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**Title:** People's perception about the role of NGO's for the ecotourism development in Sundarbans: A case study of Dacope Upazilla

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People's Perception about the Role of NGO's for the Ecotourism  
Development in the Sundarbans: A Case Study of Dacope Upazilla



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2017

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requirement for four years professional B. Sc. (Hons.) in Forestry.*

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## **ABSTRACT**

Ecotourism deals with environmentally responsible travel and visit to relatively undisturbed natural areas that promotes conservation of nature with the involvement of local people. This study was conducted in Dacope upazilla of Khulna, Bangladesh to evaluate people's perception about role of NGO's for ecotourism in the Sundarbans (Dacope upazilla) in Bangladesh. Most of the people of this area are poor and depend on forest. Approximately 40 NGO's working in Dacope upazilla. NGO's working in the field of livelihood, biodiversity conservation, awareness and education is at 73%, 31%, 15% and 12% respectively. NGOs improve local people's livelihood condition by creating different income generation activities like cash for AIG, clean water supply infrastructure, eco-cottage, empowerment, labor payment, tourist guide training, agricultural assistance at 23%, 25%, 7%, 8%, 30%, 3% and 4% respectively. It also found that 73% of respondents don't have any involvement in ecotourism related activities while 27% of the respondents actively involve ecotourism related activities. Two NGO's (Relief international and BEDS) directly working on ecotourism development. Ecotourism still a misunderstood word to the common people of this area and requires more awareness and training on the issue.

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## **DECLARATION**

I, Md. Sajol Ahmed declare that the work in the thesis entitled “People's Perception about the Role of NGO’s for the Ecotourism Development in the Sundarbans: A Case Study of Dacope Upazilla” has been performed by me under supervision of professor Md. Sharif Hasan Limon in the Discipline of Forestry and Wood Technology, Khulna University, Khulna and it has not been submitted or accepted for a degree in any other university.

I, hereby, give consent for my thesis, if accepted, to be available for any kind photocopying and for inter-library loans, for the title and summary to be made available to outside organization.

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## **List of Acronyms**

- AIG – Alternative Income Generation
- ASA -- Association for Social Advancement
- BEDS -- Bangladesh Environment and Development Society
- BRAC -- Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
- CARE -- Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
- CFSD -- Centre for Sustainable Development
- CRS -- Corporate Social Responsibility
- GIZ -- The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
- HEED -- Health, Education and Economic Development
- IPAC – Integrated Protected Area Co-Management
- IUCN -- The International Union for Conservation of Nature
- JJS -- Jagroto Juba Songstha
- LNP -- Lawachara National Park
- NGO -- Non-Governmental Organization
- RDRS -- Rangpur Dinajpur Rural Service
- SMP – Sundarbans Mangrove Forest
- SNP – Satchari National Park
- TRU -- Traditional Resource Users
- UNESCO -- The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
- UNWTO – United Nations World Tourism Organization
- WWF -- World Wildlife Fund
- YPSA -- Young Power in Social Action

# TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>Abstract</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Acknowledgement</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background .....	1
1.2 Objectives of the study .....	3
<b>2 Literature Review .....</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1 Definition and Concept of Ecotourism.....	4
2.2 Benefits of Ecotourism .....	5
2.3 Obstacles of ecotourism development of a country .....	6
2.4 Actors working in ecotourism development of a country .....	7
2.4.1 Government.....	7
2.4.2 Non-government.....	7
2.4.3 Foreign organization .....	9
2.4.3.1 Relief International .....	9
2.5 Major areas of work/activity for ecotourism development .....	12
2.5.1 Ecotourism in Lawachara National Park, Bangladesh .....	12
2.5.2 Ecotourism in Satchari National Park, Bangladesh .....	13
2.5.3 Ecotourism in the Sundarbans, Bangladesh .....	14
<b>3 Materials and Methods .....</b>	<b>16</b>
3.1 Study site .....	16
3.2 Secondary data collection.....	17
3.3 Reconnaissance survey.....	17
3.4 Questionnaire preparation and testing.....	17
3.5 Questionnaire survey and data collection.....	17
3.6 Data processing and analysis.....	17
<b>4 Results and Discussion .....</b>	<b>18</b>
4.1 Total NGO's list in Dacope upazilla .....	18

4.2	Areas of activities .....	19
4.3	NGO's working in Dacope upazilla .....	20
4.3.1	Key activities of the NGO's in the study area.....	21
4.3.2	NGO's directly working on ecotourism development .....	22
4.4	Involvement of respondents in the Sundarbans ecotourism and related activities.....	23
4.4.1	Ecotourism related activities in the study area.....	24
4.4.2	Tourists' visit in the study area.....	25
4.4.3	Activities of the local for the tourists .....	26
4.4.4	Obstacles for tourists in the study area.....	27
<b>5</b>	<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>28</b>

# CHAPTER 1

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Background

Sundarbans, the largest single block of tidal halophytic mangrove forest in the world, located in the southwestern part of Bangladesh. The Bangladesh part of the forest (Sundarbans Reserved Forest, SRF) covers 6017 km<sup>2</sup> (4.2% of the land area of the country). Parts of the forest are demarcated as wildlife sanctuaries (Sundarbans West, South, East, Chandpai, Dhangmari and Sonarchar) comprising a total area of 1408 km<sup>2</sup> (23.40% of the SRF) (Iftekhar 2011, Bangladesh Forest Department 2012). The Sundarbans has its great importance to Bangladesh, as a prime source of valuable unique natural timber and non-timber products (Blower 1985). The honey collection by the Mowali and the collection of nipa leaves by the Bowali are the traditional activities of the common people living around the forest for their very existence.

Being a borderline ecosystem, three distinct types of organisms can be found in mangrove areas. The first are the typical species such as the mangrove crab, telescope shell, fiddler crab or the estuarine crocodiles, which are exclusive mangrove dwellers. However, both marine and fresh water species also frequent the mangrove forests. The forest is already a famous tourism destination for both the Bangladeshis and the foreign nations. According to a Forest Department (FD) estimate, about 100,000 tourists (2% of them are foreign tourists) visit the forest every year and thus possess a potential position in the tourism sector (Bhuiyan and Moss 2011) due to its global ecological importance, rich biodiversity, scenic beauty, friendly host communities, presence of diverse livelihood groups, pleasant weather, etc. (Islam et al. 2012). Ecotourism hopes to change the unequal relationships of conventional tourism. Thus it encourages the use of indigenous guides and local products. It claims to combine environmental education with minimal travel comforts, help protect local flora and fauna and provide local people with economic incentives to safeguard their environment (Salam et al. 2000).

Thus ecotourism in the Sundarbans has the potential to provide economic and political incentives for conservation and additional benefits to the local and regional economies. It is therefore important to involve the local community in a conservation programme which will provide economic benefits for them (Islam 2010). With this objective, a collaborative forest management approach has been recently initiated under the IPAC programme. Under this programme, nature-oriented tourism is being promoted as a means of providing alternative employment opportunities for the local community (Islam et al. 2012). Different NGO's are involved to achieve the goal.

NGO's prioritize tourist development approaches that are inclusive of indigenous and/ or host communities, maximize the 'quality' of interaction of tourism with host communities, and involve ethics of care for nature. NGO's have also displayed a greater appreciation of the consequences of human action on nature and local economies (Weaver 2006). NGO's have emerged in the last decade as one of the principle advocates and implementers of tourism/ecotourism (Higgins 2001). They have also played a major role in specific areas of ecotourism. Several non-governmental organizations (NGO's) (both national and international) undertook initiatives to create an alternative livelihood opportunity, which helps to reduce pressure on natural resources and promote ecotourism.

Different NGO's are working in variety of sectors comprising of economic development, human rights, public health and environment and nature conservation in Bangladesh. NGO's that are working close to natural forest/ecosystem requires assessment of their role in terms of people's perception to evaluate the sustainability of their activities and acceptance to the local people. It also helps to assess the understanding of the people about the issue. The NGO's are targeting which facilitates future modification and alteration of the course of action.

This study thus focuses to assess the people's perception about the activities taken by different NGO's to promote ecotourism development in the Sundarbans, Bangladesh. The objectives of the study are as follows.

## **1.2 Objectives of the study**

- To assess NGO's contribution towards ecotourism development in the Sundarbans.
- To evaluate people's perceptions towards ecotourism in the Sundarbans.

## Chapter 2

### 2 Literature Review

#### 2.1 Definition and Concept of Ecotourism

The term ecotourism emerged in the late 1980s as a direct result of the world's acknowledgment and reaction to sustainable and ecological practices. Ecotourism was first defined as "travelling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring, and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals, as well as any existing cultural manifestations (both past and present) found in these areas (Ceballos 1987).

