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# THE WORLD BANK IN BANGLADESH 2024



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# FOREWORD

Over the past 50 years, Bangladesh has made remarkable development progress that have garnered global attention. It is a story of resilience, determination, and a shared commitment to reducing poverty and fostering shared prosperity. In just four decades, Bangladesh has transformed itself from being one of the poorest nations at independence to turning into a lower-middle-income country. This journey stands as an inspiration to nations around the world.

Early on, Bangladesh took decisions to empower women, as demonstrated by achieving gender parity in school enrollment. Today, over 97 percent of children in Bangladesh enrolls in primary school. At the same time, Bangladesh has reduced maternal and child mortality significantly.

Being severely affected by the impacts of climate change, the country has demonstrated its resilience and leadership in adaptation and disaster preparedness. The country has modernized its agriculture sector to improve productivity to feed a large population and cope up with climate challenges.

Private Sector growth contributed to sustained growth and job creation. Bangladesh is the second largest exporters of ready-made garments in the world, employing hundreds and thousands of rural women. Today, access to energy is almost universal and rural roads and bridges connect the remotest corners.

I also wish to commend Bangladesh for its generosity in providing shelter and support to the displaced Rohingya population. The World Bank has mobilized resources to aid in addressing this crisis, with a focus on the health, learning, and basic service needs of the forcefully displaced Rohingya population living in Cox's Bazar District, as well as for the host communities.

The World Bank has been a proud partner in Bangladesh's journey. Since independence, we have provided about \$40 billion in financing to reduce poverty and advance development. Our partnership extends to a wide array of sectors, including human development, infrastructure, urban development, climate change, environment, agriculture, and many more. The tangible results of this collaboration are visible in improved human capital, infrastructure, livability and a sustained economic growth.

As the world is facing intertwined and unprecedented global challenges, the World Bank is helping Bangladesh navigate the challenges and achieve its vision of upper middle-income status by 2031. Bangladesh remained an important partner in our mission of ending extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity on a livable planet.

The stories within these pages provide a glimpse into the ongoing World Bank projects in Bangladesh. They underscore the potential that arises from a strong commitment to sound policies, reinforcing our belief that Bangladesh can provide its people with a brighter and better future. And they serve as a testament to the remarkable progress and enduring collaboration between the World Bank and the people of Bangladesh.

## **Abdoulaye Seck**

Country Director for Bangladesh and Bhutan  
The World Bank

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# World Bank's Country Partnership Framework FY 23-27 for Bangladesh

Supports Bangladesh's vision of upper middle-income status by 2031

## INCREASED PRIVATE SECTOR JOBS

Improved business environment for holistic private sector development

Strengthened financial systems to support long-term growth and resilience

Improved effectiveness of public institutions to deliver better services

## IMPROVED SOCIOECONOMIC INCLUSION

Improved access to quality services for human capital development

Enhanced opportunities for women, poor, and vulnerable groups

Strengthened spatial and digital connectivity for inclusive growth

## ENHANCED CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Improved effectiveness of delta management to accelerate development of climate resilience

Enhanced sustainability and productivity in the use of natural capital for climate-smart green growth

# STRATEGY

Since Bangladesh's independence, the World Bank through its concessional lending arm—the International Development Association (IDA)—has committed about \$40 billion in grants, interest-free and concessional financing credits to Bangladesh to help achieve the country's development goals. Currently with a total IDA commitment standing at \$15.6 billion for 53 ongoing projects (as of January 1, 2024), Bangladesh has the largest IDA program globally.

The World Bank Group's ongoing **Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for Bangladesh for FY 23-27** supports the country to achieve its vision of upper-middle-income status by 2031. The framework is anchored in the Government of Bangladesh's Eighth Five-Year Plan 2021–2025 and the Long-Term Perspective Plan 2021–2041, as well as inputs received from country-wide consultations. It is helping Bangladesh address key barriers to higher and sustainable growth to achieve its development goals.

Building on the country's remarkable development progress, the CPF seeks to help Bangladesh transform itself into a more competitive, resilient, inclusive, and greener economy as it aspires to become an upper middle-income country by 2031. It will support three key priorities needed for the country's growth aspirations: develop a diversified and competitive private sector to create more and better jobs; promote socioeconomic inclusion to expand opportunities for all; and address climate and environmental vulnerabilities.

Guided by these priorities, the CPF proposes a robust program of technical and financial support focusing on eight objectives:

- improved business environment for broad-based private sector development;
- strengthened financial intermediation for long-term growth and resilience;
- improved effectiveness of public institutions to deliver better services;
- improved quality and equitable access for human capital development services;
- enhanced economic opportunities for women and vulnerable groups;
- strengthened spatial and digital connectivity for inclusive growth;
- improved effectiveness of delta management for accelerated climate resilience building and sustainability; productivity in the use of natural capital for green growth and energy.

Stronger institutions and policies will be needed as the country moves up in middle-income ladder. The CPF supports the government's reform programs for resilient and inclusive economic growth, by maximizing synergies among the World Bank's International Development Association, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA).







# Education

## Quality Learning for All Program

### BASIC INFORMATION

#### APPROVAL DATE:

June 14  
**2018**

#### END DATE:

December 31  
**2024**

#### TOTAL COMMITMENT:

**\$650**  
million

#### IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:

Directorate of Primary Education

## FULFILLING EDUCATION'S PROMISE



### OVERVIEW

Education develops children's latent capabilities, contributes to a skilled workforce and acts as a powerful tool for reducing poverty, increasing shared prosperity and boosting economic growth. Education is a fundamental right of every child. Accordingly, enhancing the coverage and quality of education is a high priority for the government of Bangladesh (GoB) and the development partners. The Quality Learning for All Program (QLEAP), initiated in 2018, is supporting the government's Fourth Primary Education Development Programme, which is a sector-wide program covering grades 1 through 5 and one year of pre-primary education. The QLEAP aims to improve the quality of and enhance equitable access to education from pre-primary to grade 5.

## CHALLENGE

Bangladesh has made remarkable progress in enhancing access to primary education in recent decades. It now has a net enrolment rate (NER) of around 98 percent and has achieved gender parity in school enrolment. It has also made some notable improvements in system efficiency. However, the desired quality of education is yet to be achieved. National student assessments show low learning outcomes in grades 3 and 5. School closure for a year and half during the COVID 19 pandemic have affected the student's learning.

School readiness of children at primary school entry remains a challenge. Many schools are still overcrowded, and many schools operate double shifts resulting in inadequate contact hours, teacher qualifications and motivation remain low, and classroom teaching leaves much room for improvement. In addition, quality monitoring and supervision of the teaching learning activities at school level is yet to be ensured. Furthermore, despite the progress made in increasing primary enrollment, due to COVID-19 school closure, number of out-of-school children has been increased;. Apart from service-delivery challenges at the school level, the sector also faces system-level issues such as inadequate financing, constraints to management decentralization, and weak local capacity.

## APPROACH

The project is built upon the experience of predecessor World Bank projects, PEDP2 (2004-2011) and PEDP3 (2011-2017). To enhance the quality of education, it puts special emphasis on improving the quality of and access to pre-primary education, strengthening teacher quality, improving the curriculum and teaching learning materials, strengthening the examination and assessment system, and improving school infrastructure. To ensure universal access to primary education, it also focuses on providing educational opportunities for out-of-school children.

QLEAP uses the Program for Results (PforR) financing instrument, which means 100 percent of World Bank financing under QLEAP is linked with results achieved on the ground and disbursed after program targets associated with a set of key indicators have been met. The indicators cover three broad results areas include i) quality, ii) equitable access and participation, and iii) management and financing. The project now also supports pre-primary and education in emergency.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- **50%** and **51%** grade level competencies in Bangla and Mathematics respectively achieved by Grade III students.
- **85.12%** completion rate for primary education (Annual Primary School Census (APSC), 2022)
- More than **700,000** out-of-school children enrolled in learning centers.
- **78.30%** schools meeting standard ratio of 40 students for 1 teacher (Annual Sector Performance Report, 2021).
- **11,368** Government Primary schools converted to single shift from double shift (APSC, 2022)
- **65,000** schools receive School Level Improvement Plan funds annually.
- **82%** schools display key school data in public area.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

QLEAP will contribute to Bangladesh's long-term objective of human capital development for poverty reduction and economic growth according to the Second National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction, the Perspective Plan 2021-2041, the National Education Policy 2010, Bangladesh 8th 5-year strategic plan. The project is also aligned with the SDG goals of providing free, equitable and quality primary education for all and ensuring universal access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education. GoB has introduced piloting of 2 years of pre-primary education from January 2023, upon the result of this piloting the government will take initiative to extend pre-primary level to two years, which is likely to have a significant positive impact on the school readiness of young children.



## Accelerating and Strengthening Skills for Economic Transformation Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

**APPROVAL DATE:**  
May 20  
**2021**

**END DATE:**  
December 31  
**2026**

**TOTAL COMMITMENT:**  
**\$300** million

**IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:**  
Directorate of Technical Education, Technical and Madrasah Education Division

## JOBS OF THE FUTURE

### OVERVIEW

With the rapid economic progress in recent decades, and increasing adoption of technological solutions by major industries, Bangladesh will need to prepare its youth, the new entrants in the job market with skills that are responsive to changing labor market demands.

Skills development can reduce unemployment and underemployment, increase productivity, and improve living standards. The Government's 8th Five Year Plan for 2020-2025 and SDG action plan have identified skills development as one of the economy's

growth drivers by enhancing the quality of the labor force. The Accelerating and Strengthening Skills for Economic Transformation (ASSET) project aims to equip youth and workers with skills needed for the future of work. It will particularly support youth, women and disadvantaged groups, including people with disabilities to become skillful and to connect them to labor market. The project will help modernize, promote coordination, and build the resilience of Bangladesh's technical vocational education and training sector.



## CHALLENGE

To maintain robust growth momentum, Bangladesh will need to increase workforce productivity over the next two decades. Therefore, the skilling of the workforce will play a vital role in the future development of the country. Skills development in Bangladesh has made progress, but still faces a significant mismatch between the job market demand and supply. The value-added per worker in Bangladesh is only 35 percent of the lower middle-income country average, falling behind many South Asian countries in labor productivity.

