

## Social Forestry and Climate Change Program

In Bangladesh the rapid depletion of forest resources has posed a serious threat to the ecological balance. The once lush green environment of Bangladesh is now in a deteriorating stage due to over exploitation and conversion of forestland to non-forest purposes.

Social Forestry and Climate Change Program of Proshika is a systematic intervention to enhance afforestation in the country. Proshika been experienced by the Program that if the poor are organized, trained and allowed usufruct right to the forest resources they can be potential source for environmental protection and regeneration.

The goal of the Social Forestry and Climate Change Program is to increase the forest resources and coverage for poverty eradication and sustainable development through people's participation.

The timely and organized intervention of Proshika's Social Forestry Program in Bangladesh is a unique case to resist the fast-vanishing forest resources. PROSHIKA group members have planted and protected 10 crores of trees in the past in denuded forest land, roadsides embankment slope and alongside railway lines. Through this program, PROSHIKA has earned total Tk. 56,17,933 by selling trees during the financial year 2023-2024 in several part of the country. From this earning money PROSHIKA gets a share of Tk. 11,23,586 and Tk. 33,70,759 gets its group members. PROSHIKA has planted 805,000 tree saplings in the financial year 2023-2024.

**Program Activities:** (a) Mobilization and awareness campaign (b) Group formation (c) Providing Training (d) Tree Plantation and Seedling Distribution (e) Technical assistances for nursery development, plantation and maintenance (f) Assistance for tree harvesting for benefit sharing and replantation (g) Credit support for IGA.

**Component of the program :** (1) Nursery establishment (2) Homestead Plantation (3) Strip and Block Plantation (4) Institutional Plantation (5) Tree Plantation and Seedling Distribution (6) Tree Harvesting (7) Natural Sal Forest Protection (8) Collaborative activities (9) Training facilities

### 1. Nursery Establishment:

Good quality seedlings are the basic inputs for the successful afforestation. With the aim to meet the demand of seedlings both from Proshika group members as well as others involved in plantation and to ensure the supply of good seedlings at the doorsteps, Proshika encourages its groups to undertake plant nursery projects. Technical and financial assistance is being provided by Proshika, which is contributing to make the nurseries one of the most potential income generating activities. So far, 3,169 nurseries have been



established and 34,614,596 seedlings have been produced. Different training has been imparted to the group members enables them to improve their skill on different tree improvement techniques.

## **2. Homestead Plantation:**

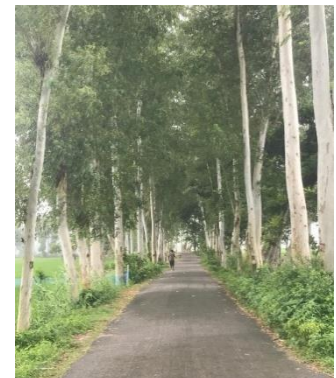
Social Forestry Program began its journey with homestead plantation because Proshika always looks to maximize the use of the limited resources of the group members. Most of the cases, the poor people do not have any other land except their homesteads. Proshika motivates its group members to plant multipurpose and fruit trees in their homesteads, which eventually become a good source of income without any extra efforts and time. In Homestead Plantation 112,876 groups of Proshika have planted 13,786,003 trees.



## **3. Strip and Block Plantation:**



Proshika group members are involved in raising strip plantations on feeder roads, embankments and railway track sides. They are also involved in raising block plantation on both public and private land. Both the strip and block plantation are established under a long-term land lease and benefit sharing agreements between the land-owning agencies, beneficiaries' groups and Proshika. The groups used to receive training on 'Tree Plantation and



Management' for successful implementation of afforestation activities. The financial assistance is also ensured to the respective groups if they needed. Proshika 14,926 km. strip and 35,295 acres block plantations have been established with the involvement of the organized groups of Proshika.