The Ecotourism Society defines ecotourism as purposive travel to natural areas to understand the culture and the natural history of the environment; taking care not to alter the integrity of the ecosystem; producing economic opportunities that make the conservation of the natural resources beneficial to the local (Epler Wood et al. 1991).

Ecotourism is nature-based travel that embraces principles of sustainability, and thus is managed to conserve the natural environment on which it depends, provide economic benefits to the local community and the industry, and to educate and satisfy the tourists .The International Ecotourism Society defines ecotourism as responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people. Demands for more sustainable forms of tourism have helped to stimulate the development of ecotourism and nature-based travel (Hing and Dimmock 1997).

The concept of ecotourism concern for environment as well as socioeconomic status. Ecotourism is considered for sustainable development by establishing a durable productive base that allows the local inhabitants and ecotourism service providers to enjoy rising standards of living and environmental conservation. Ecotourism is a sub-component of the field of sustainable tourism. Ecotourism's perceived potential as an effective tool for sustainable development is the main reason why developing countries are now embracing it and including it in their economic development and conservation strategies.

Ecotourism is picked up by the tourism industry as a marketing tool, the industry recognizing that 'green' sells and 'eco' means big business (Lindberg and McKercher 1997, Fennell 2001). Today, ecotourism is seen as one of the fastest growing market segments in the tourism industry, with a prosperous future outlook, particularly in light of ever-increasing demands by tourists around the world for an ultimate nature experience (Buckley 1994, Herliczek 1996).

Ecotourism linked to the concept of sustainable tourism and should therefore be consistent with the principles of the parental paradigm of sustainable development, balancing economic, ecological, and social aspects as an integrated whole. This understanding highlights the significant relationship between ecotourism, sustainable tourism, and sustainable development. Ecotourism, understood as sustainable tourism in natural areas, has the potential to assist a more workable approach to achieve sustainability objectives through tourism. Thus, ecotourism contributes not only to sustainable development but also to the long and difficult process of its implementation in the tourism system (Hall and Lew 1998).

## **2.2 Benefits of Ecotourism**

Ecotourism is viewed as a means of protecting natural areas through the generation of revenues, environmental education and the involvement of local people (in both decisions regarding appropriate developments and associated benefits). In such ways, both conservation and development will be promoted in a sustainable form (Wight 1993, Cochrane 1996).

Ecotourism can also raise awareness of the value of traditional crafts and cultural interchange in two different perspectives: Firstly, eco-tourists post-trip attitudes may be different as a result of a better understanding enhanced by the destination conservation and cultural issues. These tourists may become active or volunteer in some conservation or cultural events in their own community. Secondly, can benefit especially from the sale of tourism merchandise, as it can be involved with the ecotourism activities through cultural/sustainable product development, use of local materials, which in turn can be used as a tool for educating ecotourists about the resources and the local culture (Healy 1994, Harvey and Hoare 1995).

Ecotourism is often considered to be a potential strategy to support conservation of natural ecosystems while, at the same time, promoting sustainable local development (Lindberg and Hawkins 1993).



Ecotourism has as a model of sustainable community development, based on the claim that the link between conservation of resources and the sustainable development needs of local people is inseparable. The education characteristic of ecotourism was claimed to be a key element which distinguished it from other forms of nature-based tourism, in that it is based on the development of a programme by ecotourism operators and/or a destination authority (Blamey 1995, Finucane and Dowling 1995).

Ecotourism could therefore be a means of redistributing economic resources, mitigating the socio-economic situation both at local and national scale and contributing to biodiversity conservation (Budowski 1976, Western and Henry 1979, Boo 1990, WWF 1995). There is a broad consensus that such tourism should be fully compatible with conservation goals, while at the same time posing the minimum threat to the continuation of local culture and society.

### **2.3 Obstacles of ecotourism development of a country**

Developing countries often face problems like rapid population growth, workforce-pressure, lack of capital and foreign debts, which lead to over-exploitation of wild living resources, expansion of agriculture, forestry and aquaculture, and with mounting pressure on the remaining habitats and loss of biodiversity (Burgess 1993, Vorlauffer 1997). Besides these following obstacles are frequently arise:

**Awareness-** awareness is a vital factor in ecotourism development of a country. Lack of public awareness significantly play role to diminishing the development of ecotourism in a region.

**Government policy-** Lack of government policy is also a problem for ecotourism development. Sometimes ecotourism development faces policy formulation process which includes infrastructure development, coordination among governing body, lack of managing governing body, incentives etc. This indicates that our ecotourism sector is in scarcity of proper guideline.

**Political instability-** The major reason which prevent foreign visitors from traveling to developing countries are political instability and unrest Compared to other developed Countries, vacationing international tourists arrival are much less in number in those countries.

**Insufficient planning-** Insufficient planning and provision for infrastructure components are two classic errors that hinder the development of ecotourism of a country

**Lack of sincerity-** Lack of sincerity and political fact hinders ecotourism development in developing countries.

**Security and safety-** For a designation to attract increasing tourism flow it requires the provision of security and safety to tourists, it is unfortunate that many of countries has failed to provide these to them, which is one of the major problems in ecotourism development.

**Corruption-** Corruption is another major problem regarding tourism industry of a country. For which foreigner often fell into problem in their smooth and continue journey in that country.

**Lack of infrastructure-** Shortage of tourism training infrastructure, qualified trainers, accommodation problem, transport facilities, and lack of proper strategies and policies for human resource development hinders the growth of ecotourism in a country (Hossain et al. 2013).

## **2.4 Actors working in ecotourism development of a country**

Ecotourism has been promoted and developed by a complex of actors that spans the government sector, private sector and international organization and civil society. These forms powerful networks that direct the pace and form of ecotourism development, and can serve to extend the neo-liberalization of nature (Crowley 1997).

### **2.4.1 Government**

Ecotourism development is usually pushed by governments through the development of policies and strategies. Their support for the concept is based on its potential as a job and income generator, particularly for local communities and therefore as an effective means of regional development. Too often, however, the tourism industry and governments adopt a narrow product-centered perspective only, without accepting ecotourism as a paradigm for sustainable tourism development in natural areas (Buckley 1994, Lindberg and McKercher 1997).

### **2.4.2 Non-government**

Non-government organizations play a prominent role in ecotourism development. They usually are involved for one of two reasons: (1) protection of biodiversity and environment, or (2) sustainable development of local people. NGOs are ideal partners for the private sector by developing a myriad of programs such as research on best practices, guide training, regional

planning and stakeholder meetings, community development, protected area management, and targeted conservation initiatives (Alderman 1990).

**Coastal biodiversity conservation through creating AIG (alternative income generation) facilities-** A programme implemented by Uttaran and CFSD (center for sustainable development) and funded by Arannayk Foundation at Satkhira and Paikgacha, khulna. The livelihood of the people living in the coastal fragile ecosystem are very vulnerable and over 70% of the people earn less than a dollar per day. The hardcore poor people are also suffering from malnutrition and variety of diseases. The biodiversity assets which are at the verge of extinction could be managed as a source of alternative income for better livelihood. This might require empowerment of poor coastal people and restoration of coastal habitats with diversity of alternative income generation activities. The programme objective was (1) conserve coastal biodiversity, (2) involve poor people in the coastal biodiversity conservation activities, (3) improve livelihood of the poor people through income generation activities and (4) enrich the ecosystem of the coastal region (Arannayk 2011).

**Restoration and conservation of biodiversity in denuded hills in Sitakund and Mirsharai, Chittagong-** A programme implemented by YPSA (young power in social action) and funded by Arannayk Foundation at Sitakund and Mirsharai, Chittagong. The programme objective was (1) restoration of tree cover and biodiversity and sustainable management of the forest, (2) Improvement of livelihood of the poor people living in and around the forests and their access to fuel wood through alternative means and (3) Creation of opportunities for revenue generation from forest recreation or eco-tourism based activities benefiting local communities (Arannayk 2014).

**Restoration and conservation of biodiversity in singra national park-** A programme implemented by Bangladesh forest department and RDRS (rangpur dinajpur rural service) and funded by Arannayk Foundation at Singra National Park, Thakurgaon. The programme objective was (1) Restoration and conservation of the remaining Sal forests and the bio-diversity resources (flora, fauna) thereof, (2) Improvement of livelihood of the poor people living in and around the forests and their access to fuel wood through alternative means and (3) Creation of opportunities for revenue from the aesthetic values or environmental services of the forest, such as through eco-tourism development (Arannayk 2014).