There are severe shortages of future-looking and market demand-driven skills development interventions that can provide re-skilling or up-skilling opportunities in coordination between central agencies, private industries, and skills training providers. Prevailing social stigma and negative perception towards technical education is also adding to the problem. The COVID-19 pandemic further created a “digital divide,” especially for women and the disadvantaged, further impacted job situation, particularly for poor youth and women. The pandemic has made around 20 million people temporarily jobless, out of the 60 million working in the informal sector. Moreover, the skills development ecosystem faces a range of capacity constraints with the lack of labor market information, knowledge generation, and digitization. It needs substantial upgrading to adapt to the technological changes in emerging sectors.

## APPROACH

The ASSET project draws upon the experience and lessons learned globally and from two earlier World Bank supported projects: Skills and Training Enhancement Project (STEP) and Northern Areas Reduction of Poverty Initiative (NARI). Adapting the successful implementation mechanism of the STEP project, the ASSET project utilizes an innovative multi-ministerial team arrangement, where the Directorate of Technical Education of the Technical and Madrasah Education Division, Ministry of Education is the implementing agency, and other ministries join as partner implementing agencies. NARI project has shown that targeted communication campaigns was instrumental in supplementing the government’s efforts in providing dedicated, flexible support to vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, especially women. Institutional development grant programs have proven effective in strengthening institution-level capacity to plan and implement improvement activities. The leveraging of public-and-private partnership

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- **15%** increase in employment rates of graduates from project-supported short courses.
- **15%** increase in employers’ satisfaction level with the skills of graduates from project-supported diploma programs.
- **150,000** vulnerable and disadvantaged people, including women, trained and 100,000 (35% women) employed.
- **520,000** (30% women) trainees skilled for future of work.

also proved to be promising to enable job-linked training opportunities.

The key project interventions include transforming formal skills development; introducing innovative skills development programs; enhancing system capacity and social marketing. The activities focus on providing program grants to diploma institutes and per-trainee grants to formal short course institutes to upgrade facilities, digitization, equipment, industry linkage, pedagogy, teacher training etc; establish a model polytechnic institute to improve international competitiveness in skilled labor; build pandemic response actions with digital adaptation; recognize the skills of informal sector workers through recognition of prior learning (RPL); and social marketing, awareness and job placement to improve the perceptions and prospects of technical education.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

ASSET will complement Bangladesh’s priorities in human capital development for poverty reduction and economic growth, aligning with the 8th five-year plan, Government’s Vision 2041, the National Skill Development Policy 2020, and the World Bank’s Country Partnership Framework. ASSET is well aligned with the SDG goals of achieving decent work, economic growth, and quality education for all. Higher investment in skills development to support the adoption of new technologies with an emphasis on diversified and inclusive skills development programs will cater to the rapidly changing skills demand. This project will support preserving and creating new jobs to ensure sustainable business growth.



## Higher Education Acceleration and Transformation Project



### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
June 24  
**2021**



END  
DATE:  
December 31  
**2027**



TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$191** million



IMPLEMENTING  
AGENCIES:  
University Grants Commission  
Ministry of Education

## TRANSFORMING HIGHER EDUCATION

### OVERVIEW

Demand for higher education has been rising in Bangladesh. In recent years, the changing nature of work, along with technological acceleration, has increased the demand for high-level skills and technically adaptable workforce. Though female enrolment in higher education has increased significantly, there is a long way to go for attaining gender parity. Enhancing the coverage of quality of higher education and employability of graduates, especially for females, is

a high priority for the government of Bangladesh and the development partners. The Higher Education Acceleration and Transformation (HEAT) Project aims to support the government to strengthen the COVID-19 response in higher education, improve connectivity and quality of higher education for women, enhance higher education's governance, resilience to emergencies, and graduate employability.

## CHALLENGE

Even before pandemic, there were several deeply rooted challenges which impeded the effectiveness of higher education and the transition from university-to-work. This included strong demand among youth for higher education access and for foreign qualifications; limited access to and participation of women, and other individuals from low income and disadvantaged groups; poor quality programs and skills of graduates; relevance to the needs of the labor market and graduate employability; weak governance and management of higher education systems; severe financing constraints; and poor quality of research outcomes, links to innovation systems, and university industry partnerships. Female share of enrolments across universities stood at around 42 percent in Bangladesh, considerably lower than other countries in the South Asia region. The unemployment rate among tertiary education graduates of Bangladesh stood at 11 percent, much higher than the national average rate of around 4 percent. Gender disparities in employment outcomes among tertiary graduates are quite pronounced with female unemployment rate (21 percent) nearly three times as high as males (8 percent). In addition, research funding in Bangladesh has not been tailored to what the main stakeholders consider to be strategic sectors.

## APPROACH

The Project is built upon the success of its predecessor project, Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project (HEQEP, 2009-2018). The HEAT aims to support the government's efforts to internationalize higher education by financing regional and global partnerships; and deepening the reform agenda in the Bangladesh higher education sector to improve the quality of education and employability of graduates. The project will also provide support to COVID-19 recovery efforts through response and recovery interventions in higher education.

Specifically, the Project will focus on: (i) business continuity under COVID-19 and similar future shocks by strengthening Online Learning Capabilities; developing National Learning Management Infrastructure (LMI); and subsidized connectivity and devices to students and staff; (ii) strengthening market relevance of higher education programs through enhancing employability skills of university students, with a particular focus on girls, continuous professional development of university faculty; (iii) promoting advanced research and innovation efforts; and (iv) improving the governance and quality

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- **600,000** students in higher education will benefit.
- **60%** of universities in Bangladesh implementing Emergency Response and Recovery Plans.
- **30** newly accredited courses in universities under the Bangladesh Accreditation Council.



of the higher education sector by improving Higher Education Management, Enhancement of Quality Assurance Mechanisms, and Strengthening of Institutional and Program Accreditation.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The Project will contribute to Bangladesh's long-term objective of human capital development for poverty reduction and economic growth. It also aligns with the second Strategic Plan for Higher Education (SPHE) 2018-2030.



## Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

#### APPROVAL DATE:

June 29  
**2023**

#### END DATE:

December 31  
**2028**

#### TOTAL COMMITMENT:

**\$300**  
million

#### IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:

Department of Youth Development

## UNLEASHING THE UNTAPPED POTENTIAL OF THE YOUTH

### OVERVIEW

Bangladesh is a country known for its resilience and vibrant culture. But despite having a distinct advantage with its demographic dividend, the country is finding it challenging to harness the untapped potential. And this dividend will be squandered if the country does not address the issue of youth in Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).

Given the disproportionately higher share of females, especially in rural areas, among the NEET youth, there is a need to make skills development, continuity of education,

and employment support opportunities accessible while also addressing underlying cultural and social norms that drive exclusion, particularly for women. Equally important will be to focus on the youth who may be vulnerable and marginalized due to various reasons such as the presence of a physical disability, their ethnicity or location. The Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET Youth (EARN) project aims to address this challenge through a comprehensive support to enable economic inclusion and empowerment of the NEET population.



## CHALLENGE

Approximately 27 percent of young people that is about 12.6 million youth in Bangladesh are classified as NEET. Among this group, around 89.6 percent are female, and a majority of them, about 61 percent, come from the rural areas. The key determinants contributing to a high share of female NEET youth include: (a) the scarce supply of skills development opportunities; especially in rural and lagging regions; (b) lack of employability skills such as Socio-emotional behaviour, effective communication, enterprise development and financial literacy; (c) absence of market linkages and networks to foster connections with potential employers; (d) financial constraints to support education, skill development, entrepreneurship; (e) disproportionate distribution of care work and household responsibilities on the female; (f) mobility and other social restrictions; and (g) limited encouragement from the family and community. Deep rooted socioeconomic challenges as well as gender and social norms underlie these constraints and exacerbate the situation, especially for women and vulnerable youth.

## APPROACH

Excluded and vulnerable youth face multifaceted and complex barriers to education and employment. To address these barriers, the project offers interventions that are designed to be holistic and tailored to individual needs. They will provide excluded and vulnerable youth with the skills, knowledge, and support they need to succeed in education, employment, and life.

It will provide skills training and employment support to young people who are NEET. The project's interventions focus on ensuring a range of accessible and flexible skills development opportunities. These include helping secondary dropouts to complete secondary education; establishing inclusive vocational training centers in convenient locations; providing online and offline training courses in market driven trades aligned to youth aspirations; and offering competitive financing for innovative initiatives.

To enhance employability, beneficiaries will receive training in communication, entrepreneurship, financial literacy, leadership, and climate change. To expand employment opportunities, the project will help connect the youth with employers, foster provision of seed financing for potential entrepreneurs, and facilitate internships/apprenticeships supports for potential trainees.

The project will take innovative approaches to tackle key barriers for NEET female youth. Key among these is

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- **900,000** NEET youth, particularly females, will get increased access to education, technical and soft skill, and employability development.
- **450,000** NEET youth will get increased access to employment through provisions of internship and apprenticeship, connecting with the employers, enterprise development support including seed financing and mentorship for the new entrepreneurs.
- **60%** of all female beneficiaries will be targeted to promote an enabling environment through increased community engagement, awareness campaigns and promoting group activities.
- **250** Union Parishads will have Union Youth Information Centers.



fostering the vital role of community engagement and family ownership to create a supportive ecosystem and transform social norms that restrict women's participation in activities outside the household. The project will undertake targeted awareness raising and community mobilization aimed at changing perceptions towards working women as well as jobs in non-stereotypical trades. The project will pilot child day care centers at community level in 20 selected upazilas to encourage young mothers' participation in skill training.

The project will support to improve the capacity of the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS) and its agencies by improving the outreach capacity up to union level, establishing a digital management, monitoring and evaluation mechanism, and modernizing the district youth training centers and Krira Shikkha Protisthans (BKSP). It will support climate friendly trades and foster green business models.

The project will be implemented in 250 selected upazilas through collaboration with the NGOs and private sector.

## Learning Acceleration in Secondary Education Operation

### BASIC INFORMATION

#### APPROVAL DATE:

September 22  
**2023**

#### END DATE:

December 31  
**2028**

#### TOTAL COMMITMENT:

**\$300**  
million

#### IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:

Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education

## IMPROVING SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR A RESILIENT FUTURE



### OVERVIEW

As Bangladesh aspires to move up the value chain and become an upper middle-income country, there have to be significant gains in quality and relevance of skills imparted by the secondary education system. Investment in secondary education is critical as demand for quality secondary education is increasing rapidly following a large-scale investment in primary education. Furthermore, despite Bangladesh's success in increasing enrolment rates as well as in achieving gender parity, low learning and high dropouts remain pervasive in secondary education. Learning levels are still low and unequal compounded by COVID-related learning losses. In this backdrop, the Learning Acceleration in Secondary Education (LAISE) Operation aims to improve student learning and retention and build system resilience in secondary education.

