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Title: “No forest, no dispute” - The rights-based approach in creating an environment for collective action: A case from Madhupur Sal forest, Bangladesh

Managing conflicts over natural resources in Madhupur Sal forest, Bangladesh is one of the major challenges for creating condition and facilitating a collective action. Although the rights-based approach has been suggested for minimizing conflicts there is a lack of understanding among practitioners about its application in a participatory forest management program. This study aims to explore the long-running conflicts in Madhupur Sal forest and identify the rights employed by duty-bearer which play a significant role to transform the conflicts into collective action.

Using a case study design, we applied a timeline method and semi-structured in-depth interviews to collect data. Grounded theory approach was used to reconstruct the experiences of resource users and identify the common themes of right based approach.

The study revealed that national government’s policies and regulations, the death of several tribal people, the destruction of their crops form reasons for long-running conflicts and also provides insight how rights are linked with the transformation of conflicts into collective action. Therefore, for any future program or initiatives, a government agency should carefully consider the wider perspective of right based approach that could sustain their initiatives.