alongside a forest guard a few times a week, has been recognized in international media and women are now taking an active role in protecting the wildlife sanctuary. In total, 424 patrol group members have received support to improve their incomes, and as a result many of them have moved out of poverty and begun sending their children to school.

## **What did not work and why?**

*Not specified.*

## **Further comments or additional information about community engagement:**

Co-management has required a great deal of investment in community capacity building, particularly on the management side. The history of tension between local practitioners and the government has also required an investment of time in conflict resolution, building trust and fostering cooperation.

### Bibliographic information

Published documentation

## **Main source(s) of information:**

**Title:** Chunoti Co-Management Committee, Bangladesh.

**Author(s):** UNDP

**Year of** 2013

## publication:

Equator Initiative Case Study

## Journal/Book/Series

### details:

**Publisher:** United Nations Development Programme

**Place** New York,  
US.

### published:

## Download/Access

### URL:

[http://www.equatorinitiative.org/images/stories/winners/51/casestudy/case\\_137035...](http://www.equatorinitiative.org/images/stories/winners/51/casestudy/case_137035...) [1]

## Title:

Chunoti Co-Management Committee, Bangladesh. (Bengali Version)

UNDP

## Author(s):

2013

## Year of publication:

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### details:

**Publisher:** United Nations Development Programme

**Place** New York,  
US

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## Additional source(s) of information:

No data

Case study entry  
information

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## This case study entry compiled by:

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**Source URL:** <https://communitiesforwildlife.iied.org/chunoti-co-management-committee>

### Links

[1] [http://www.equatorinitiative.org/images/stories/winners/51/casestudy/case\\_1370356231.pdf](http://www.equatorinitiative.org/images/stories/winners/51/casestudy/case_1370356231.pdf)

[2] [http://www.equatorinitiative.org/images/stories/winners/51/casestudy/case\\_1\\_1373486148.pdf](http://www.equatorinitiative.org/images/stories/winners/51/casestudy/case_1_1373486148.pdf)