## CHALLENGE

A large number of students are dropping out at the secondary level and getting trapped in low-wage informal-sector work, thus entailing the need for retaining students in secondary schools and equipping them with relevant cognitive and noncognitive skills for further education, labor market or other livelihoods. In 2021, the dropout rate for girls was higher (40.3 percent) compared to boys (32.5 percent). Significant cases of school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV), high early marriage rate (50 percent), early pregnancies, and lack of information about sexual and reproductive health are some of the factors contributing to high dropouts among girls. The situation has been aggravated by the learning losses caused by the nearly two-year-long COVID-related school closures. The National Assessment of Secondary Students (NASS) 2022 shows that 14.5 months of school closures led to nearly 26 months of learning lost in secondary schools. School closures also negatively impacted adolescent mental health.

The secondary education sector faces quality issues, stemming from insufficient support for students and teachers combined with long-standing systemic challenges. Teacher education in Bangladesh needs to improve in terms of coverage and effectiveness. Teachers do not have formal in-service support structures so that they can receive feedback to improve their performance. Improvements are required in areas such as school management and accountability, examinations and assessments, data management, and the skills and resources to cope with vulnerability to climate change hazards.

## APPROACH

LAISE prioritizes interventions that reach secondary students and teachers in a direct and meaningful way. The operation will support the secondary education subsector in Bangladesh through student support for improved learning, retention and resilience, improved teacher competency, and improved secondary systems and resilience. The project will focus on improved and inclusive curriculum for better learning outcome, access to ICT and blended learning for resilience, mental and physical wellbeing for improved retention, and initiatives for improved student access to secondary education. It will help capacity development and provide enhanced support for learning acceleration, climate change education, continuous teacher professional development, and enhanced leadership and management capacity. And finally, it will help introduce and roll out blended learning, improved inspection and online monitoring, improved climate change behaviors, and supporting vocational education in secondary schools.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- **37%** points increase in basic proficiency for Grade 8 students in math.
- **33%** points increase in basic proficiency for Grade 8 students in Bangla.
- **2%** points improvement in Grade 10 retention rate for both boys and girls.
- **40%** or more of Grade 6 and 8 students in 2100 targeted schools will use blended learning program designed for learning acceleration for math and Bangla.
- **15,000** teachers will be trained.
- **7,200** schools will implement a reading program among grade 6 and 8 students.
- At least **5,000** schools will have operational sexual harassment prevention committees.
- At least **30%** of students in targeted schools will be able to identify at least one mechanism for reporting SRGBV and/or accessing mental health support.
- At least **50%** of eligible cases reported to SHPCs in targeted institutions will be handled according to protocol.
- **45,000** students will receive instruction on climate change through dedicated sessions.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

A significant proportion of the country's younger population will enter the job market in the next decade, and currently, nearly 60 percent of its youth is under-skilled and has not attained secondary education. LAISE would help them acquire the required knowledge and skills, paving the way for higher education and employability and contributing to Bangladesh's long-term human capital development agenda aligned with the National Education Policy 2010, 8th Five-Year Plan and the Sustainable Development Goals in education. In addition, the Program will directly serve Bangladesh's Green, Resilient, and Inclusive Development Agenda by leveraging secondary education for climate change mitigation and adaptation, building a more resilient secondary education system, and enhancing equitable access to quality education.









# Health, Nutrition and Population

## Health Sector Support Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

#### APPROVAL DATE:

July 28  
**2017**

#### END DATE:

June 30  
**2024**

#### TOTAL COMMITMENT:

**\$500** million

#### IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

## BUILDING A HEALTHY NATION

### OVERVIEW

Bangladesh has made remarkable progress in improving key health indicators, including significantly reducing maternal mortality and under-5 child mortality. The progress is not uniform throughout the country and divisions like Sylhet and Chattogram lag behind in key health outcomes.

Through the Health Sector Support Project (HSSP), the World Bank supported the Government's Fourth Health, Population and Nutrition Sector Program. On the onset of the COVID 19 pandemic, the World Bank adjusted the project to help maintain critical levels of child immunization in vulnerable eastern border areas. This ensured that at least 85 percent immunization coverage was maintained among children in the Sylhet and Chattogram divisions.

## CHALLENGE

Bangladesh's Health, Nutrition, and Population (HNP) sector faces numerous challenges, including continuing immunization coverage and improving child nutrition as well as further enhancing the quality and coverage and reducing socio-economic and regional disparities, addressing emerging health challenges; and improving financial management of health sector.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the movement restrictions exacerbated the health sector challenges. In 2020, due to the movement restrictions, the outreach sessions of the Expanded Program of Immunization (EPI) were suspended. Even after lockdowns were lifted, households were unwilling to allow field health workers tasked with child immunization to enter their homes for fear of spreading infection. At the same time, Community Clinics and Union Health and Family Welfare Centers shifted their focus onto COVID-19-related services. These developments seriously impacted child immunization services.

## APPROACH

Initially the project focused on strengthening the country's health sector and improve quality and coverage of essential health service delivery, with a particular focus to the Sylhet and Chattogram divisions, where key health outcomes are below national average.

As the pandemic started, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW) and the districts worked out different approaches to quickly restore EPI coverage. These included: (i) maintaining the supply chain line followed by rigorous monitoring (ii) developing district-specific vaccination plans to reach defaulters; (iii) creating awareness through intensive communication campaigns and (iv) dispatching outreach teams to remote areas.

The ministry identified locations with low coverage. Field health workers carried out active child immunization defaulter tracing by going house-to-house to address misinformation and stigma attached to COVID-19 that affected routine child immunization services. Reminders were sent by text and telephone to attend immunization sessions. Communication for development volunteers were engaged to escort mothers to vaccination sites to ensure their children were vaccinated against common childhood infectious diseases. The government provided special passes to allow EPI staff to move about during lockdowns.

## RESULTS

- **382** Upazila Health Complexes with at least 2 accredited diploma midwives.
- **5,843,469** children immunized.
- **588,032** women and children have received basic nutrition services.
- **722,462** deliveries attended by skilled health personnel.
- During the movement restriction for COVID 19, in the Sylhet and Chattogram divisions **1,136,888** children (0-11) months were vaccinated in 2020, **1,212,206** in 2021 and **1,251,086** in 2022.
- The project is expanding the essential maternal and child health services, including EPI, to benefit the poor in Barisal division in 2022.





## COVID-19 Emergency Response and Pandemic Preparedness Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
April 03  
**2020**

END  
DATE:  
December 31  
**2024**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$567.5**  
million

IMPLEMENTING  
AGENCIES:  
Ministry of Health and  
Family Welfare

## HELPING BANGLADESH SUCCESSFULLY MANAGED THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC



### OVERVIEW

The World Bank helped Bangladesh to test and treat COVID-19 cases by mobilizing critical supplies including ventilators, oxygen concentrators, testing kits and hospital beds. The World Bank also played a crucial role in prevention of the disease spread by supporting the national vaccination program as well as helping to strengthen health systems to manage any future outbreaks.

## CHALLENGE

Like the rest of the world, Bangladesh faced severe health and economic challenges from the COVID-19 outbreak in early 2020. With the international supply chain constrained, the government was desperate to secure emergency medical supplies, including ventilators, hospital beds, oxygen supply, and testing machines. It also faced a shortage of good quality personal protective equipment (PPE) for front-line health workers. The government needed support to develop protocols and guidelines to deal with the disease outbreak.

## APPROACH

Within three weeks of the detection of the first COVID-19 case in Bangladesh in April 2020, the World Bank fast-tracked \$100 million financing to support the health ministry's emergency response. In March 2021, the World Bank approved additional \$500 million to support the government's vaccination program. The project was instrumental in enabling the government to secure critical supplies during the emergency phase. Now the focus has shifted toward prevention by strengthening health systems to deal with future outbreaks, not only of COVID-19 but any pandemic. The project was designed to be flexible to ensure maximum effectiveness, particularly for the quick procurement of supplies. It served as a platform to leverage partner financing. Bangladesh was the first IDA country with co-financing of US\$100 million from the Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank (AIIB) for COVID-19 management.

## MOVING FORWARD

The World Bank will continue to support the government in preparing for any future health emergency. Initiatives are being taken to train medical personnel and strengthen health systems, including expansion of ICU capacity and isolation units, and setting up PCR laboratories. These are tangible assets for the country and will continue to benefit future generations.

## RESULTS

- **46.5%** of the total population was vaccinated, with 68 million doses of vaccines and 110 million syringes.
- **30** public hospitals setup with Liquid medical oxygen systems.
- **23** Hospitals have been equipped with 10-bed Intensive Care Units (ICU).
- **300** ventilators were installed at public hospitals handling COVID-19 cases.
- Large quantities of PPE, masks, body bags, gloves, goggles, coveralls, and aprons were supplied for the protection of frontline workers.
- COVID-19 testing machines and kits were used by laboratories dealing with COVID-19 samples.
- A National Vaccine Testing Laboratory has been set up at the Directorate General of Drug Administration. This has paved the way for the country to approve vaccines locally, following WHO protocols.







## Urban Health, Nutrition and Population Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
August 30  
**2023**

END  
DATE:  
December 31  
**2028**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$200**  
million



IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:  
Local Government Division,  
Ministry of Local Government  
Rural Development and  
Cooperative  
Ministry of Health and Family  
Welfare

## IMPROVING PRIMARY HEALTHCARE IN URBAN AREAS

### OVERVIEW

Bangladesh has witnessed notable improvements in health, nutrition, and population (HNP) outcomes over the past decade, especially among urban populations. Between 2007 and 2017-18, there was a decline in the urban total fertility rate and infant mortality, with a marked increase in facility-based deliveries. However, various aspects of the

health sector still require improvement and challenges that arise from disparities present within the urban areas need addressing. The Urban Health, Nutrition and Population Project aims to address these inequalities and ensure a comprehensive care for all urban residents.



