

Welcome

Presentation on:

Development Issues and Priorities of Indigenous People in CHT



Dhaka Ahsania Mission

Knowledge Management Forum

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Introduction & Background

- Indigenous people have been living in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) for centuries, divided in tribes, following their unique rituals, customs, languages, dress, cultural practices and rules.
- CHT has a land area of about 13,294 square km mostly hilly, only 3% of the area constitutes plain land with a population of about 1.4 million of which 90% live in paras/small villages. The average household size of CHT is 5.2.
- CHT is very much isolated from the rest of the country and is poor/behind in all development indicators like education, health and nutrition, water and sanitation, income, employment opportunities, women empowerment, human rights, access to information etc.
- Poverty is pervasive, people in general, struggle for survival at bare subsistence level.
- Administratively, CHT comprises of three hill districts: Bandarban, Khagrachari, and Rangamati.

Introduction & Background

- In total there are 3 districts 25 upazilas, 111 unions, 379 mouzas and 4,426 paras in CHT.
- The circle chiefs are represented at a higher level, at the mouza level by a Headman and at the para level by a Karbari.
- There are eleven indigenous language communities in the CHT e.g. Bawm, Chak, Chakma, Khyang, Khumi, Lushai, Marma, Mro, Pangkhua, Tangchangya, Tipperas and Bengalese settled in the CHT.
- The para in CHT on an average consists of about 46 households and a population of around 240 persons.
- 77% of the paras are inhabited by only one or more indigenous communities and 16% paras are inhabited by only Bengalese and 7% are mixed paras.
- About 58% of the population belongs to below the age of 24 years, and 5% belong to that of 60 years and above.
- 72% of CHT population (age 15+years) is married and 5% widowed.

Infrastructure & Communication

- **Existence and condition of physical infrastructures in paras are deplorable:**
 - only 16% of the villages have access to metallic roads;
 - average distance between a para and the nearest metallic road is 4.5 km;
 - Union Parishad and Upazila HQs are respectively 2.2 km and 5.7 km away from the paras;
 - economic hubs such as market place/trading centre are about 7 km away from paras.
- Government primary schools and NGO schools in one-third and half of the paras respectively and a secondary school are very rare in a para.
- **Average distance between an NGO school and a para in CHT is about 0.8 km; and the same for a government primary school is 1.4 km.**
- UH&FWC is around 5.5 km away from the paras whereas one-fifth of the paras have a satellite clinic.

Education

- Only 7.8% of all CHT people completed primary education and 2.4% completed secondary education.
- The average years of schooling for CHT population are only 2.8.
- The annual household expenditure on health and education for an average household are extremely low with Tk. 605 and Tk. 398 respectively.
- About 82% of children of 5-16 years are enrolled in primary or secondary schools with the enrollment among the Bengalese being marginally higher than that among the indigenous peoples.
- The dropout scenario among the students is highly unacceptable, 65% children discontinue their education before completion of primary schooling and 19% after completion of the same.

Health

- Peoples' knowledge about health problems, health facilities and health service providers is crucial.
- Health awareness situation is deplorable in terms of the following issues: how to prepare ORS, ANC checkup, PNC checkup, and delivery by medically trained provider, place to go for child vaccination, and place to go for treatment of TB/leprosy.
- Availing ANC and PNC check-up facilities is low, as the knowledge on danger signs of pregnancy.
- Habit of receiving TT immunization by pregnant women is also very low.
- Regarding reasons for not availing treatment services from public health system and/or NGO facilities, the most commonly mentioned reasons are 'don't know where to go', and 'facility/provider too far off'.

Agriculture

- Farming/cultivation through ploughing is the occupation of 18% of the total population in CHT; Jum cultivation is the occupation of 14% indigenous population.
- Nearly two-thirds of rural households are farming households.
- Major crops cultivating are limited to 7 types including paddy, turmeric, ginger, arum, binny paddy, and banana.
- Agriculture-related activities are the prime sources of household income across the communities.

Income & Employment

- About 3% and 3.5% population respectively are involved in business and salaried jobs.
- More than 9% of the population is day labourers in farm/non-farm.
- About 20% household members are old age people.

