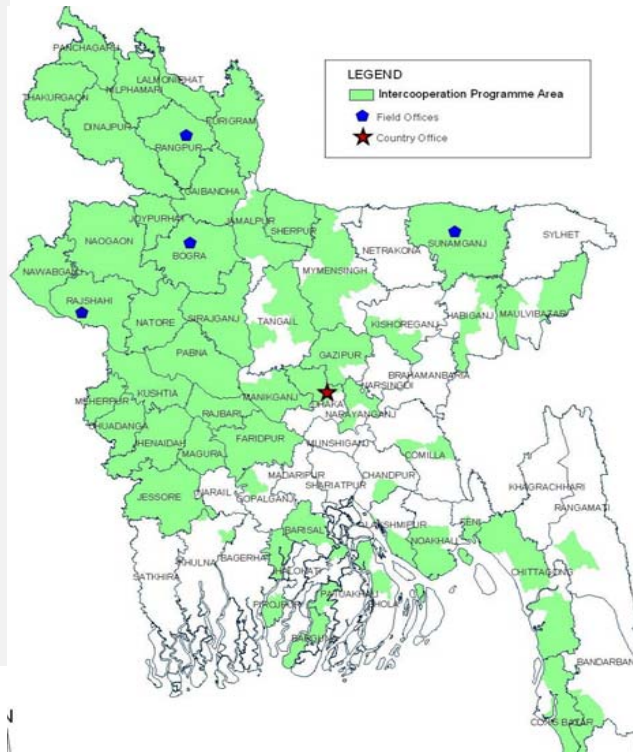


## OUR WORKING AREAS

Our main focus of activities has historically been in Rangpur and Rajshahi divisions as well as Sunamganj district. However, we are active throughout the country and in particular in the districts of Jamalpur, Sylhet, Rangamati, Bandarban, Jessore, and Bagerhat.

### Regional Offices:

- Rajshahi
- Bogra
- Jessore
- Natore
- Rangpur
- Sunamganj
- Sylhet



## OUR MAIN PARTNERS

We work together with a wide range of partners, from donors to government agencies, national and international NGOs, and private companies. Some of our long-standing partners are:

- SDC (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation)
- Over 20 National NGOs country wide
- Government line agencies such as the DAE, DLS, DAE, Seed Wing, etc.
- Over 130 union parishads and 20 upazila parishads
- 70 Private companies
- Service Provider associations
- LG Horizontal Learning Platform
- Market Development Forum

## QUICK FACTS

### In Bangladesh since 1997

- Main Projects**
- Sharique (SDC funded)
  - Samridhi (SDC funded)
  - Improving Local Government Services (Katalyst funded)
  - Socio-economic Empowerment of Rural Communities in the CHT
  - Sustainable Management of the Tanguar Haor (with IUCN, SDC funded)
  - Cross-Border Food Security (with Concern Universal, EU funded)
  - Panii Jibon – Water is Life

**Total Budget** around 5 million CHF per year

## HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation BANGLADESH



## HELVETAS SWISS INTERCOOPERATION IN BANGLADESH

We envision a world in which every woman, man and child lives a life in dignity and security, exercises self-determination and cares for the environment in such a way that needs of the current generation as well as of future ones are met. This vision is the basis for our mission to help disadvantaged men, women and communities in developing countries. We work in more than 30 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe in the domains of water and infrastructure, environment and climate change, rural economy, skill development and education, and governance and peace.



In Bangladesh, we have been active since 2000 (formerly under the name of Interooperation) and have specialized in rural economy, local governance, natural resource management and disaster risk reduction.



## RURAL ECONOMY

We believe that sustainable agriculture and a thriving rural economy are crucial for improving rural livelihoods. Therefore, one of our main areas of focus is rural economy: sustainable agriculture, food security, value chain facilitation, private sector development and rural finance.