## CHALLENGE

Urban health in Bangladesh is faces challenges that are underscored by disparities, especially within urban slums. These disparities manifest in areas like child immunizations, antenatal care, and teenage pregnancies, further exacerbated by prevalent gender norms. The situation is further complicated by an alarming rise in non-communicable diseases, such as hypertension and diabetes, which disproportionately affect urban women. Infectious diseases, particularly dengue, have seen a resurgence, with cities like Dhaka bearing the brunt. In 2023, Dhaka has faced the highest number of cases of dengue and dengue related deaths in recent years.

Furthermore, environmental challenges, accentuated by climate change, bring added health risks, with urban areas grappling with the twin problems of air pollution and poorly managed medical waste. The urban population faces a health infrastructure that's relatively underdeveloped. This deficiency often pushes residents towards the private sector, despite the higher costs associated. Consequently, many urban families face spiraling healthcare costs, stressing household finances and pushing some towards poverty. This multifaceted urban health crisis underscores the pressing need for an integrated, comprehensive approach to urban healthcare in Bangladesh.

## APPROACH

The project in aims to enhance urban health services across selected areas, adapting to the specific needs of each area. The initiative is divided into two components. The first focuses on elevating primary health services. It envisions setting up and upgrading health networks, adopting a “hub-spoke” model linking primary centers to major facilities. Existing health units will be refurbished, primary centers will provide comprehensive health services, and measures will be in place for efficient patient referrals. Emphasis will be placed on training healthcare providers, adopting energy-efficient technologies, and leveraging ICT for better service delivery and data reporting. The second component concentrates on public health, targeting environmental health enhancement and prevention services. This includes strategies for integrated vector surveillance, behavior change interventions, tree planting, and revamping medical waste management. The project will be rolled out in two phases: the first focusing on initializing services through government units, and the second expanding these services, exploring innovative delivery methods, and building partnerships. The primary beneficiaries will be residents of the targeted urban zones, with wider benefits stemming from the environmental health efforts.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- **2,457,168** children (aged 0 to 5 years) to receive nutrition services.
- **255,960** women to receive four or more antenatal care checkups.
- **1,279,800** registered people to receive screening and follow-up for hypertension.
- **35,550** children (aged 0 to 12 months) to get fully immunized.
- **136,512** pregnant women to receive nutrition services.
- **100** primary HNP centers with solar panels to be established.
- **450,000** trees to be planted to mitigate the effects of climate change.





# **Social Protection and Jobs**





## Safety Net Systems for The Poorest Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:

June 26  
**2013**

END  
DATE:

June 30  
**2024**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:

**\$500**  
million

### IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:

Department of Disaster  
Management

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics

Ministry of Disaster Management  
& Relief

## IMPROVING DELIVERY OF SAFETY NETS

### OVERVIEW

The Government of Bangladesh currently implements several public workfare and humanitarian assistance programs to support the poorest populations during periods of seasonal unemployment and to provide protection against disaster-induced shocks. These programs are the Employment Generation Program for the Poorest, Food for Work / Work for Money, Test Relief, Vulnerable Group Feeding, and Gratuitous Relief, which cover around twelve million beneficiaries with a total budget of BDT 70.19 billion in FY 2019.

The World Bank is supporting Bangladesh with the Safety Net Systems for the Poorest Project which aims to improve

the equity, efficiency and transparency of these major safety net programs to benefit the poorest households. The Project provides the majority of its resources towards performance-based co-financing for the Employment Generation Program for the Poorest implemented by the Department of Disaster Management (DDM) under the Ministry of Disaster Management & Relief (MoDMR). The remainder of the financing is provided as technical assistance to DDM, as well as to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) under the Statistics & Informatics Division (SID) to support the establishment of the country's first universal social registry.

## CHALLENGE

While Bangladesh has halved the number of poor people living in the country since 2000, nearly a quarter still live below the poverty line while more than one in ten live in extreme poverty. Safety net programs play a significant role in the country's poverty reduction efforts, and public expenditure on such programs is approximately 1.4% of GDP per fiscal year. Despite the range of interventions, only one-third of the poor are covered by safety nets primarily due to challenges in identifying households who may qualify for social assistance based on their vulnerability and poverty status, as well as in identifying inclusion errors in safety net programs. The programs implemented by DDM represent a significant share of the social protection budget and improvements to program targeting, as well as other aspects of service delivery, would help to ensure the right benefits reach the right people at the right time.

## APPROACH

The Project co-finances a portion of Government expenditures on beneficiary wages under the Employment Generation Program for the Poorest. The co-financing uses a results-based disbursement modality based upon incremental improvements in the performance of the major safety net

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- **Greater** share of beneficiaries in, and benefits going towards, the bottom expenditure quintile.
- **Reduced** duplication of beneficiaries across programs.
- **Improved** access and security in the delivery of benefits.

programs implemented by DDM. Results targets currently focus on improvements to (i) household targeting, (ii) administrative systems, and (iii) payment systems, aspects of these programs which address their equity, efficiency and transparency. These targets would be achieved by the (i) utilization of poverty data to identify potential recipients of social assistance, (ii) establishment of a common safety net program management information system (MIS) for better administration, and (iii) scale-up digital payments of cash benefits. In addition, the Project supports the establishment and operationalization of the National Household Database (NHD) to facilitate household targeting for safety net programs across different ministries and thus help harmonize a major process in the social protection service delivery system.







## Cash Transfer Modernization Project



### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
January 31  
**2018**



END  
DATE:  
March 31  
**2025**



TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$300** million



IMPLEMENTING  
AGENCIES:  
Department of Social  
Services

## IMPROVING TRANSPARENCY AND EFFICIENCY OF SAFETY NETS



### OVERVIEW

Despite Bangladesh's success in reducing poverty, a significant number of people still live below and around the poverty line. The Government of Bangladesh currently implements several cash transfer programs for the poorest and most vulnerable populations. Four major cash transfer programs that cover the most socially excluded populations are Old Age Allowance, Allowances for the Widow, Deserted and Destitute Women, Allowances for the Financially Insolvent Disabled, and Stipends for Physically Challenged Students. These programs collectively reach 11.38 million poor elderly, widows, and persons-with-disabilities, with a total budget of BDT 90.08 billion in FY 2024. The Cash Transfer Modernization Project aims to improve the transparency and efficiency of these cash transfer programs by modernizing their service delivery. Such changes directly and positively impact beneficiaries with greater access to programs and faster delivery of benefits.



## CHALLENGE

Safety net programs play a significant role in Bangladesh's poverty reduction and resilience building efforts. However, despite the range of interventions, as of 2022, only around one-third of the poor are covered by safety nets, primarily due to challenges in identifying vulnerable households, attesting to the weaknesses in pro-poor targeting of social programs. Beneficiary identification currently relies on localized manual processes which risks exclusion of the poor and inclusion of the non-poor. A uniform targeting system combined with community screening and managed digitally can help to better identify the poor and improve the transparency and efficiency of the process. There are duplicative efforts across programs and outdated administrative systems which limit the ability to respond to the needs of the vulnerable in a timely manner and to be fully accessible and accountable to citizens. Digitization of program information and processes can significantly improve administrative efficiencies, allowing optimal utilization of resources, and ultimately resulting in greater responsiveness to citizen and beneficiary needs. The forced displacement of the Rohingya population and the COVID-19 pandemic have also underscored the need for safety net programs to adapt to shocks and changing circumstances.

## APPROACH

The project contributes to the systemic reform of cash transfer programs through a combination of results-based financing and investments in capacity building. It focuses on integration across various digital platforms across the government and has brought significant changes to program processes such as outreach, intake and registration, vulnerability assessment, enrolment decisions, recertification, case management, benefit payment, grievance redress, among others.

This modernization process entails extensive use of information and communications technology tools and interoperable systems. It uses, or will eventually use, national administrative systems for identity verification, targeting, payment, grievance redress, as well as the existing infrastructure of local level public-private partnerships for access to government services, and a network of banking and mobile money agents.

The COVID-19 pandemic necessitated agility and the project supported the country by rapidly mobilizing a contingency emergency response to sustain cash transfers for the poor elderly, widows, and persons-with-disabilities

## RESULTS

- **11.1 million+** mobile money or digital bank accounts opened for cash transfer recipients, of which 61% belong to women.
- **196.26 billion+** Bangladeshi Taka delivered digitally to cash transfer recipients' accounts, of which 58% of the funds went to women.
- **1/7<sup>th</sup>** reduction (3 hours) in time spent to withdraw benefits by cash transfer recipients.
- **\$166 million** support for over 4.36 million beneficiaries under the project's contingent emergency response component, the first emergency financing fully disbursed in Bangladesh in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

so that such vulnerable groups had cash on hand to weather the economic impacts of the crisis. The Agence Française de Développement (AFD) contributed EUR 150 million to the project to enable the Bank's emergency response and ensure continuity of the results-based financing component.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The cash transfer programs supported by the project have been part of the government's regular programming for several decades. These programs are being implemented more efficiently and transparently as the beneficiary data and program processes are now managed digitally and leverage other national platforms for service delivery, in line with the vision articulated in the National Social Security Strategy. Such systemic reforms will ensure that vulnerable people have access to social assistance programs close to home without reliance on intermediaries. Enhancements in program delivery has made space for improvements in human capital building and preservation with a new "cash+" component having been introduced in 2023 to promote greater socioeconomic welfare for beneficiaries of cash transfer programs, by building self-reliance, undertaking livelihoods opportunities, among others.

## Recovery and Advancement of Informal Sector Employment Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
March 15  
**2021**

END  
DATE:  
June 30  
**2026**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$200**  
million

IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:  
Palli Karma-Sahayak  
Foundation  
Financial Institutions Division  
Wage Earners Welfare Board

## Economic Inclusion of Low-Income Urban Youth and Returnee Migrants

### OVERVIEW

In Bangladesh, strong labor market gains contributed to a sharp decline in poverty, with the national poverty rate falling from 48.9 to 24.5 percent between 2000 and 2016, while extreme poverty declined from 34.3 to 13 percent. International migration has played an important role in the country's development narrative in terms of household income and macroeconomic stability. By migrating to overseas markets, workers have traditionally been able to earn three to four times more than what they had earned before migrating.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought about major disruptions to economic activities. This was predominantly felt in

urban areas, where pandemic-related lockdowns had significant impact on informal sector workers in services and manufacturing, and on households who relied on remittances, with a large number of migrant workers forced to return.