NGOs also are actively working nationally and internationally to ensure that *ecotourism* is developing in a manner that is consistent with national and international *conservation and sustainable development* priorities. In fact, NGOs worldwide are increasingly developing their strong desire to use ecotourism as a tool for conservation and sustainable development. For example, the nature conservancy, the largest private conservation organization in the world, has developed an ecotourism program that is assisting with the responsible development of ecotourism products, the planning of ecotourism for protected areas, and the development of user fees to assist with conservation and sustainable development. Finally, many local NGOs are implementing true grassroots ecotourism initiatives focused on the conservation of local resources that can benefit from ecotourism's economic and educational potential. River dolphin watching program, bird watching programs are an excellent example of how ecotourism can successfully raise awareness and funds for protection, involve local guides and rangers, and lead to long-term sustainable conservation of endangered species (Ashley 2000).

### **2.4.3 Foreign organization**

#### **2.4.3.1 Relief International**

Relief International is a nonprofit organization whose sole mission is to reduce human suffering. Relief International is a non-sectarian and non-political. Relief International goal is to empower communities to develop lasting solutions to their most pressing challenges and to build an environment that creates permanent well-being. Relief International also partner with communities to address long-term challenges related to health, education, economic opportunity, rural development and the establishment of robust civil societies. Some of Relief International signature programs connect farmers to markets and ensure biodiversity conservation. With legal standing both in the United States as a not-for-profit organization and in the United Kingdom as a registered Charity, Relief International has a global board of directors who bring an informed perspective to the communities. Relief International works in 19 countries across Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

Relief International mission expanded over the following two decades, growing to embrace issues such as poverty, hunger and lack of economic opportunity (such as ecotourism development). In 2009, RI merged with Enterprise works, an organizational pair with more than 50 years of experience providing relief and supporting robust livelihoods by applying expertise in areas such as irrigation, resource management, communications and entrepreneurship. Programs customized to local needs connected producers to broader markets, applied innovative technologies such as rainwater harvesting, and enabled entrepreneurs to boost their productivity. The Sundarbans Mangrove Forest, tucked among rivers that spill into the Bay of Bengal, is one of the world's largest mangrove forests. Honored as a UNESCO World Heritage Site for its ecological importance and cultural value to South Asia, the Sundarbans represent the vivid tapestry of Bangladeshi culture. Traditional Resource Users (TRU) such as fisherman, honey collectors and woodsmen have worked the land for years and carry with them abundant generational knowledge of the forest. This knowledge, however, has remained inaccessible to the thousands of ecological tourists and cultural artists who visit the forest each year. This project, supported by the European Union, works to build respect for the significance of the Sundarbans through development of cultural tourism and entrepreneurship (Relief International, 2017).

Key objectives include:

- Ecotourism development training for government officials, local NGO representatives, and private tour guides from the local community
- Skills training for 200 community members who would educate tourists about local culture and the importance of mangrove conservation
- Building respect for cultural groups and the critical Sundarbans environment.

## **United States Agency for International Development (USAID)**

The majority of Bangladeshis rely on the country's natural resources to support their livelihoods, which places tremendous strain on the environment and economy. Bangladesh is facing immediate climate change issues and must become resilient to frequent natural disasters, degradation of forest areas and wetlands, and meet the country's energy demand without endangering the environment.

For more than a decade, USAID has helped Bangladesh protect its natural resources and biodiversity by bringing together local communities and the government to form committees that co-manage more than 700,000 hectares of wetlands and forest areas. These community co-management groups monitor protected areas to conserve flora and fauna, prevent illegal poaching, and reduce natural resource degradation. USAID also teaches people living near these protected areas new job skills to generate alternative income sources, directly increasing economic benefits to nearly 200,000 individuals. USAID programs trained nearly 160,000 people to become less dependent on natural resources by learning new skills in agriculture, aquaculture and poultry to generate income and reduced pressure on sensitive habitats (USAID 2017)

## **Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)**

Management of the Sundarbans mangrove forests for biodiversity conservation and increased adaptation to climate change (SMP) is current project of giz. The project objective is Institutional and organisational frameworks improvement, making the management of the Sundarbans ecosystem more sustainable and better adapted to climate change. The project focuses on the collaborative management of protected areas. As well as providing support at the national level, it specifically addresses the management of the Sundarbans. Civil society organisations and local platforms, such as co-management committees, are involved in management and decision making. This gives local communities the chance to have a say in what happens to their natural resources and to improve their own livelihoods. The project concentrates on following activity.

**Co-management instruments:** Long-term conservation of biodiversity in the Sundarbans is only possible with the collaboration of all stakeholders, including the adjacent population. The project supports the Forest Department at national and district levels in the further development of its existing co-management approach, including rules and regulations.

**Enhanced coordination for biodiversity management:** Measures are being taken to improve the level of cooperation between the various stakeholders and initiatives that are important for the long-term preservation of the mangrove forest. This includes strengthening the regional dialogue between India and Bangladesh on trans boundary biodiversity conservation (GIZ 2017).

## **2.5 Major areas of work/activity for ecotourism development**

Bangladesh government first recognized tourism as an important industry and framed it in national tourism policy in 1992. Tourism was declared a thrust sector and tax exemption and other incentives were given in 1999. Bangladesh is blessed with a rich diversity of nature like sea in Cox's Bazar, Island in Teknaf, mangroves in Sundarbans and the northeastern hill tracts in sylhet. Because of these natural resources tourism as a fast growing industry in the country. It is estimated that the contribution of travel and tourism to Gross Domestic Product is expected to rise from 3.9% in 2010 to 4.1% by 2020. There are other places in this country that are usually used to large scale tourism purposes. Some resources like- the Sundarbans, Lawachara National Park, Satchari National Park etc. are trying to practice ecotourism while other resources like – Cox's Bazar are practicing mass tourism. The ecotourism industry of Bangladesh has great potential both as a foreign exchange earner and provider of job opportunities with resultant multiplier effect on the country's economy (UNWTO 2005).

### **2.5.1 Ecotourism in Lawachara National Park, Bangladesh**

Lawachara National Park (LNP) is located northeast of Dhaka in kamalganj sub district of Maulavi district. Declared in 1996, LNP is located between 24°30' to 24°32' N and 91°37' to 91°47' E and covers an area of 1250 ha of 2740 ha west Bhanugach reserve forest. The Park lies Between Dholai river on the east and the Manu river on the north (Ahsan 2007). The topography of the park is undulating with slopes and hillocks ranging from 10-50 meters along with numerous streames flowing through the park (Aziz 2008). In this area threere are high natural forest, monoculture of exotics, grassland and bamboo, wetlands, tea estates and cultivated fields.

The forests are mixed tropical evergreen and semi green forests. The forests area was earlier used for jhum cultivation by forest dwelling communities. Lawachara National Park is rich in avifauna and is home to 237 species of birds which is representing nearly one third of the country's known bird species (Nishorgo 2006). There are village of four ethnic communities namely Khasia, Tripura, Manipuri and Santhal in and around the park.

The key strengths of Lawachara lay in the exotic ambience, ethnic community in and around and its wilderness areas. It is one of the few protected areas in the country that can offer this diversity of products. Being easily approachable this park is a major attraction amongst visitors. The park is open for visitors throughout the year, although visitation reduces considerably during the rainy season i.e May to August each year. The visitors to Lawachara are attracted by the area covered with terraced tea estates, patches of tropical rain forest, pineapple plantations and lemon groves. Both attended and unattended services are present in the national park for making the visitors visit enjoyable and educative. Ethnic community village like- Khasia, Manipuri and Tripura are of huge attraction to the visitors. The products produced by those ethnic communities are also attractive to the tourists. In case security matters there are tourist police who maintain security of the visitors (IPAC 2012). There are three entry points in Lawachara National Park. There are picnic spots within the park area. Tea estates, seven colored tea, wildlife and natural environment along with different handicraft are major attractions to the visitors of this park. Tourist carrying capacity of this park is already evaluated to promote sustainable ecotourism.

### **2.5.2 Ecotourism in Satchari National Park, Bangladesh**

Satchari National Park (SNP) is located about 130-140 km northeast of Dhaka in the paikpara Unoin of Chunarghat Upazila of Habigonj district. SNP stands on the Dhaka-Sylhet old highway in Sylhet division. SNP is governed by the Forest Act of 1927 as well as the Wildlife Conservation Act of 1974, subsequently Wildlife (Conservation and Security) Act of 2012. The national park was established in 2006 and covers an area of 243 ha and is a part of the 6205 ha of the Raghunandan Hills Reserved Forest (IPAC 2013). The forests of the park are mixed tropical evergreen and semi-evergreen. Hillocks, locally known as tillas, are scattered throughout the landscape and their altitudes ranges from 10-50 meters. A number of small, sandy bedded streams flow throughout the forest, all of which dry out following the end of the rainy season in October-November, are subject to intensive commercial harvesting of sands during dry period.