Income & Employment

- About 9% of the households are female-headed.
- Across the communities, two-thirds of the employed persons are self-employed.
- 47% of the IPs and 30% Bangalee income-earners are females.
- The income-earners, on average, have employment for 9.36 months per year.
- An average rural household annual net income of the Bangalees is around Tk. 71,000 and the same for indigenous peoples around Tk. 62,000.
- Food Poverty is widespread in CHT; most indigenous peoples in CHT are not secured in relation to availability of food during most time in a year.

Housing & Displacement

- **62% of the Bangalee populations are living in rural CHT for less than 30 years.**
- **Around 31% of households had to ever change their usual place of residence in their lifetime, and the average frequency of such displacements is 1.7.**
- **Around 38% of indigenous peoples had to change the same for almost 2 times and 20% were displaced more than once.**
- **The Chakmas are the worst affected and 72% of their households were displaced at least once in the last 30 years.**
- **An average Bangalee household had to move from their first permanent residence in CHT about 1.5 times.**
- **In most cases, the settler households have preferred to move to locations adjacent to security forces' camps due mainly to security perceptions.**

Housing & Displacement

- At least one household member in 13% of CHT rural households had to out-migrate from its para before the signing of the CHT Accord in 1997.
- In about 10% of CHT households, out-migrated member returned after the signing of the CHT Accord.
- 10% of migrated members migrated due to reasons related to security concern, and communal or political conflict.
- The majority (63%) of the houses of IPs are kutcha followed by machan.
- Almost all the houses of Bangalees (96%) are kutcha.
- More than 91% of the IP households and 73% of the Bangalee households are non-electrified.
- Overall 42% of the CHT households with 46% indigenous and 38% Bangalees do not feel secured in moving outside of their own community.

Land Ownership

- **Almost all households possess own houses in rural CHT.**
- **Land ownership of a household in context of CHT is to be understood along with three major types of ownership:**
 - **individual registered ownership;**
 - **traditional ownership recorded and/or not recorded with headman under usufruct rights; and**
 - **usufruct rights to ownership of common property different from that in plain land.**
- **If a IP household uses part of para common property as homestead or as cultivated land, all members from his/her community/para traditionally honor his/her usufruct right of ownership on that part of common property.**
- **Only one-third population of the CHT enjoy land ownership with a significant variation between the indigenous (30%) and the Bangalee household (42%).**

Land Ownership

- **Almost all the CHT households (93%) have land irrespective ethnic identity.**
- **An indigenous household owns on average 3.2 acres and a Bangalee household owns 1.3 acres.**
- **Agricultural land is owned by 27% households.**
- **46% of households from among indigenous communities own jum land.**
- **Among the indigenous communities, most lands fall under the category of traditional- customary property (55%).**
- **Over half (52%) of land properties have been categorized as 'Registered Ownership' for the Bengalese and the same for the indigenous peoples is 21%.**

Water & Sanitation

- **The major sources of drinking and cooking water in CHT are not safe.**
- **People have to travel long distances to collect drinking water and spend substantial amount of time for the same.**
- **A widespread practice of gender discrimination in collection of water, it is the female members who suffer most due to water scarcity and inadequate hygiene situation.**
- **The use of latrine by all household members is not practiced in most of the households who have hygienic latrine.**
- **The practice of healthy personal hygiene, including hand washing at critical times and disposal of household waste, is below the national standard.**

Recreation

- Overall 43% households, 50% indigenous and 34% Bangalee listen to radio, and 60% households with 54% indigenous and 68% Bangalee watch TV.
- All of them do not own radio, 16% go to neighbor's houses and 13% to Hat/Bazar and relatives'/friends' homes.
- All of them do not own TV, 29% go to neighbor's homes, 15% to Hat/bazar, and 13% to relative's/friend's homes.

Other Issues

- The CHT region appears as a crucial political and development discourse among academicians, researchers, development planners, and politicians for its diversity and gravity in geography, population, displacement, and Bangalee settlement among others.
- The issues like ethnicity, displacement, migration, environment, socio-economic backwardness, insurgency, military operations consequently make the CHT in unstable situation.