The World Bank is supporting the informal sector and returnee migrant workers with programs that provide immediate support to those affected by the economic shocks of the pandemic, while also building the systems and interventions necessary for addressing longer-term structural challenges.

## CHALLENGE

Over 1.7 million youth are entering the labor force every year, and with the domestic market unable to provide jobs at a sufficient pace, youth unemployment rates have spiked in recent years and female labor force participation, already low, is further decreasing. Some of the key challenges faced by youth from low-income households include weak entrepreneurial, technical, and soft skills, limited opportunities for on-the-job learning, and lack of access to credit. The urban poor – especially those in the informal sector – have also been disproportionately affected by COVID-related shocks, with limited access to formalized support from employers or the Government in case of an income shock. During the pandemic, the country also experienced an influx of returning migrant workers, many of whom had to return before their contracts were completed. Addressing the needs of the low-income urban youth and returnee migrants require interventions that address the multiple simultaneous challenges they face.

## APPROACH

The project provides services to enhance access to earning opportunities for low-income urban youth, urban youth impacted by COVID-19, and returning migrants. It supports two interrelated programs, in a way that addresses not just immediate needs, but also structural weaknesses, thus facilitating a more resilient post-pandemic growth. The first program is an economic inclusion program for low-income urban youth and microentrepreneurs whose livelihoods had been impacted by COVID-19. Beneficiaries under this program, receive a tailored package of services, based on their individual needs. Youth with low formal educational attainment who need to acquire technical skills can do so through informal apprenticeships, while youth with aspirations for self-employment can learn business management and entrepreneurship, while also accessing microfinance. Low-income urban micro-entrepreneurs who were affected by the pandemic – but who may not need skills development – can access a specific microfinance product to support them through the recovery. All beneficiaries will also receive life-skills and socio-emotional skills support.

The second program is a comprehensive program to support the socio-economic reintegration of returning migrant workers. Under this program, migrant workers who returned to Bangladesh due to the pandemic, receive a package of services. Welfare Centers in high-migration districts, offer counselling to eligible returnees, and then based on individual skills and aspirations, refer them to an customized set of services, ranging from technical skills programs,

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- **50,000** microentrepreneurs affected by COVID-19, provided with recovery loans.
- Over **8,000** youth reached with information and communication on the economic inclusion program.
- Up to **1,768** master craftspersons across various trades identified and oriented, who are now hosting 3,455 apprentices (of which 39% female).
- **31** Welfare Centers established nationwide with over 52,000 return migrants enrolled as beneficiaries.



financial products, or psycho-social support. The program also provides cash transfers to incentivize and facilitate the uptake of services and will be critical in improving access to lower-income migrants.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The systems that the Project is supporting will build capacity at both implementing agencies for providing continuing economic inclusion services to low-income microentrepreneurs in urban areas, and to migrants and their households in the future, respectively.



## Bangladesh Enhancing Investments and Benefits for Early Years

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
October 31  
**2023**

END  
DATE:  
October 31  
**2028**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$210**  
million

IMPLEMENTING  
AGENCIES:  
Ministry of Women and  
Children Affairs

## ENHANCING EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT IN BANGLADESH

### OVERVIEW

Bangladesh has made significant progress in economic growth and poverty reduction over the past decades. This has been accompanied by improvements in maternal and child health outcomes. Prevalence of stunting among under-five children improved from 41 to 24 percent, child wasting declined from 16 percent to 11 percent, and the rate of child underweight declined from 36 percent to 22 percent between 2011 and 2021-22. Despite this notable progress, malnutrition and learning poverty remain prevalent. The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated the situation with long term implications for cognitive development, adult outcomes, and economic productivity.

The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) implements the Mother and Child Benefit Programme (MCBP) to provide opportunities for children to grow up with adequate nutrition, psychosocial and cognitive development for human capital accumulation. The MCBP provides monthly cash transfers to pregnant women and mothers of children under four years of age from vulnerable households and social and behavioural change counseling on maternal and child health and nutrition. The Bangladesh Enhancing Investments and Benefits for Early Years (BEIBEY) Project will support the MCBP by expanding coverage and strengthening Programme systems and capacity, thereby contributing to early childhood development and human capital accumulation in the country.

## CHALLENGE

Underutilization of key health and education services is one of the key causes of lagging human capital outcomes particularly among low-income households, largely due to lack of awareness, high out of pocket expenses, and restrictive social norms. Burdened by poverty, inadequate feeding practices, unhealthy environments, and lack of home stimulation, children from poor and vulnerable households are disproportionately affected, impacting their optimal development and putting them at risk of continuing the intergenerational transmission of poverty.

Climate shocks also pose an additional threat to development and wellbeing, particularly for children. The poor face a disproportionate impact because they generally live in higher-risk areas, rely on agriculture and other climate-sensitive natural resources for income and livelihoods, and have limited coping mechanisms.

While the MCBP makes good use of existing platforms and systems, including on-demand enrollment and regular electronic payments, there still remain significant gaps, including inadequate beneficiary coverage and insufficient payment tenure of 36 months from pregnancy due to limited budgetary allocation; integration with service delivery systems, including health, family planning, nutrition, and birth registration services, among others, which limit effective monitoring and follow up with households, as well as the need to enhance social and behaviour change counseling to encourage regular service utilization and appropriate nurturing care for children.

## APPROACH

The BEIBEY Project will support rolling out MCBP cash transfers while fostering a nurturing environment for early childhood development through two interrelated components: expanding coverage of the MCBP and strengthening Programme systems and supporting implementation by building capacity for more effective outreach, administration, and monitoring and evaluation.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

Positive development during early childhood will have lasting effects for the rest of the individual's life. Project investments will help children to reach their full potential, through good health, adequate nutrition, responsive caregiving, opportunities for early learning, and safety and security.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

■ **1.7 million** pregnant women and mothers of children under 4 years of age in vulnerable households will receive cash transfers.

■ **48 months** coverage of cash transfer, increase from 36 months.

■ Improved social and behavioral change counseling curriculum for comprehensive early childhood development.

■ Upgraded Management Information System (MIS).











# **Agriculture & Food**

## Bangladesh Modern Food Storage Facilities Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
December 30  
**2013**

END  
DATE:  
December 31  
**2024**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$412**  
million

IMPLEMENTING  
AGENCIES:  
Directorate General  
of Food

## ENSURING FOOD SECURITY FOR ALL



### OVERVIEW

Bangladesh has made commendable progress over in achieving food security, despite frequent natural disasters and population growth. Food grain production has tripled between 1972 and 2014, from 9.8 to 34.4 million tons. But Bangladesh faces high climate vulnerability and is hit frequently by natural disasters. The poor are most vulnerable to natural disasters and face difficulty in ensuring steady food supply in the aftermath of natural disasters. A modern food storage system will help ensure food is available immediately after a natural disaster.



## CHALLENGE

Bangladesh is among the most vulnerable countries to climate change and face frequent natural disasters. Floods and cyclones can destroy crops and changing weather can reduce yields in any particular year. Currently, public food distribution and grain reserves have a total effective capacity of about 2.1 million tons. Most of these reserves are stored in warehouses or 'godowns' where poor condition often leads to grain losses in quantity and nutritional value. An improved system with modernized technologies that can store rice and wheat grains for between two and three years, will limit food storage losses significantly. This, combined with efforts to improve the efficacy and accountability of the grain distribution systems in post-disaster periods, could serve to significantly address food shortages experienced as a result of natural disaster events.

## APPROACH

The Modern Food Storage Facilities Project aims to increase the grain reserve available to households to meet their post-disaster needs and improve the efficiency of grain storage management.

The project is helping construct seven public modern grain storage steel silos in seven strategic locations with a total public grain storage capacity of 0.488 million Metric Ton, This will add 20 percent public grain storage capacity in Bangladesh. A silo complex comprises of 15 to 30 silos and each silo has about 3,000 to 3,550 tons capacity. The modern steel silos will be able to store food grains for up to three years while retaining the nutritional quality of the rice and wheat. In comparison, a traditional concrete warehouse can store grains only up to six months.

It is also developing a food storage monitoring system at the Ministry of Food, with latest technology. The project also supports distribution of 500,000 smaller household silos to poorest and marginal farmers, and women-headed vulnerable households. The silo bins are food-grade and designed to store liquids, grain, or seed without the use of any chemical or pesticide.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The project will focus on the finalization of the seven grain silos and the development of the Online Food Stock and Market Monitoring System (FSMMS) and the dissemination of the findings of food research.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- **500,000** household silos fully distributed.
- More than **50%** construction of modern silos completed at Ashuganj, Barisal, and Narayanganj sites.
- **50%** Reduction in grain storage and handling losses in public storage facilities.
- Construction of modern silos completed in Mymensingh site and nearing Completion in Madhupur site.
- Work at Khulna and Chattogram are ongoing.







## Livestock and Dairy Development Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL DATE:  
December 6  
**2018**

END DATE:  
December 31  
**2025**

TOTAL COMMITMENT:  
**\$500**  
million

IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:  
Ministry of Fisheries & Livestock

## IMPROVING LIVESTOCK AND DAIRY PRODUCTIVITY

### OVERVIEW

The Livestock and Dairy Development Project (LDDP) aims to improve productivity, market access, and resilience of smallholder farmers and agro-entrepreneurs in the livestock and dairy sector. It focuses on supporting climate-smart production systems, farmer empowerment, and commercialization. The project will enhance the value chain development by financing key infrastructures, improving access to markets, insurance, and financial products and services. Additionally, the project prioritizes climate-resilient livestock production systems and address animal health, food safety, and antimicrobial resistance. Over 70 percent of

rural households are engaged in livestock production which contributes a large share of the smallholder and landless farmers' livelihoods. The livestock sector accounts for 1.7 percent of the economy's Gross Domestic Product. The LDDP is aimed at improving the productivity, market access, and resilience of smallholder farmers and agro-entrepreneurs in the livestock and dairy sector. Ultimately the LDDP seeks to foster a market-led transformation of livestock production while ensuring sustainability, inclusivity, safety, and environmental consciousness.

## CHALLENGE

Unlocking the growth potential of livestock requires addressing challenges in the following areas: (i) poor practices along the value chains (animal husbandry, animal health); (ii) weak value chain organization and infrastructure; (iii) low access to insurance services and products; (iv) low risk management (climate but also markets, food safety and public health and wide livestock exposure to a range of perils); (v) institutions and services; and (vi) policies and regulations.