The park is surrounded by tea estates which are ecotourism attractions. It is characterized by high rainfall and a multi-tier vegetation of rich biodiversity. Satchari National Park originally supported an indigenous vegetation of plant species.

This Park supports a number of animal's species (mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians) which are both forest dwelling wetland associated species of different genera and families. Satchari has a wildlife diversity consisting of 197 species. Satchari is home to many primates including the globally endangered Hoolock Gibbons, Pig-tailed Macaque and Capped Langur. Other mammals such as the Orange-bellied Himalayan squirrel and Barking Deer are found in the Park. A number of bird species including the Greater Racket-tailed Drongo, Hill Myna, Oriented Pied Hornbill, White-crested Laughing Thrush, Puff-throated Babbler and White-rumped Shama are found in the park. This area is home to an ethnic community of the Tripura tribe.

As a nature based tourism site, SNP is easily accessible and it is the next popular tourist destination after Lawachara National Park (IUCN 2008). However, level of visitation is comparatively low to LNP and so SNP still has a tranquil natural environment. The number of tourist arrival in 2011-2012 is more than 5000. Sighting of wildlife especially Capped Langurs and Pig-tailed Macaques is common and so this park is one of the major eco-tourist attraction sites. Satchari National Park has generated jobs for the local and has provided them with alternative means of earning income and depending less on the forest for their livelihood (IPAC 2013).

### **2.5.3 Ecotourism in the Sundarbans, Bangladesh**

The prospect of ecotourism in the Sundarbans is enormous because of its biodiversity, species composition and land escape with physical feature. The Sundarbans supports a very rich and diverse flora and fauna that include about 334 species of plants and 425 species of wildlife species. The multiple attraction of Eco tourist in Sundarbans include scenic beauty of the foerest, unspoiled wilderness and tranquility, wildlife viewing, jungle trails, boating, bird watching, walking and exploration, beach relaxation etc. Total area of Sundarbans is about 5770 sq. km of which 1700 sq. km is open water bodies and 4000 sq km is forest land (Bhuiyan 2001)

The Sundarbans reserve forest is world largest single tract mangrove forest. The Sundarbans is very unique ecosystem that has been recognized globally for its importance in terms of biodiversity and resources. The Sundarbans supports as wide range of important flora nad fauna, both in quality and diversity, some of which are endangered, both domestically and worldwide, presence of Royal Bengal Tiger, estuarine crocodile, a variety of dolphins, reptiles and a certain number of birds and highly endangered has created lot of importance to ecotourism in Sundarbans. Some of important, unique features and positive factors that can benefit the development of the ecotourism activities in Sundarbans are summarized as follows:

1. The wilderness and condition of the largest mangrove forest in the world.
2. The forest and UNESCO sites are protected from encroachment and for conservation purposes.
3. The variety of wildlife (specially birds).
4. The importance one of the remaining natural habitats of the Royal Bengal Tiger, education and conservation awareness initiatives and studies.
5. Life in the river. The riverine experience and low impact on the natural and physical environment.
6. Understanding the conservation dilemmas and problematic in the highly populated country as Bangladesh. The human context of individuals living in the impact zone and the exposure of conservation and biodiversity initiatives (Siddiqui 2003).

The Sundarbans is a unique ecosystem. Its exceptional scenic beauty and rich wildlife can be source of attraction to different levels of people and is convenient for outdoor recreation. Ecotourism may be developed without causing damage to vegetation and wildlife. Because of weather condition tourism may be accelerated to winter months when the climate is favorable. The only way to visit the Sundarbans is by water transport (Hassan et al. 2013).

# CHAPTER 3

## 3 Materials and Methods

### 3.1 Study site

Dacope Upazilla (Khulna District) area 991.57 sq km, located in between 22°24' and 22°40' north latitudes and in between 89°24' and 89°35' east longitudes. It is bounded by Batiaghata upazilla on the north, Pasur River on the south, Rampal and Mongla upazilla on the east, Paikgacha and Koyra upazilla on the west. Naliyan and Baniashanta union under Dacope upazilla in Khulna districts were purposively selected to carry out the study.

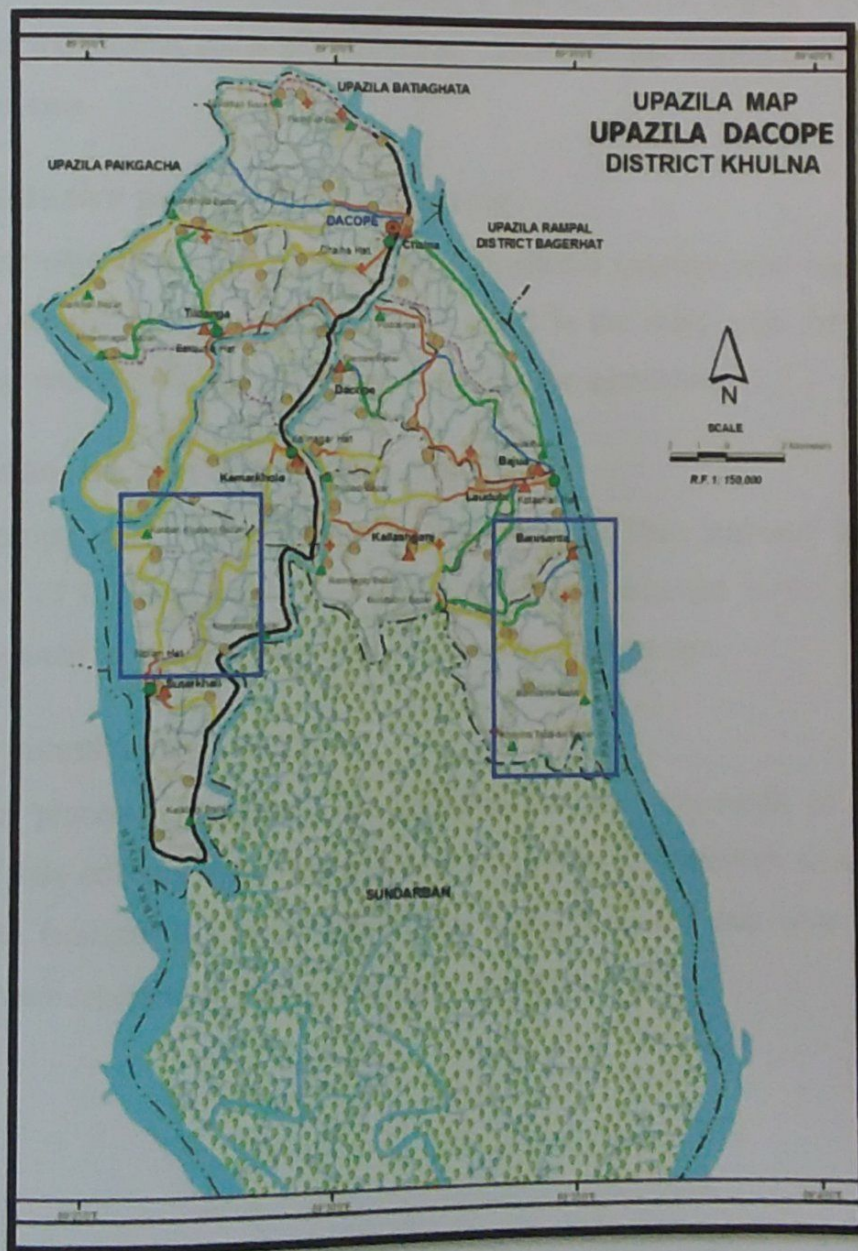


Figure 1: Study area

### **3.2 Secondary data collection**

Information about the NGOs was collected from the local, regional and head office of the registered NGOs working in and around the Sundarbans for the last five years (2011-2016). Their major areas of activity were listed. Specific objectives in the study area were also collected.

### **3.3 Reconnaissance survey**

A reconnaissance survey was carried out to acquire basic ideas to develop questionnaire through the face to face discussion with the local people of the study area. During survey, views were exchanged with the peoples about the objectives. The survey has helpful to realize the existing condition of the area.

### **3.4 Questionnaire preparation and testing**

Considering the objectives of the study a semi-structured questionnaire was prepared. After preparing the questionnaire, questionnaire was tested in the study area. After questionnaire, testing language amendment was carried out to finalize the questionnaire.

### **3.5 Questionnaire survey and data collection**

A total of 60 people were interviewed face to face randomly. Their interview was recorded with due permission of the respondents and at the same time recorded in the paper. All of the information required for the study was collected with meticulous care.

### **3.6 Data processing and analysis**

The data were processed, analyzed and interpreted to find the result of the study. After completion of data collection the response to the questions of interview were transferred to a master sheet to facilitate tabulation. Descriptive analyses of the data were carried out. The analyzed data were represented through tabular and graphical form.

