Bhola Island, Bangladesh

Risks of erosion and disasters on livelihood

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COAST at a glance

- COAST (www.coastbd.org), by the merit of the name, works in the coastal area of Bangladesh.

- COAST, as an organization, was initiated in Bhola, the largest island in the coastline of Bangladesh. COAST works in 7 coastal districts in the country.

- To serve the poor and disadvantaged people of coastal area of Bangladesh is our mission.

- COAST is certified member of HAP International
COAST Programs

- Micro Finance
- Institution Building
- Development Education
- Good Governance
- Coastal Integrated Technology Extension Program
- Primary health care
- Disaster Management
- Value Chain
- Advocacy for climate migrant
- Social Justice
- Education
- Local governance
- Communication for Development
- Justice for Safety &
- School feeding
## Area Coverage

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Branch Office</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Upazila</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Union</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total member (including all program)</td>
<td>1449618</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total staff (Female-570, Male-855)</td>
<td>1425</td>
</tr>
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Bhola, at a glance

- Bhola is the largest island in Bangladesh.
- The area of Bhola is 3403.48 sq.km.
- Emerged in the estuary of Meghna 800 years ago, by the sediment bore by Ganges and Brahmaputra river system.
- Agriculture was introduced in the 13th century.
- The altitude of the island is only 12 feet from the sea level.
- This island is NOT connected with the mainland by road communication. Waterways are the only way of transportation.
Features of Bhola

- Bhola district is under Barisal Division consisting of:
  - 7 Sub-Districts.
  - 5 municipalities.
  - 68 union & 438 villages.
- Population is 1.8 million with the density of 522/sqkm.
- Fishing (60%), agriculture (30%) and other (10%) are the main occupation.
- Only 263 cyclone shelters. Insufficient for the huge population.
- Total land for agriculture 159 thousand hectares.
- Main crops are: Rice, Cucumber, Watermelon, Potato, Peanut, Chili, Coconut, Betel leaf, Betel nut and different vegetables.
Major risks

- River erosion is the burning issue in Bhola coastline.

- Bhola and adjacent area are one of the most disaster prone area in the world. Mostly hit by the big cyclones & tidal surge.

- This is why the islands in the Bay of Bengal are called the Climate Ground Zero.

- The unsecured embankment is a living threat to the crops and farming production.
Great disasters in last 40 years only in Bhola

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Death toll</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tidal surge</td>
<td>15 feet</td>
<td>5-7 feet</td>
<td>8-10 feet</td>
<td>7 feet</td>
<td>5 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of crop</td>
<td>Totally ruined</td>
<td>850 hectares</td>
<td>34784 hectares</td>
<td>107 hectares</td>
<td>400 hectares</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data sources from Disaster office, Media, Local people, Fisherman
Flood in 2013

- Unusual tide appeared in July 2013 and flooded all over Bhola.
- 15 km of the embankment eroded to the river
- 500,000 people were imprisoned in the water logging for 4 months
- In Burhanuddin alone 12,358 hectares of land kept under water and expected crops valued US$9.3m are ruined
Recommendations

- Erosion along the Meghna river line of 120 km should urgently be addressed.
- 230 km of embankment should be repaired.
- More and sufficient cyclone shelters should be built to save more lives during cyclones and tidal surge.
- Facilities should be built to save the livestock from disaster.
How COAST works on the ground

- Organize public events including human chain, meetings, press conference etc to bring the issues forefront
- Advocacy
- Awareness among the stakeholders, relief works during disasters
- Influence local political leaders to work on river erosion
Thank you