## APPROACH

The Project supports government's plan to scale-up climate smart investments in livestock. Growth in livestock productivity potentially leads to job creation for women, youth, and other vulnerable. The project aims to improve productivity, market access, and resilience of small-holder farmers and agro-entrepreneurs operating in selected livestock value chains in target areas. For this, the project will help: (i) upgrade livestock production systems and increase productivity and efficiency; (ii) support value chain development and integration in the markets with participation of private sector; and (iii) enhance resilience of farmers and entrepreneurs to risks and shocks.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

In the coming months, the project will intensify its support for the Producers Groups, which will benefit from a range of production equipment. LDDP will also support the revitalization of the meat and dairy value chains, with matching grants awarded on the basis of a competitive call for proposals. The LDDP will also enhance market infrastructures with the construction of 140 wet markets, 18 district-level slaughterhouses and 3 metro-level slaughterhouses.



## RESULTS

- **2.33 million** animals have been vaccinated and 0.4 million households received deworming services.
- **150** upazilas level mini-diagnostic labs are being renovated.
- **360** Mobile Veterinary Clinics mobilized.
- Over **BDT 185 million** of accumulated savings made by 5500 producer organizations.
- **65,250** farmers (36% of them are female) have been trained on animal disease control.
- **92,660** farmers (female 31.41%) trained on good farming practices.
- **37,261** farmers trained on Business Plan development.
- **24,000** farmers received production materials (feed, chick, feeder, drinker, farm utensils) and hygienic cleaning tools.
- **162** demo-farms has been constructed.
- **65,852** students (Girls 34,651) are consuming 200 ml UHT milk per day through the School Milk Program in 300 primary schools.
- **238** training and service facilities constructed at Upazila level.
- **683,000** small-scale farmers poultry and dairy farmed received cash transfer to remain in business during COVID 19. 20% of the households were headed by female.
- **63,550** poultry farmers and 22,300 dairy farmers benefitted from van rental program.
- **1,500** Milk Cream Separators distributed to village milk collection centers.





## Climate-Smart Agriculture and Water Management Project

### BASIC INFORMATION



**APPROVAL DATE:**  
March 9  
**2021**



**END DATE:**  
June 30  
**2026**



**TOTAL COMMITMENT:**  
**\$120**  
million



**IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:**  
Bangladesh Water Development Board  
Department of Agricultural Extension  
Department of Fisheries

## SUPPORTING FARMERS WITH TECHNOLOGY FOR INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE

### OVERVIEW

Bangladesh is extremely vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Projected increase in temperatures can lead to more intense and unpredictable rainfalls during the monsoon season, there is higher probability of catastrophic cyclones resulting in increased tidal inundation. The projected increase in extreme rainfall, in combination with strong sea level rise, is alarming and lead to more frequent and severe coastal and river flooding and rainfall-induced landslides.

The agriculture sector has been, and remains, a powerhouse for inclusive growth and poverty reduction in Bangladesh. Primary agriculture supports about 54 percent of rural

employment. Agriculture-growth-led impact on poverty reduction is significant and when growth slows, so does poverty reduction, employment, and food and nutrition security. Agriculture and fisheries are severely threatened by the impacts of climate change – on productivity, soil and water salinity, water stress, and temperature. These impacts aggravate existing challenges in the sectors, related to low productivity, to inefficient and unbalance input use, and a lack of crop diversification and land degradation. For growth and productivity in the agriculture and inland fisheries and aquaculture sectors to be sustainable, the sector must become adaptive and resilient to climatic change and other shocks.



## CHALLENGE

Years of inadequate management and deferred maintenance have left some of the already existing flood control and drainage infrastructure in poor condition and are compromising their effectiveness. Low productivity and limited diversification both in the crop and non-crop sector are responsible for the declining performance of Bangladesh's agricultural sector. Even with some improvements over the last decade, the sector is characterized by a significant yield gap for most crops, largely due to limited adoption of modern technology and imbalanced input use. Rice dominates production and diversification towards higher-value crops is low. The introduction of climate-smart practices, crop diversification in the product mix of agriculture through a shift toward high-value products, has great potential for accelerating sector growth, contributing to meeting the growing demand for a diversified food supply, better nutrition, and building resilience of agriculture to climate change. In the fisheries sector, average productivity for inland capture fisheries stands at 0.28 Mt/ha while that of inland culture fisheries stands at 1.53 Mt/ha, both below the averages observed in similar systems in Asia. Climate-smart practices for modern aquaculture systems, conservation and management measures to protect and restore the health of open inland water ecosystems, and strengthening community natural resources management are required to enhance the productivity, sustainability, and climate resilience of inland open-water ecosystem-based fisheries and aquaculture sectors. Climate change, extreme weather events including intense floods, drought and storms are also implicated in undermining the performance of Bangladesh's agricultural and fisheries sector.

## APPROACH

Climate-Smart Agriculture and Water Management Project supports Government's priorities with respect to enhancing agricultural productivity while ensuring climate resilience of production systems. The project will help rehabilitate, modernize and improved management of priority Flood Control and Drainage (FCD) and Flood Control Drainage and Irrigation (FCDI) infrastructure for improved flood protection and drainage during the monsoon. This will also help ensure improved water management and increased water use efficiency during the dry season. The project will also help mobilize and strengthen Water Management Organizations (WMO) to improve water management for agriculture and fisheries operations at the community level and will facilitate the transfer of the management, operations, and maintenance of the FCD/FCDI to the WMOs. It will introduce climate-smart

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- **95,000 hectares** to be under climate-resilient technologies and practices covering both crop production and fisheries.
- Over **120,000 hectares** of land to have improved irrigation and drainage service, where flood damage to crops will be reduced by 60%.
- **170,000** poor farmers, half of whom are women, vulnerable to climate change will be directly reached with project services.
- **100,000** farmers to adopt improved, climate-smart agricultural technology.
- **18.60%** increase in productivity of selected agricultural and fisheries commodities.



agriculture and water management practices for increased agricultural and fisheries productivity and income growth while building the resilience of agriculture and the local communities to climate change. The project will support diversification in agriculture production systems to enhance resilience, improve market access and farmers' income.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

Improved climate resilient water management along with adaptation of climate-smart agriculture practices in agriculture and fisheries/aquaculture production systems and diversification of agriculture production will enhance climate resilience and productivity of irrigated agriculture and fisheries in targeted areas.

## Resilience, Entrepreneurship and Livelihood Improvement Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
May 20  
**2021**

END  
DATE:  
May 28  
**2026**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$300**  
million

IMPLEMENTING  
AGENCIES:  
Social Development  
Foundation

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR RURAL BANGLADESH



### OVERVIEW

Poverty rates in Bangladesh have declined at an impressive rate in the last two decades. Despite these achievements, a number of challenges remain. Most of the country's poor people live in rural areas with recurrent movement in and out of poverty reflecting the vulnerability and informality of jobs for rural households. Agriculture has been a key driver in poverty reduction, but declining agricultural productivity growth has hindered the development of the rural economy. Weather and climate change-related risks affect rural incomes and rural poverty negatively, especially among households engaged in agriculture. Stark gender disparities also exist in women's livelihood and entrepreneurship opportunities in rural areas. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic, which is threatening to reverse the progress made on rural poverty reduction, has further undermined women's economic opportunities and outcomes.



## CHALLENGE

Poor and extreme poor rural populations lack access to basic assets, services, and skills to make a living and improve their livelihoods. In addition, these populations are vulnerable to outside shocks such as COVID-19 and recent climate-induced events that have further affected their livelihoods, and producer groups and rural entrepreneurs lack access to assets and services to fully contribute to the growth of the rural economy.

## APPROACH

The Resilience, Entrepreneurship and Livelihood Improvement (RELI) Project aims to improve livelihoods of the poor and extreme poor, enhance their resilience, and support rural entrepreneurship in select rural areas. The project aims to support beneficiaries by strengthening community organizations, providing cash transfers to the poor and vulnerable, providing loans for entrepreneurship, and building small-scale climate-resilient infrastructure.

Furthermore, the project aims to support the creation and operation of second-tier institutions at the cluster level and at the district level. It will also support the growth of the rural economy through the development of producer groups and the creation of market linkages for these producer groups, including with e-commerce. It will also help in product promotion through participation in trade fairs and matching grants. Finally, the project will support employment generation through technical support and skills training for unemployed and under employed youth and jobless migrant or immigrant returnees.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The proposed project will provide immediate livelihood support for rural communities, primarily women, while contributing to building back better. With the project's support, households in rural Bangladesh will be in a better position to cope with future shocks like the pandemic or climate-related events.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- **744,600** beneficiaries, of which **90%** are women.
- At least **30%** income increase from income generating activities and increased employment for 163,072 beneficiaries, of which 90% are women.
- **25%** share of beneficiaries in villages changing poverty status.
- **6,500** producers and rural entrepreneurs with increased income of at least 40%, of which 90% are women.





## Program on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for Nutrition, Entrepreneurship, and Resilience in Bangladesh

### BASIC INFORMATION

**APPROVAL DATE:**  
April 27  
**2023**

**END DATE:**  
December 31  
**2028**

**TOTAL COMMITMENT:**  
**\$500**  
million

### IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:

Department of Agricultural Extension  
Department of Agricultural Marketing  
Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation  
Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council  
Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute  
Bangladesh Rice Research Institute  
Barind Multipurpose Development Authority

## PROMOTING DIVERSIFICATION, FOOD SAFETY, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE ACROSS AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS

### OVERVIEW

Agriculture has been a key driver in poverty reduction over the past two decades in Bangladesh, although the growth of sector has slowed down since 2010. In addition, the sector is highly vulnerable to climate change and is under pressure to cater to an increasing population and changing diets. In the meantime, it has a significant potential to increase inclusive economic growth with millions of smallholders, women, youth, and educated entrepreneurs, particularly as value addition and diversification become more dominant. Thus, a new wave of reforms and investments is needed to continue the agriculture transformation process towards

higher crop productivity and diversification, as well as higher income earning potential for rural producers, which requires a comprehensive sector-wide program.

The Program on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for Nutrition, Entrepreneurship, and Resilience in Bangladesh (PARTNER), which will be the first program for results for the agriculture sector in the country, will support the Government of Bangladesh in implementing this new wave of reforms. More specifically, PARTNER will help drive diversification, food safety, entrepreneurship, and climate resilience across agri-food systems.