## CHAPTER 4

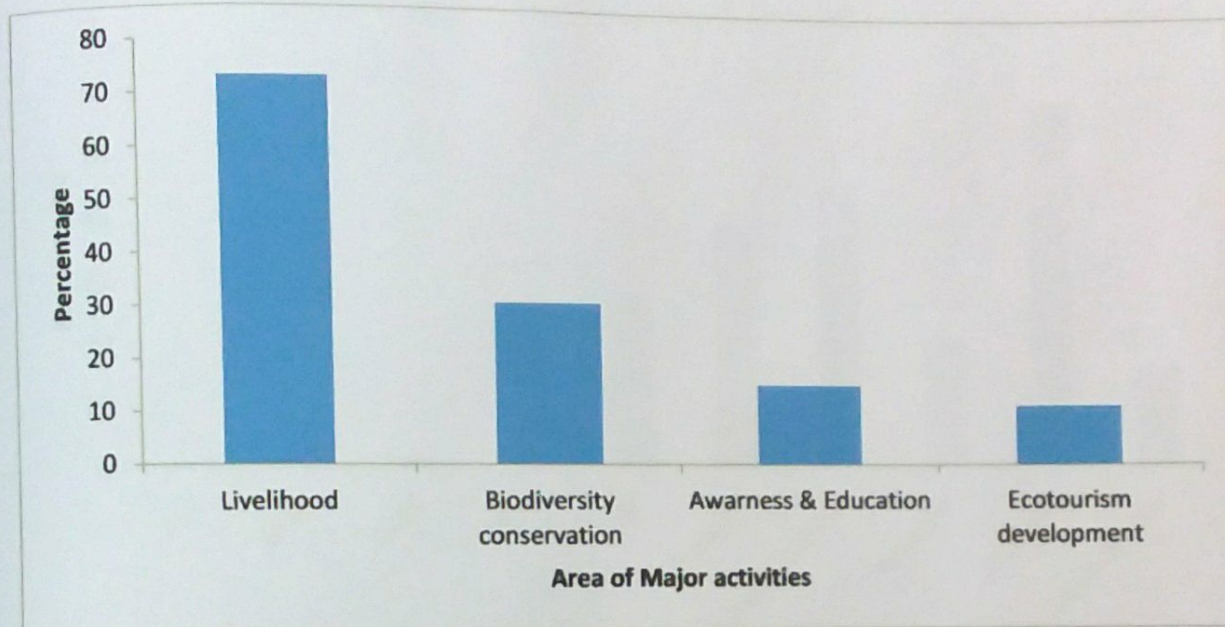
### 4 Results and Discussion

A total number of 40 (approximately) NGOs are working in Dacope upazilla. I covered 25% NGO's named ASA, BEDS, CARE, HEED, JJS, Pradipan, Relief International, Rupantar, Sushilon, Ulashi Srijoni Songho) during survey in the study site.

#### 4.1 Total NGO's list in Dacope upazilla

Serial No.	NGO's list	Areas of activity			
		Livelihood	Biodiversity conservation	Awareness development	Ecotourism development
1					
2	World vision	✓		✓	
3	Heed Bangladesh	✓		✓	
4	Ad-din welfare store	✓		✓	
5	Bangladesh nazrin mision	✓		✓	
6	DSK	✓			
7	Adra Bangladesh	✓			
8	BRAC	✓			
9	CSS	✓			
10	Bajua CSP BD			✓	
11	Love your neighbour				
12	Child sponsorship program	✓			
13	Dolito			✓	
14	SEBA	✓			
15	Women job creation	✓			
16	Friendship bangladesh	✓			
17	BASD	✓			
18	Dhaka ahsania mision	✓			
19	Cholontika	✓			
20	CCEC	✓			
21	Codec	✓		✓	
22	Nusa	✓			
23	Gonosahajjo songstha			✓	
24	Bridge	✓			
25	CRS	✓			
26	Bondhu chula	✓			
27	Caritas			✓	
28	WFO			✓	
29	Wave foundation	✓			
30	pangano				
31	JJS	✓			
32	Relief international		✓		✓
33	BEDS		✓	✓	
34	Ulashi srijoni songho	✓			
35	Sushilon	✓			
36	Rupantor		✓	✓	
37	Pradipon	✓			
38	JJS	✓			
39	Care Bangladesh	✓			
40	Heed Bangladesh	✓			

## 4.2 Areas of activities



**Figure 2: Area of major activities of NGO's in Dacope upazila**

It is found that major activities of NGOs in the field of livelihood, biodiversity conservation, awareness and education were 73.07%, 30.76%, 15.38% and 11.53% respectively. Most of the NGO, about 73.07% of total NGO's are working with livelihood and least percent, about 11.53% of total NGO is ecotourism development. Besides these some of NGO's such as Rupantar and BEDS work in both area like biodiversity conservation and awareness development. Heed also works in livelihood and awareness program.

### 4.3 NGO's working in Dacope upazilla

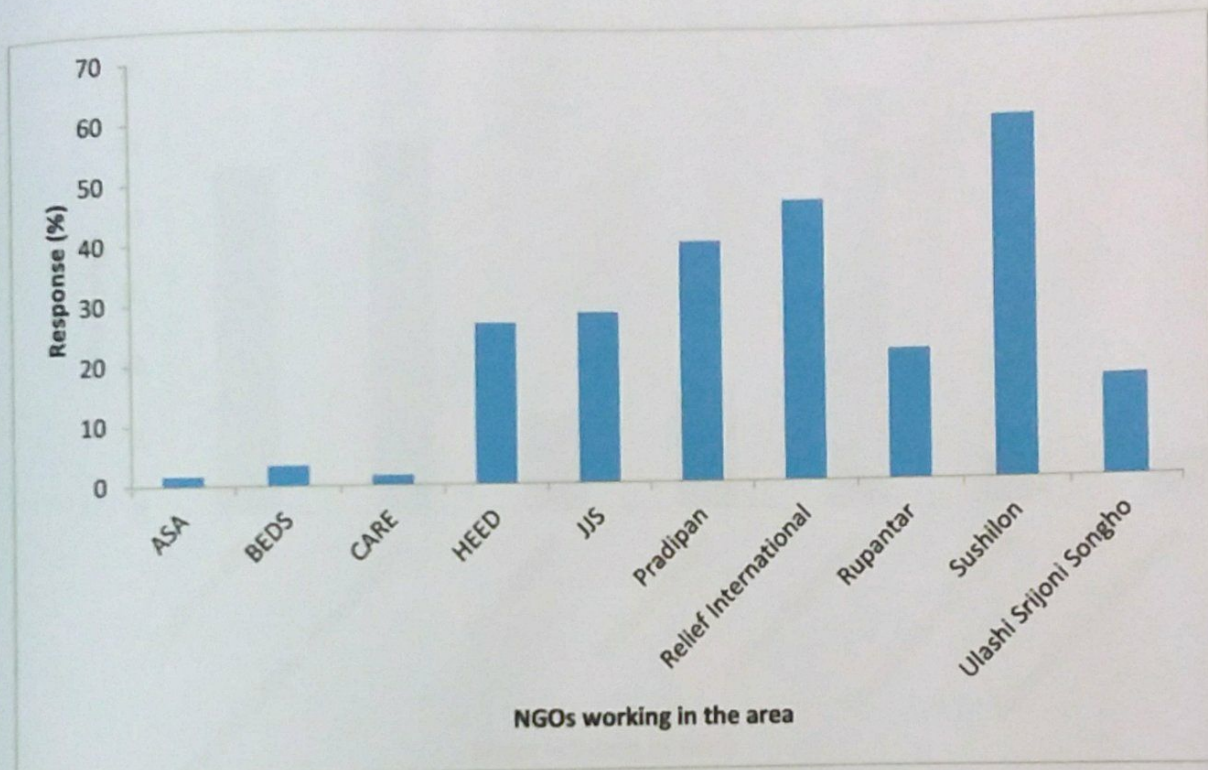
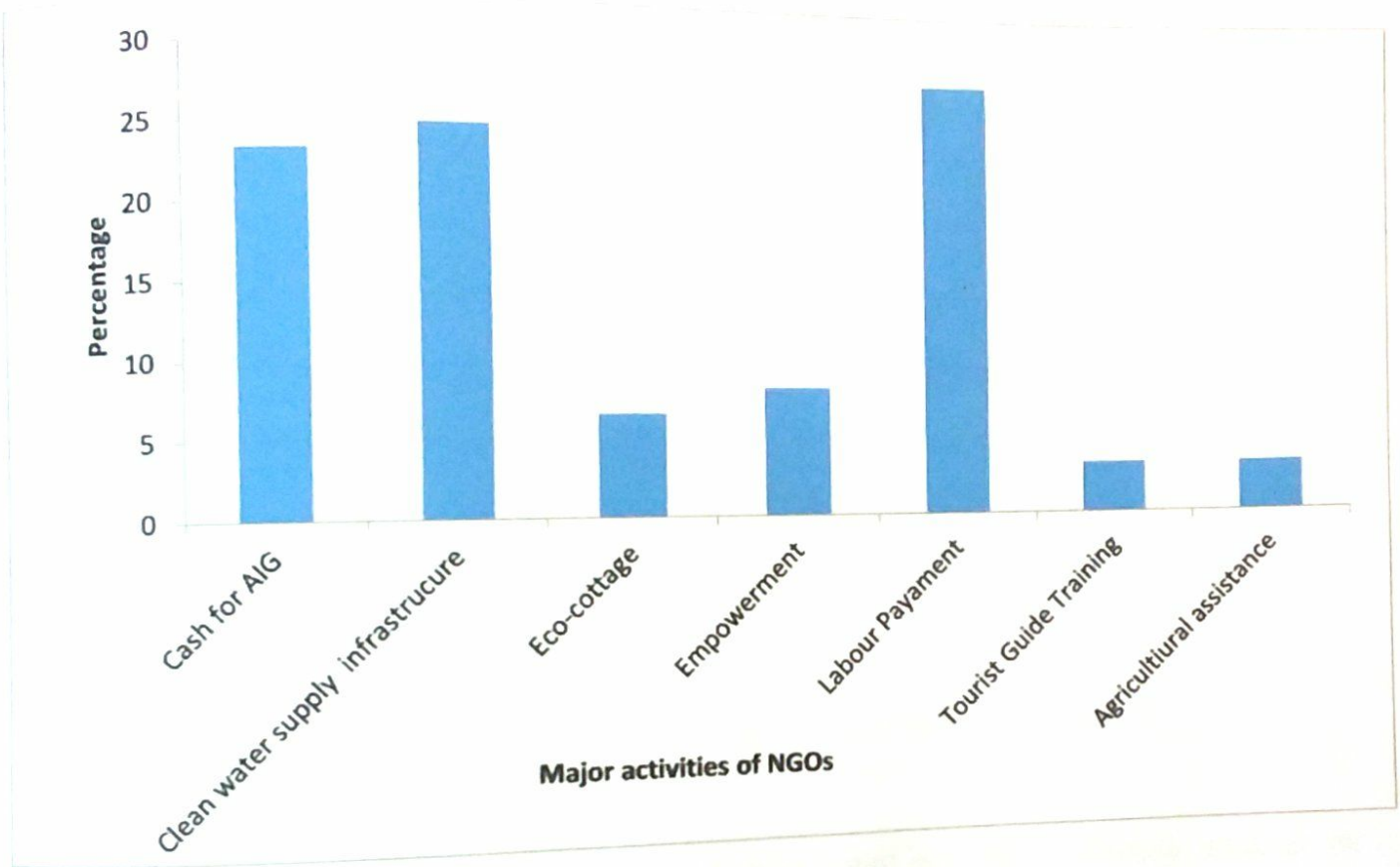