## **4. Institutional Plantation:**

Proshika, since its inception has been implementing the institutional plantation with the aim to bring the unutilized land under the jurisdiction of the different institutions like school, college, university, government offices, hospital etc. 455 institutions including Khulna University and Jahangirnagar University, total 391,864 trees have been planted.

## 5. Tree Plantation and Seedling Distribution

Tree plantation and seedling distribution is an ongoing program of PROSHIKA. For environmental protection and regeneration PROSHIKA has been implemented tree planting and sapling distribution program. In the year 2023-2024 about 805,000 of different sapling are planted and distributed in Proshika Branch Offices, HRDC, Educational Institution and Homestead area of Proshika group member where local level public representatives, government and private officials were present.



## 6. Tree Harvesting



Social Forestry and Climate Change Program aims to contribute poverty alleviation by involving people in the plantation and protection activities. Effectiveness of this program is to ensure benefit sharing among the involved people by harvesting trees from raised strip/ block plantation. Sustainability of this program depends on local people involvement, building trust and ensure right on natural resources. Proshika continuing its Tree Harvesting program by selling mature trees from strip and block plantation through maintaining proper process and approval. Also ensure benefit sharing to the beneficiaries. In the financial year 2023-2024 through this program, PROSHIKA has earned total Tk. 56,17,933 by selling trees from several part of the country. PROSHIKA gets a share of Tk. 11,23,586 and Tk. 33,70,759 gets its group members.

## 7. Natural Sal Forest Protection

In the early eighties, Prashika started a program of natural Sal forests protection program in the central region of Bangladesh involving local poor people. Sal/Gajari plant has excellent coppicing ability. If the Sal coppices are protected properly, the Sal/Ghazari forest can be restored. Prashika continues to expand natural Sal Forest protect activities by involving local people around the forest to restore the damaged forests into full forest. At the same time Prashika undertaken various socio-economic empowerment programs for of the poor. In the beginning this program was obstructed by the forest department and the local land occupying influential groups. Proshika able to persuade the government about the effectiveness of participatory forest management. Finally, the Forest Department brought these activities under the participatory forest management program and implemented two nationwide projects named 'Thana Forestry and Nursery Development Project' and 'Forestry Sector Project'. Prashika works jointly with the Forest

Department on these two projects. So far, 8,690 acres of natural Sal forests have been protecting by the organized group members of Proshika.

### **8. Collaborative activities:**

In Bangladesh since 1980, involvement of non-governmental organizations (NGO) in forestry activities gradually started. Through the implementation of Community Forestry Project Forest Department realize that non-governmental organizations can play an effective role in ensuring people's participation in social forestry activities.



Forest Department implemented several participatory forestry projects involving NGOs and local people in forest management on a partnership basis. Proshika implemented several projects with FD and other international organization

#### **Collaborative Project with FD :**

- (a) Thana Afforestation and Nursery Development Project-TANDP (1988-1997)
- (b) Coastal Greenbelt Project-CGP (1995-2001)
- (c) Forestry Sector Project-FSP (1997-2004)
- (d) Sustainable Forest and Livelihood (SUFAL) Project (2021-2024)

#### **Collaborative Project with INGO :**

- (e) Tree improvement and Promotion of Nursery Association-TIPNA (2005-2012):

Proshika implemented Tree improvement and Promotion of Nursery Association(TIPNA) project funded by SDC – Helvetas Bangladesh under the project Agroforestry Improvement Partnership Project( AFIP). Major objective of the project was QPM distribution system establishment. Capacity building of Nursery associations/ owners. QPM development and supply by facilitation to establishment FMTO, New LMTO, Management of QPM and to motivate and provide support to nursery owners for Plus Tree selection.

### **9. Training Facilities:**

Social Forestry and Climate Change Program, a number of training courses are developed. Such as – (i) Social Forestry and Project Management, (ii) Nursery establishment and management, (iii) Vegetative Propagation and Tree Improvement, (iv) Participatory Natural Forest Protection etc. These training are provided in two way, Formal and non-formal. Formal Training is residential and non-formal is village based.