## CHALLENGE

Policy reforms, strategic investments in research and infrastructure, and a focus on rice production have driven growth for the agriculture sector in Bangladesh, which has played a significant role in reducing poverty, contributing to 69 percent of total poverty reduction between 2005 and 2010. However, while Bangladesh achieved self-sufficiency in rice production, growth in agriculture slowed down since 2010, which contributed to limiting progress in poverty reduction.

The bias in agricultural policies and support towards rice production has hindered the development of more diversified production systems, despite changing dietary patterns and an expanding local market for high-value agricultural commodities. The government's agricultural strategies continue to prioritize food security, interpreted as self-sufficiency in rice, through policies and public interventions to maintain incentives for rice production. Climate change is expected to exacerbate the challenges facing the agriculture sector, as the sector is highly vulnerable to climate events and natural hazards. Environmental degradation, including monocropping, unbalanced/overuse of chemical fertilizers, and overexploitation of groundwater resources, coupled with increased extreme weather events, pose additional risks to the sustainable development of the agri-food system. As a result, the government's agricultural strategies need to balance the objectives of food and nutrition security and sustainable development, taking into account technology demand for non-rice crops and the risks induced by climate change.

## APPROACH

The Program will promote sustainable and nutritious food production by supporting a more efficient use of inputs and an alleviation of food safety challenges through the development and adoption of good agricultural practices; increased rice productivity and resilience through the development and adoption of stress-tolerant and nutrient-dense rice varieties and of climate-smart production packages; crop diversification through the development and adoption of stress-tolerant and nutrient-dense varieties of non-rice cereals, pulses, oilseeds, spices, and horticulture crops; and increased water use efficiency through the adoption of efficient irrigation technologies.

The Program will also increase entrepreneurship and access to services along the agri-food value chain by supporting (i) a more efficient provision of services and subsidies to farmers through digital agricultural services tools; (ii) improved food

## RESULTS

- **300,000** hectares under fruits and vegetables with good agricultural practices certification.
- **200,000** hectares under high-yielding rice varieties.
- **200,000** hectares under non-rice cereals, pulses, oil crops, fruits, and vegetables.
- **100,000** hectares under efficient irrigation technologies.
- **5 million** farmers receiving digital services (extension, input subsidy, credit).
- **20** accredited testing processes for agricultural commodities in testing laboratories.
- **20,000** youth and women entrepreneurs trained.
- **10%** yearly increase in agriculture research budget.
- **Five** value chain specific promotional bodies established and operational.
- Improved agricultural data collection and analysis from all Upazilas.

safety and access to markets through the accreditation of seed certification and food safety testing processes; and (iii) increased female and youth entrepreneurship through skills strengthening and advisory support.

Lastly, the Program will modernize institutions and policies for agriculture transformation by supporting (i) increased research and development activities and more efficient extension services; (ii) improved value chain coordination and promotion through value chain promotional bodies; and (iii) an improved agricultural information system.







# Water



## Bangladesh Municipal Water Supply and Sanitation Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

#### APPROVAL DATE:

July 11  
**2019**

#### END DATE:

December 31  
**2024**

#### TOTAL COMMITMENT:

**\$100**  
million

#### IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:

Department of Public Health Engineering

## SAFE SANITATION AND CLEAN DRINKING WATER FOR ALL



### OVERVIEW

Bangladesh achieved its Millennium Development Goals targets of halving the population without access to improved drinking water sources three years ahead of time and showed impressive progress in sanitation too. 84 percent of households have access to safe water and 57 percent of households have access to safe sanitation. Bangladesh almost eliminated open defecation. The government is committed to continue with its efforts, to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6) - safe and sustainable sanitation, hygiene and drinking water for all.

## CHALLENGE

Achieving SDG 6 poses several challenges. Bangladesh is rapidly urbanizing, yet only 10 percent of the population—mostly living in the major cities—have access to piped water. One hundred and fifty-one (151) out of the 329 municipalities have basic piped water systems, but these systems cover only a limited population residing in town centres. They suffer from maintenance and quality problems, limited connections, high operational costs, poor service levels and low tariff recovery. Furthermore, 20 percent of the urban population experience arsenic contamination and 55 percent E. coli contamination in their water supply.

Sanitation in municipalities mainly comprise of household on-site pits and tanks that are cleaned infrequently. When cleaned, the fecal matter is dumped in drains and open lands, posing a public health hazard. Solid waste, drainage and flooding are common problems. Technical expertise for piped water supply and fecal sludge management are limited at all levels of government. Municipalities need support to build their capacity to carry out their roles effectively – from managing the design and construction of water and sanitation systems to strengthening their institutional and financial systems for operations and maintenance.

## APPROACH

The project aims to increase access to water and sanitation services in 30 municipalities by strengthening their institutional capacity to deliver water and sanitation services. This will give 600,000 people access to improved water sources and 680,000 people with improved sanitation services. Given the very basic institutional capacity of the municipalities, the project aims to address capacity deficits by infrastructure provision and operationally sustainable services delivery by the private sector for both water supply and sanitation, institutional capacity strengthening of municipalities to enable them to play increasingly central roles in planning and supervision of services delivery by the private sector, and strengthening the DPHE to focus more on policy and facilitation roles (away from direct infrastructure provision). The project's goal is to devolve water and sanitation responsibilities to the local governments to ensure sustainability and cost-effectiveness. It directly supports the SDP target of improved services (with piped water, improved household toilets and fecal sludge management) in municipalities, alongside strengthening the institutional capacities of municipalities to provide universal access to improved water and sanitation services in a financially sustainable manner. This involves introducing operating principles and developing the private sector.

## RESULTS

- **600,000** people (at least half of whom are female) with access to improved water sources.
- **80,000** people (at least half of whom are female) with access to improved sanitation services.
- **30** municipalities with operational water supply systems and improved operational performance with greater ownership and sustainability of water, sanitation, and drainage infrastructure and services delivery involving operational service contracts with private sector.



## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The project aims to demonstrate financially and operationally sustainable water supply and sanitation (WSS) schemes involving private operators. Considering the lessons expected from this operation, the government has planned to expand sustainable WSS services in another set of 30 municipal towns. The feasibility studies for such prospective intervention have been initiated under the ongoing BMWSSP.



## Dhaka Sanitation Improvement Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
March 20  
**2020**

END  
DATE:  
June 30  
**2025**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$170** million

IMPLEMENTING  
AGENCIES:  
Dhaka Water Supply  
and Sewerage  
Authority

## ENSURING BETTER SANITATION IN DHAKA



### OVERVIEW

The capital Dhaka is one of the most densely populated cities in the world. Its rapid population growth led to inadequate infrastructures and service deliveries resulting in poor living conditions. Dhaka has over 3.5 million people living in low-income communities where access to water supply, sanitation, and health care is limited. These areas have no systematic excreta disposal and treatment system. Untreated domestic sewage and industrial waste are illegally discharged into rivers and canals polluting the water. This adversely affects the environment, living spaces and public health of Dhaka's residents. Studies have highlighted the considerable economic, environmental, and public health costs of pollution and inadequate sanitation. Climate change further exacerbates the challenge with sanitation due to inland flooding.

## CHALLENGE

Dhaka's existing sewerage system serves only about one-fifth of the city's population. The city has only one wastewater treatment plant which operates at less than half its capacity due to deficiencies in the collection network. The city does not have a well-developed fecal sludge management system. The disposal of fecal sludge and septage from septic tanks is sporadic. About 30 percent of Dhaka's population disposes off their sewage through drainage networks and open channels which enter the city's water bodies untreated. Only about 3-4% of the wastewater generated in the city is treated. Bangladesh is estimated to be losing about \$3.56 billion due to health-related economic impacts of inadequate sanitation. Health-related productivity impacts of inadequate sanitation are close to \$456 million. Studies have found that young children below five-years and poor households bear the highest burden of poor sanitation. Human resources in Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (DWASA) also needs to be strengthened. At present, there is no water and sewer regulator in Bangladesh.

## APPROACH

The Dhaka Sanitation Improvement Project is helping to improve the city's livability by establishing safely managed sanitation services in Dhaka, particularly in its southern part, benefiting around 1.5 million people. The project is establishing sewage and septage treatment facilities which will help reduce inland flooding and water pollution. It's also providing 50,000 new households with sewer connections.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- **1.5 million** people with access to safely managed sanitation services.
- **50,000 households** with access to sewer connections.
- Improved efficiency of DWASA with Operating Ratio maintained at **0.7** or below.
- **150 million** liters of sewage treated at Pagla Sewage Treatment Plant.
- **Reduced pollution** of water bodies.

The project is supporting DWASA to improve efficiency in sanitation service delivery particularly in customer orientation and implementation of sewer connection strategy. It is helping DWASA improve its billing system, as well as its management information system (MIS), Geographic Information System (GIS) for sanitation and IT-enabled customer complaints management. The project is also helping to provide trainings to DWASA officials and also rationalize the tariff framework to improve performance efficiency.





## BD Rural Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for Human Capital Development Project



### BASIC INFORMATION

#### APPROVAL DATE:

September 25  
**2020**



#### END DATE:

October 31  
**2025**



#### TOTAL COMMITMENT:

**\$200**  
million



#### IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:

The Department of Public Health Engineering  
Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation

## ENSURING SAFE WATER AND SANITATION IN RURAL AREAS



### OVERVIEW

Access to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services in rural Bangladesh has improved much over time, but significant challenges remain to achieve the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 on clean water and sanitation. In 2017, about 97 percent of the rural population had access to at least basic water supply. This achievement was largely due to the expansion of tube wells in rural areas, with close to 95 percent of rural people using them. Meanwhile, the community-led total sanitation approach enabled almost ending open defecation and widespread use of sanitation facilities. As a result, access to improved sanitation increased dramatically from 30 percent to 65 percent in rural areas from 2000 to 2017.

Access to safe WASH is critical to maximize human capital outcomes. The World Bank is supporting the government of Bangladesh to improve access to 'safely managed' water supply and sanitation in selected areas of rural Bangladesh, and to strengthen institutional capacity for water and sanitation.

## CHALLENGES

Only 3 percent of households in rural area have piped water connections. In 2017, only 32 percent of the rural population had access to a ‘safely managed’ sanitation service, and 35 percent still were using ‘unimproved’ sanitation facilities. According to UNICEF and WHO study in 2019, although 86 percent of the rural population had access to a designated handwashing facility, only 26 percent had access to facilities that have soap and water.