Figure 3: NGO's working in Dacope upazilla (from the survey)

It is found that 1.66%, 3.33%, 1.66%, 26.66%, 28.33%, 40%, 46.66%, 21.66%, 60% and 16.66% of NGOs working in study area named ASA, BEDS, CARE, HEED, JJS, Pradipan, Relief International, Rupantar, Sushilon, Ulashi Srijoni Songho respectively. Dominant percent (60%) of works implemented by Sushilon and least percent (1.66%) of works implemented by ASA and CARE. Some respondents informed that a reasonable number of NGO's (Heed, JJS, Pradipan, Relief International, Rupantar, Sushilon, Ulashi Srijoni Songho) are working in two or more area.

### 4.3.1 Key activities of the NGO's in the study area

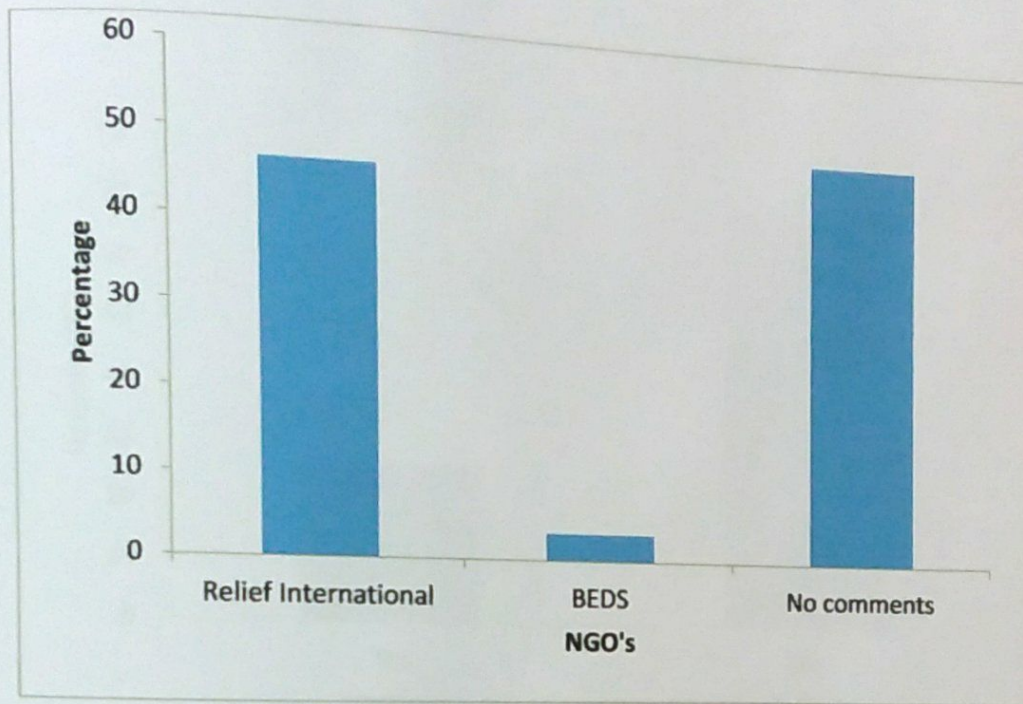


**Figure 4: Key activities of NGO's in Dacope upazila.**

From the study area it is found that activities of NGOs in response to cash for AI, clean water supply infrastructure, eco-cottage, empowerment, labor payment, tourist guide training, agricultural assistance at 23.33%, 25%, 6.66%, 8.33%, 30%, 3.33% and 3.33% respectively. Labor payment is found as high as 30% among all other activities of NGOs while tourist guide training and agricultural assistance is found as low as 3.33%.



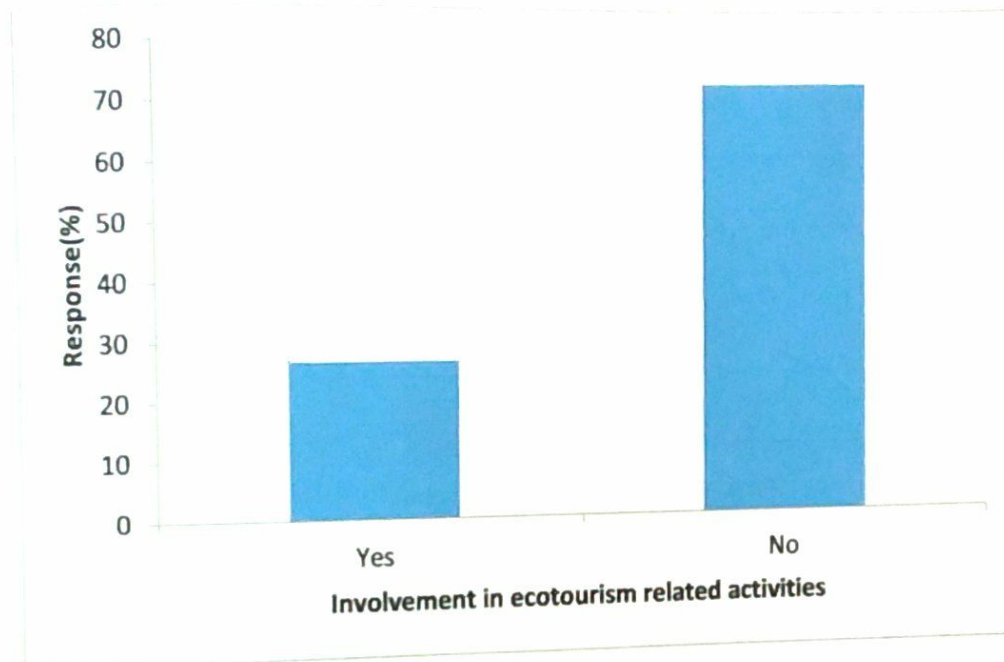
### 4.3.2 NGO's directly working on ecotourism development



**Figure 5: NGO's directly working on ecotourism development**

From the study area it is found that Relief international and BEDS directly working on ecotourism development at 46.67% and 3.33% respectively. Dominant percent (46.67%) of works implemented by Relief international and least percent (3.33%) of works implemented by BEDS in the field of ecotourism development. And other respondents (50%) did not response yet.

