

Looking Ahead: Soroptimists in Bangladesh

SDG 13: Taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impact

Plans for actions

**Women inspiring action,
transforming lives**

On behalf of the Soroptimists of Bangladesh, I am sharing with you two projects that are being planned - subsumed under SDG 13: *Taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.*

Project 1: Mangrove regeneration with Students

1.1: Helping a total of 50 high school students – boys and girls from the Sundarbans adjacent areas, to plant at least 500 mangrove saplings by the end of 2023.

1.2: Raising awareness on ecosystem restoration among 800 students from five different schools of the area by the end of 2023.



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The first project: **Mangrove Regeneration with Students**, includes 50 high school girls and boys from 5 schools in mangrove forest adjacent areas in the Sunderbans, an extensive wetland forest region along the southern coast of Bangladesh. The students will plant 500 mangrove saplings by 2023 in the forest depleted areas. And secondly, they will raise awareness on ecosystem restoration among 800 students in these five schools through weekly out-of-class activities.

Glocal initiatives



Women planting and nurturing mangrove saplings for regenerating depleted mangrove forest land.

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Where are the mangrove saplings for the high school students coming from? This photo tells the story. Mangrove seeds are provided through global initiatives and planted and nurtured by local women. When the saplings are re-planted for regenerating mangrove forest land and grow into full-grown mangrove trees, they have a global impact on combating the effects of climate change.

Expected outcome

- Awareness about ecosystem restoration raised among young high school girls and boys.
- Carbon is stored five times more in mangrove forests.

This slide shows the expected outcomes.

I focus on the secondary outcome first – Awareness about ecosystem restoration raised among 800 young school girls and boys regarding the importance of the natural ecosystem and how - disturbing the ecosystem - may have disastrous impact on their lives.

The second relates directly to the benefits of mangroves. Our previous speaker Shukla has extolled the value of mangroves for the eco system. She emphasised the exceptional capacity of mangroves to store organic carbon 5 times more

than normal trees. Mangroves store most of the carbon in their soil and sediment. If undisturbed, the carbon stays there for thousands of years.

Project 2: Providing Improved Cooking Stoves (ICS)

By 2023, a total of 25 ICS will be distributed among Sundarbans forest-dependent and marginalized households for

2.1: Reducing fuelwood consumption

2.2: Reducing women's cooking time

2.3: Improving women's health



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Our second project is aimed at improving the lives of women in marginalized households in the Sundarbans forest-dependent areas, by providing **Improved Cooking Stoves (ICS)**. These stoves have been developed through national and environmental initiatives and international research to function efficiently. A national action plan is being launched to introduce ICS to 3 million marginalised households by 2030.

Our project plans to **distribute 25 ICS among Sundarbans forest-dependent and marginalized households by end of 2023**, for

2.1: Reducing fuel wood consumption

2.2: Reducing women's cooking time

2.3: Improving Women's health

Expected outcome

- **Dependency on forest fuel wood reduced**
- **Women get more time to be engaged in alternative livelihood activities**
- **Women's health conditions improve**

Outcomes:

- Dependency on forest fuel wood is reduced (by nearly 40 %). So, more trees are saved.
- Women get more time to be engaged in alternative livelihood activities (by at least 2-3 hours per day)
- Stabilized health condition – ICS produce 70% less smoke than normal wood stoves. Not inhaling smoke and spending less time in heated conditions provide ensure better health opportunities.



Adopting the SDG 17 approach: Partnerships to achieve goals

To initiate these two outreach activities , the Soroptimists have initiated discussions with:

- **BETS (Bangladesh Environmental Development Society)**
- **WildTeam (a wild life conservation platform that involve school girls and boys called Tiger Scouts)**
- **Local community leaders , especially women.**

Thank you

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To support our outreach activities, Soroptimists have **adopted the SDG 17 approach: To form Partnerships to achieve goals.** We have initiated discussions with:

- BETS (Bangladesh Environmental Development Society)
- WildTeam - a wild life conservation association that involve high school girls and boys called Tiger Scouts. Recently Tiger Scouts are involved in natural ecosystem restoration activities.
- We have also started contacting local community leaders, particularly women.

We need partners to help select local beneficiaries, to manage inputs the sero-optimists provide, as well as report back on outcomes.

Thank you.

And now I hand over to Uma Bhandari of SI Nepal.