Other Issues

- In December 1997, the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord was signed between the Government and Parbattya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) which stopped two and a half decades of insurgency and military operations that claimed thousands of lives.
- After the implementation of the treaty, focus is on the improvement in livelihood of these marginalized and deprived people, especially the indigenous peoples (IPs) got a new dimension with development initiatives taken by the Government, and development partners.

Development Priorities

- After the implementation of the treaty, focus is on the improvement in livelihood of these marginalized and deprived people, especially the indigenous peoples (IPs) got a new dimension with development initiatives taken by the Government, and development partners.
- In the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Article 28(4), indigenous peoples are recognized as backward section of population and provision of positive discrimination regarding any types of development efforts is enshrined.
- There is a need of information on socio-economic status and situation of peace and confidence building between Bangalee and IPs for development planning and initiatives.

Development Priorities

- **The development priorities in CHT are specially the following interventions/activities:**
 - **community capacity building;**
 - **education;**
 - **health and nutrition;**
 - **infrastructure and communication;**
 - **water and sanitation;**
 - **women empowerment;**
 - **human rights;**
 - **environment and climate change;**
 - **awareness education on various development issues;**
 - **livelihood skills training and market linkage development;**
 - **access to information, etc.**
- **Need to increase emphasis on agriculture, food security, confidence building between and among the communities, and sustainable community based socio-economic and cultural development.**

Development Partners Involved in CHT Operation

- **UNDP-CHTDF** has been implementing a project on “Promotion of Development and Confidence-Building in the CHT (PDCB)” from 2003-2013 with financial assistance from multi-donor agencies to promote overall socio-economic development of the region and confidence building among the people.
- **UNICEF** has been implementing “Integrated Community Development Project (ICDP)” jointly with GoB under the direct supervision of the Chittagong Hill Tract Development Board (CHTDB), Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tract Affairs (MCHTA). The activities are pre-school, health, nutrition, water, sanitation and behaviour change hygienic practices in a purpose to improve the socio-economic conditions of the children and mothers of the disadvantaged families of CHT.
- **Dhaka Ahsania Mission** has been implementing “Up-Scaling Non-Formal Primary Education through Institutionalizing Qualitative Endeavour (UNIQUE) Project” in the 12 Upazilas of CHT from 2007, focused on non-formal education to out-of-school children with financial assistance of European Commission (EC).

Development Partners Involved in CHT Operation

- **Dhaka Ahsania Mission** has been facilitating 2nd phase of SHEWAB CHT project jointly with ICDP from 2010 with the support of UNICEF for improvement of capacity of ICDP staff and para workers for mobilizing para community for improvement of water sanitation & hygiene education and related hand washing in CHT.
- **Research Division of DAM** successfully completed a “Study on Effectiveness of Using Mother Tongue for Ethnic Minority Learners in CHT” supported by UNESCO Bangkok to develop an understanding of how the MLE based non-formal education programmes have been functioning.
- **Material Development Unit of TMD, DAM** has designed and developed 4 posters in 4 languages (Bangla, Chakma, Marma and Tripura) under the SHEWAB CHT project.
- **TMD, DAM** has implemented a project on “Teachers’ Training Support to Basic Education in CHT” by the support of UNDP-CHTDF from 2008-2010 and designed and developed 4 ToT package materials for Training Officers (TOs) of Partner NGOs of UNDP-CHTDF and provided 4 ToTs to TOs, follow-up and on-the-job training/coaching support to TOs when they facilitate teachers’ and head teachers’ training.

Conclusion

- **Technical and financial assistance is needed from multi-donor agencies, UN agencies, government, NGOs, civil societies and corporate sector to accelerate development process and overcome the above-mentioned situation gradually.**
- **Some UN Agencies, Government, and NGOs have been involved in implementing development projects in CHT from 1991.**
- **More development partners' involvement in CHT to accelerate progress in education, health, agriculture, income & employment, water and sanitation, women empowerment, community capacity building, environment & climate change etc. and ensure sustainable development is needed.**



Chakma tribal girl



Indigenous women weaving own cloths



Indigenous children standing in front of their hat



Tribal Hat in Bandarban



Thank you

For Your Kind Attention