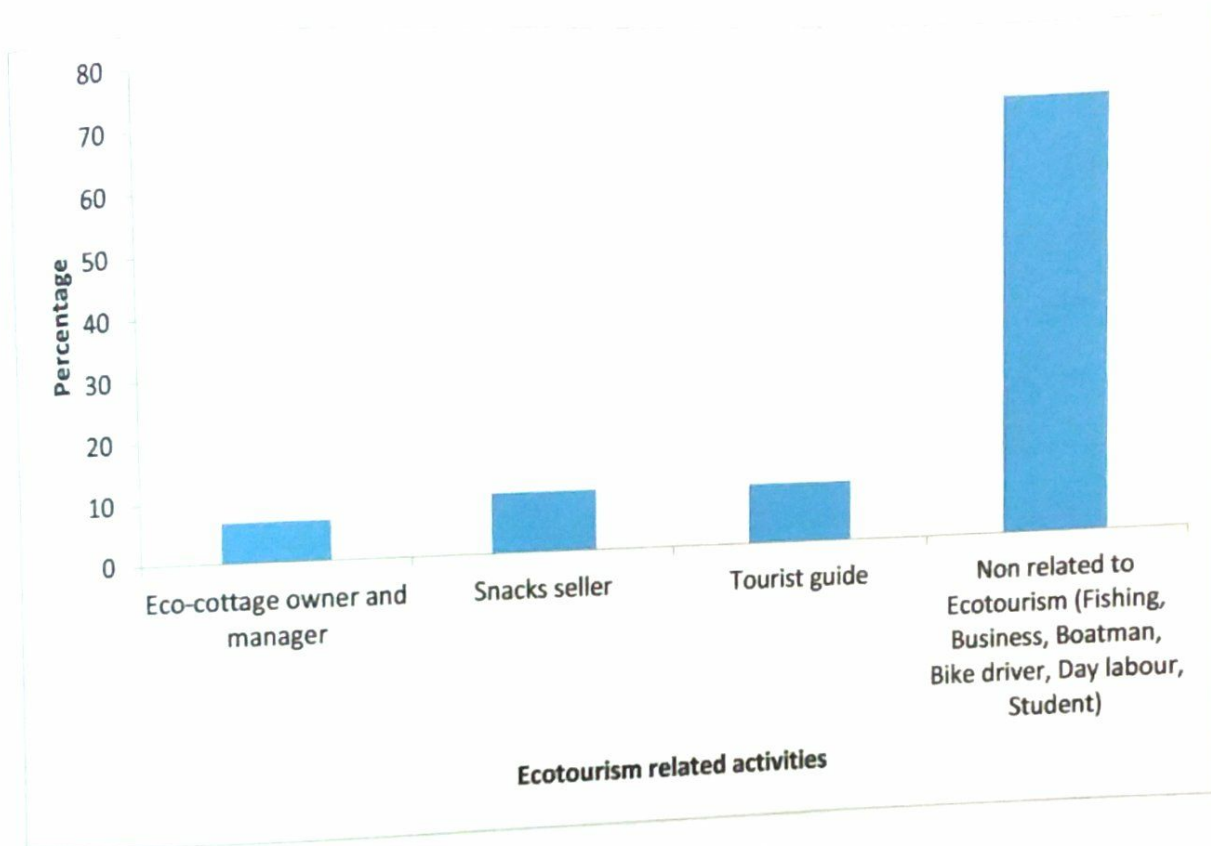
#### 4.4 Involvement of respondents in the Sundarbans ecotourism and related activities



**Figure 6: Involvement of respondents in the Sundarbans ecotourism and related activities.**

From the study area it is found that 73.33% of respondents don't have any involvement in tourism related activities while 26.66% of the respondents actively involve tourism related activities. People who are living surrounding Sundarbans and have involvement in ecotourism related activities, basically most of them works for as an alternative income generation source. And this alternative income generation enhances their self-reliant capabilities and livelihood capacities.

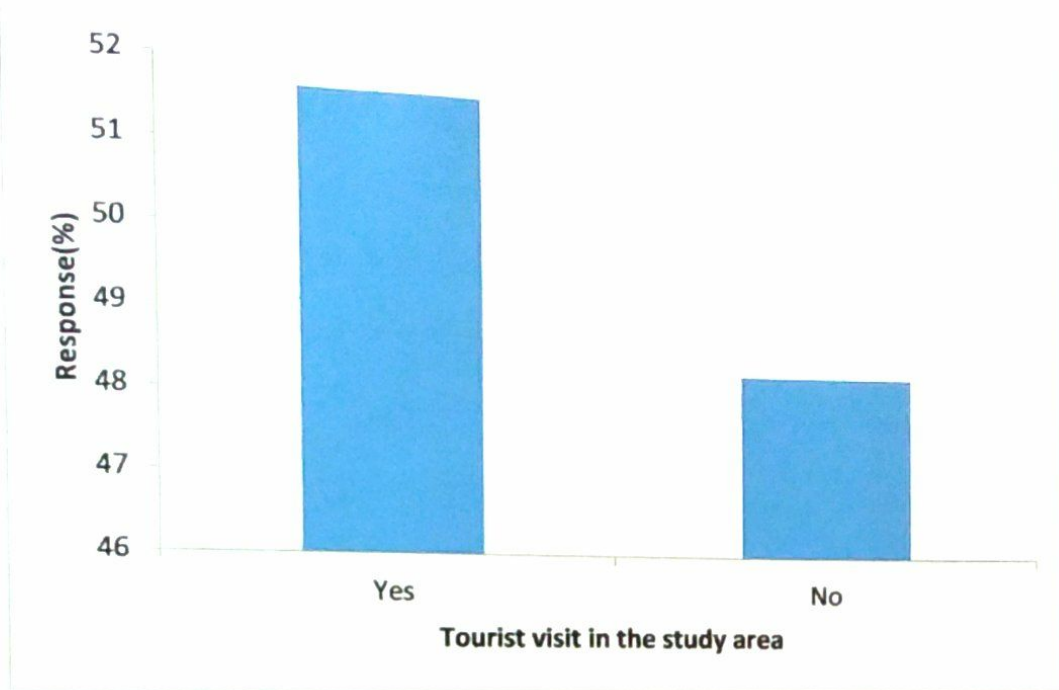
#### 4.4.1 Ecotourism related activities in the study area



**Figure 7: Ecotourism related activities in the study area.**

From the study area it is found that ecotourism related activities like eco-cottage owner and manager, snacks seller and tourist guide is at 6.67%, 10% and 10% respectively. And remains activities (73.33%) are non-related to ecotourism. And people who are involve this activities their livelihood condition are much better than others.

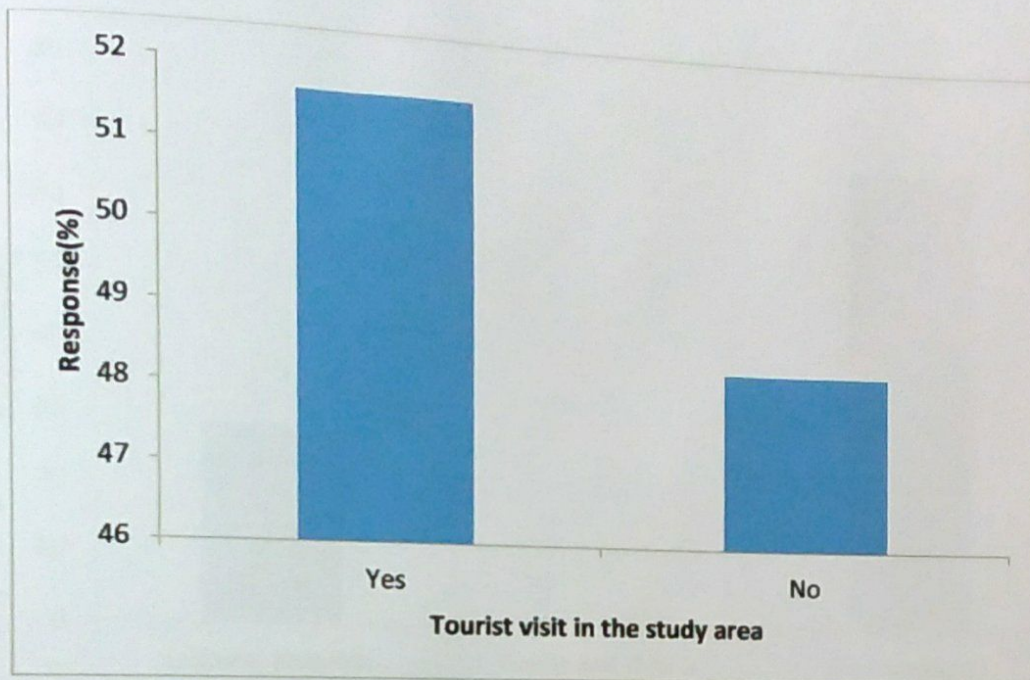
#### 4.4.2 Tourists' visit in the study area



**Figure 8: Tourists' visit in the study area.**

It is found that 48.33% respondents informed that tourists don't visit the study area while 51.66% respondents informed that tourists visit in the study area. The respondents assume that if they are able to create much more advertisements through mass media and improve transportation facilities, more tourists will visit their area in near future.