We offer particular competence in designing sustainable production systems and innovative rural advisory services. We also have extensive experience in market and value chain facilitation. Our competence in private sector development is closely linked to promoting small businesses which create employment, and to making markets work for the poor. We are used to closely collaborate with the private sector and to set up public private development partnerships.

### Thematic competences:

- Sustainable agriculture systems
- Food security
- Agricultural Extension
- Value chain facilitation
- Income and employment generation
- Market access and marketing capacities
- Private sector development
- Quality management and business planning
- Corporate social responsibility
- Inclusive business development services

## LOCAL GOVERNANCE

We strongly believe that a good relationship between the state and its citizens is crucial for development, where the state offers basic services and security to its citizens as clients and partners, and active citizens are able to claim their rights and influence policies in their interest. We want to pursue the idea that «active citizens and effective states» can jointly make a difference. We therefore promote good governance and democratic principles, human rights, justice, and peace.

Our thematic fields focus on strengthening local governments and civil society, decentralization as a means towards local democratic governance, strengthening institutions and inclusive processes, and involving citizens in decision-making to promote local development.

### Thematic competences

- Decentralization (planning, finance, services)
- Public administration
- Municipal development and management
- Citizen engagement and participation
- Strengthening of councils
- Strengthening of civil society
- Accountability
- Lobbying and advocacy
- Gender and governance
- Human rights and social inclusion



## CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

### Natural Resource Mangement

Environmental performance and livelihoods are closely interlinked and at times there are tradeoffs. We design and support the implementation of interventions that optimize the livelihood and environment interactions. We develop measures which mitigate climate change and at the same time are profitable for local communities. We advise development actors to design and support measures that help rural communities to adapt to climate change and to manage disaster risks.



### Disaster Risk Reduction

A systematic DRR approach is needed to secure any development gains made and to avoid setbacks; it is essential to take into account a multi hazard approach and incorporate risk reduction and resilience building project activities. We support programmes to mainstream DRR as a transversal theme across all their development interventions. DRR initiatives include efforts to reduce hazards (land use zoning, structural measures), reduce the vulnerability (better housing, diversified livelihoods) and/or enhance the capacity to deal with them (savings, access to credit, insurance). Non-structural measures, such as community based risk assessment, awareness building, early warning systems, livelihood diversification and strengthening are equally important elements of DRR.



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Pictures: Jens Engeli; Azmul Huda; Mostafa Nurul Islam Reza  
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## ACCESS TO DRINKING WATER

Water is a human right. Nevertheless, access to safe drinking water is still a challenge for rural populations across the country. We contribute to improving access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation by strengthening the capacity of the key sector actors (local communities, civil society, private sector, local and national government) by establishing effective coordination and communication mechanisms between them and by shaping appropriate framework conditions (national policies, norms & standards, financial mechanisms, etc.).

In Bangladesh, our focus is access to safe drinking water in the saline areas of the coastal belt.

### OUR WORKING PRINCIPLES

Technical knowledge alone is not sufficient for successful and sustainable development. It is only when there is a dialogue between cultures where men and women can express their needs and abilities that development occurs.

- **Proximity to the grassroots:** the local population themselves should be able to determine the kind of support they most urgently require. Participation of men and women in planning and implementation of projects is a foremost priority. We nevertheless always take care to link activities to the development efforts of other governmental and non-governmental organisations and to build on and support positive processes to ensure that together we can have lasting, sustainable and widespread impact.
- **Partnership based on mutual trust:** we work with local partners based on mutual respect and with consideration for our partners' autonomy. We set great store by an open exchange of information, clear agreement on joint goals and a clear allocation of responsibilities. Dependence is avoided and partners are empowered to act on their own, once a joint initiative is completed.
- **Helping people to help themselves:** We avoid all actions that degrade people to the status of simple 'beneficiaries', but rather make them co-responsible for their own development. The goal of any development project must be to allow people, organisations and political units to live, operate and determine their actions without outside help. Hence, we advocate for a long-term commitment to projects and country programmes, without ever losing sight of the goal of rendering partners independent.