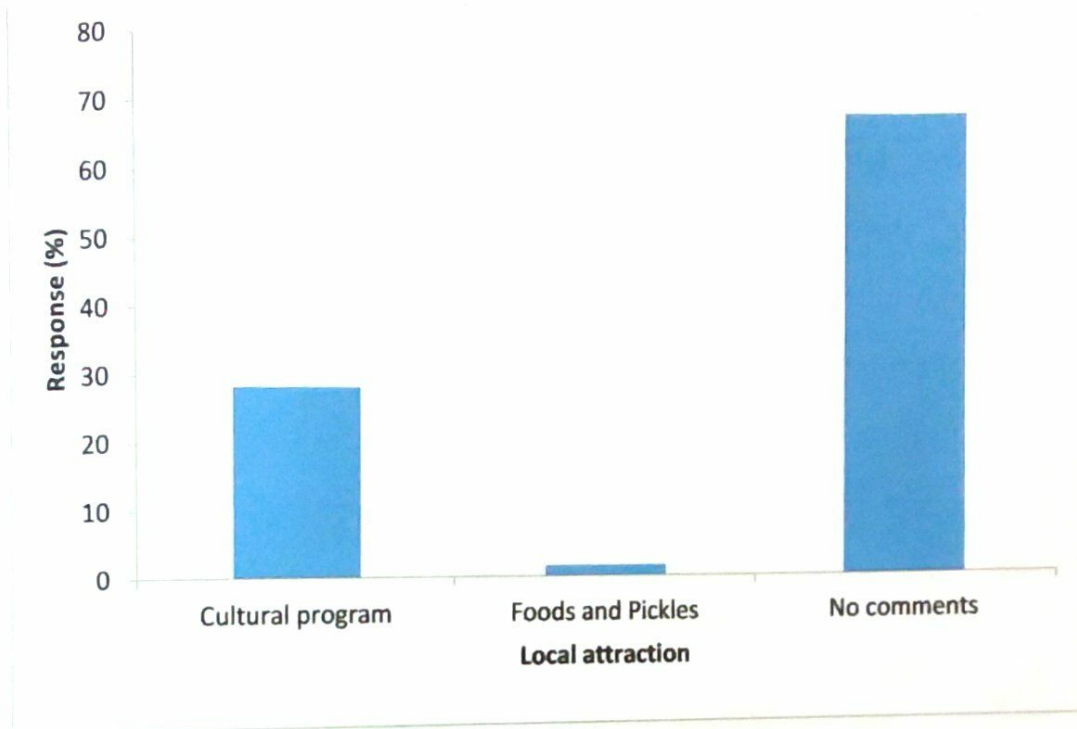
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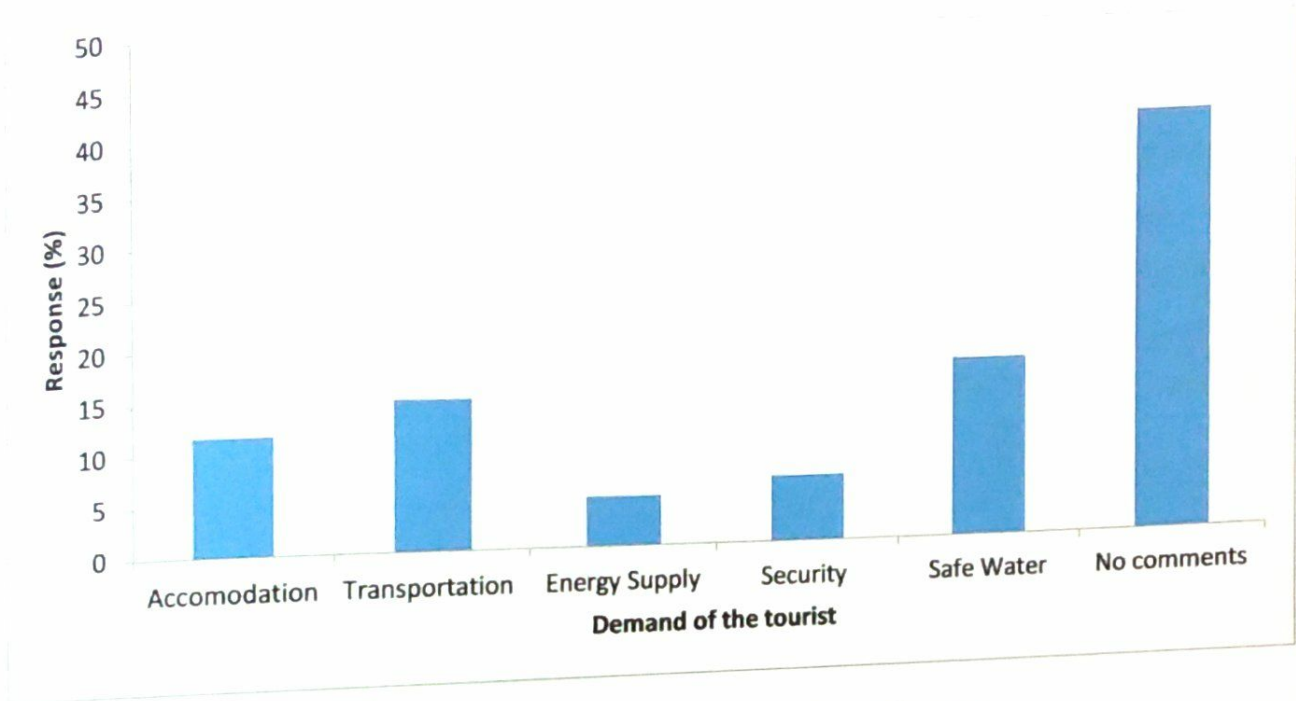
### 4.4.3 Activities of the local for the tourists



**Figure 9: Activities of the local for the tourists.**

From the study area respondents informed that local people arrange cultural program and sells foods and pickles is at 28.33% and 1.67% respectively. Peoples sell foods and pickles for their extra income generation and arrange different cultural programs for tourist's amusements and entertainment. By arranging cultural program, villagers gain extra income which enhances social economy as well as national economy.

#### 4.4.4 Obstacles for tourists in the study area



**Figure 10: Obstacles for tourists in the study area.**

Every program faces some obstacles. It is found that 11.67%, 15%, 5%, 6.67%, 18.33% respondents informed that tourist in the study area faces obstacles like accommodation, transportation, energy supply, security and safe drinking water respectively. Safe drinking is found as high demand of the tourist among all other demands while energy supply is found as low demand. And 43.33% respondents did not response yet.

## CHAPTER 5

### 5 Conclusion

The Sundarbans have huge potentiality in ecotourism sector. NGO's indirectly reduce dependency of the people on the Sundarbans by providing livelihood supports though they don't create proper awareness among people towards ecotourism sector. Their knowledge about "Ecotourism" is very obscure because of lack of their proper concept about it. NGO's are mainly concern about livelihood and product not concern about conservation and education. Now NGO' are trying to create employment opportunities towards ecotourism. People's perception towards ecotourism is not strong enough. To grow awareness in ecotourism among the people of Sundarbans it will require more time. However number of NGO's related to ecotourism is still very low.

#### 5.1 Recommendation

1. Need infrastructure development like roads, houses, bridges and ensure security for the tourist.
2. Provide a framework for local populations to engage in business and in direct employment in the tourism area.
3. Create only employment opportunities from the production of tourism related inputs.
4. Mass media can ensure publicity of this area as a ecotourism area.
5. Take considerations community attitudes and cultural values and concerns.
6. To create awareness among people about their potential opportunities, risks and changes involved, and is interested in receiving visitors by local NGO's.



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