The Local Government (Union Parishad) Act of 2009 delegated the responsibility for provision of WASH services in rural areas to Union Parishads (UPs), but the capacity and accountability of UPs remain weak. Enhancing the sense of ownership and capacity of UPs to plan, deliver, and manage WASH services is central to the project’s success. The project intends to achieve this through clarifying the roles of UPs in WASH service delivery through policy documents, training UP officials, and providing incentives for their active participation. Three ministries and several institutions are involved in implementing the activities, coordination among these institutions specially at local level would be one of the key activities for effective operation.

## APPROACH

The Rural Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene for Human Capital Development Project uses a multisectoral convergence approach with two ongoing World Bank projects—Health Sector Support Project and Income Support for Program for the Poorest Project—to improve nutrition, health, and reduce stunting among children under five. It shares the same geographical locations, and the common delivery platforms including beneficiary targeting.

The extreme poor will get 100 percent grant to construct toilets and the other households have the option to take soft loan from micro credit institutions. The borrowers of sanitation loan are eligible to receive a grant of BDT 3,000 to construct a second pit for ensuring fecal sludge management. The project also focuses on strengthening the market delivery of WASH and creating jobs; building climate-resilient WASH facilities; as well as improving fecal sludge management (FSM). Furthermore, the Project will undertake behavioral change campaigns and build awareness to help prevent.

At the community level, the project will promote women’s representation and leadership in water management committees, with a target of women chairing 30 percent of these committees. These women will be trained and

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- **4.5 million** rural people to gain access to ‘safely managed’ WASH facilities at home.
- **1 million** people to gain access to WASH facilities in public spaces, including community clinics.
- **2.5 million** people to gain access to WASH facilities through government funding.



supported to raise their voices around WASH issues. The project will also facilitate access to finance to women entrepreneurs to help them market and sell soaps, disinfectants, and menstrual hygiene products at household doorsteps, improving menstrual hygiene practices, especially among adolescent girls.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The Project is fully aligned with the Government’s commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals by targeting assistance to the most vulnerable in the rural areas to better access safe water through pipe water connection at their premises and ‘safely managed’ sanitation facilities both at households and public places.



## Jamuna River Sustainable Management Project 1

### BASIC INFORMATION

#### APPROVAL DATE:

September 19  
**2023**

#### END DATE:

December 31  
**2028**

#### TOTAL COMMITMENT:

**\$102**  
million

#### IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:

Bangladesh Inland Water  
Transport Authority

Insurance Development and  
Regulatory Authority

Bangladesh Water  
Development Board

## NAVIGATING THROUGH JAMUNA'S RENEWED JOURNEY

### OVERVIEW

In the backdrop of Bangladesh's vision to achieve upper-middle-income status by 2031, efficient river management will play a key role. The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) recognizes the need to significantly increase investments in the water sector, targeting a rise from 0.6–0.8% to 2.5% of the GDP by 2030. Historically, a significant portion of the water sector's funding, around 70%, has been directed

towards the water resource management (WRM) subsector. Yet, most of this allocation has been geared towards capital expenditures, often sidelining essential aspects like repairs and maintenance. The Jamuna River Sustainable Management Project 1 seeks to redress this imbalance by emphasizing improved expenditure quality in the water sector, particularly in the WRM subsector.

## CHALLENGE

Historically, water management strategies were singularly driven by the imperative of food security. This translated into measures that sought to control monsoon floods for averting famines and leveraging groundwater extensively for rice cultivation during dry periods. While these approaches can be contextualized against the backdrop of Bangladesh's past struggles, they inadvertently led to suboptimal investments in holistic river management. The repercussions of such a narrow focus are evident in the existing floodplain management practices, inadequate protection of communities susceptible to floods, diminished capacities for inland water transport, and unsuccessful efforts in transboundary water collaboration. Augmenting these challenges is the presence of institutional bottlenecks. Despite having a comprehensive legal foundation in the form of the Water Act 2013 to guide river management, the responsible institutions grapple with fragmentation, limited technical prowess, and a lack of robust community engagement. Further complicating the scenario is a pronounced deficiency in assimilating gender perspectives and fostering gender diversity in water and river management.

## APPROACH

The First Jamuna River Sustainable Management Project seeks to strengthen flood management and enhance navigation along the Jamuna River. As the inaugural phase of a multi-project series designed to span 14 years, it embodies a long-term vision backed by the World Bank's commitment to the BDP2100 plan and facilitates continuous learning. The project strategically blends five key areas of focus: integrating green and grey infrastructure for flood and erosion control, establishing dynamic navigation channels for year-round large vessel movement, delivering swift financial support to communities post-flood events, bolstering institutional support for project management with the involvement of authorities like the Bangladesh Water Development Board, and setting up a contingency plan for rapid fund reallocation during unforeseen emergencies, especially those climate-related.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- **29.5 KM** of riverbank protective work, including embankments, re-excavation, geo-bags.
- **11** climate-adapted river structures to be constructed, maintained, and monitored.
- **260 Physical aids** to navigation to be installed and remain functional.
- **100,000 people** with enhanced access to transportation services.
- **1,200,000 beneficiaries** to be protected by risk finance solutions.
- Increased physical capacity for **flood management**.









# Energy



## Power System Reliability and Efficiency Improvement Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
April 26  
**2017**

END  
DATE:  
January 31  
**2024**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$59**  
million

IMPLEMENTING  
AGENCIES:  
Power Grid Company of  
Bangladesh Ltd.

## RELIABLE AND AFFORDABLE ELECTRICITY FOR ALL

### OVERVIEW

While Bangladesh significantly increased power generation capacity and access to electricity in recent years, the country still faces challenges to ensure quality and reliability of power supply. Unreliable power supply leads to voltage

drops and outages resulting in about 2 percent loss of GDP. The power system operation and control systems require upgradation and modernization to keep pace with the rapid expansion.

## CHALLENGE

The rapid increase of the power system size amplifies the challenge to ensure quality and reliability of supply with present operational tools and rules. To operate and expand efficiently, the power system operation needs to ensure frequency control, reduce voltage fluctuations, and enable merit-order dispatch.

There was a need to modernise and upgrade the power system infrastructure and the related operating procedures. The system is largely reliant on manual dispatch and controls that cannot ensure system economy and security. The absence of Fast Governor Response from power plants to abate demand-supply mismatch a key shortcoming and results in wide variation of system frequency and voltage fluctuations. Unstable frequency causes supply disruption and damages household appliances. Unreliable power supply causes significant production loss in case of industrial users. Lack of system automation and integration implies considerable delays and uncertainty in balancing the demand and supply situation. An absence of spinning reserve leads the system to give dispatch to inefficient and expensive power plants. Absence of automated merit order dispatch results in uneconomic system operation and leads to high-cost supply, requiring substantial annual subsidy.

## APPROACH

The project will contribute towards Government's vision for ensuring reliable and affordable power for all, through upgradation and modernization of the national power operation and control system. A proper frequency control is the key to ensuring quality supply and enabling integration of large power plants. The project is supporting to implement primary frequency control on a number of power plants to operate under a Free Governor Mode system by financing both software and hardware modifications to integrate generators with National Load Dispatch Centre (NLDC), modernize SCADA/EMS, and upgrade communication infrastructure. The project also addresses critical transmission bottlenecks by reconductoring of 40 km line and install dynamic line rating (DLR) to improve utilisation of transmission capacity. The project also supports capacity development of utilities specially in operational procedures and enhance cooperation among the agencies to sustain the outcomes.

Merit order dispatch protocol maximizes power generation from more efficient and less expensive generators. An in-depth institutional and policy review will be undertaken to identify systemic barriers that have led to un-optimal dispatch and operational challenges.

## RESULTS

- Reconductoring of **40 km** of two **132 kv** transmission lines have been completed and energized.
- Bidding documents for the modification of about **30** power plants to operate in a Free Governor Mode Operation (FGMO) has been completed and final response from Original Equipment Manufacturers is been awaited.
- Bidding document for the upgradation of SCADA/EMS tools at National Load Despatch Centers (NLDC), Back-Up NLDC and five new Area Load Despatch Centers (ALDC) has been completed.
- Bidding document for improvement of grid communication system has been completed.



## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

Reliable and low-cost power will benefit households and facilitate industrial and business growth. The project will reduce fiscal burden as efficient and optimum power system will cut down fuel consumption. Thus, reduced use of carbon intense fuel will lower greenhouse gas emission.



## Bangladesh Scaling-Up Renewable Energy Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

**APPROVAL DATE:**  
March 1  
**2019**

**END DATE:**  
July 31  
**2025**

**TOTAL COMMITMENT:**  
**\$156**  
million

**IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:**  
Electricity Generation Company of Bangladesh  
Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited  
Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority

## PRIVATE CAPITAL TO MEET RENEWABLE ENERGY CAPACITY

### OVERVIEW

Bangladesh has long been among the leading countries to expand off-grid solar home systems in the countryside. But the country has significant potential to scale up grid-connected renewable energy for electricity generation. The total installed renewable energy generation capacity is currently about 1,200 Megawatt (MW) and the share in grid supply only around 1 percent. However, various renewable energy resource assessments indicate considerable additional renewable energy capacity. To exploit this potential, the government of Bangladesh has put in place several plans and targets for adding renewable energy capacities.

The World Bank is supporting the government of Bangladesh with the Scaling Up Renewable Energy Project to add up to

310 Megawatt (MW) in renewable energy generation capacity in Bangladesh and mobilize private sector participation to meet the growing demand for electricity in the country. It will also help the country meet its climate change mitigation commitments.

Furthermore, the cost of electricity from utility-scale and rooftop solar PV is expected to be considerably lower than the diesel and heavy fuel oil -based generation which represent as much as 25% of total electricity generation in Bangladesh. The project will help Bangladesh meet its growing demand for electricity in a sustainable and cost-effective manner.

## CHALLENGE

Despite the Government commitment, progress on increasing the share of renewable energy has been slow. There are number of reasons for this, including:

- (i) Need for project implementation experience and strengthening institutional capacity: Till date, Bangladesh has only a few sizable solar projects commissioned and the rooftop PV market, although growing, still nascent.
- (ii) Financing Market Challenges: There is a lack of deep domestic financing market to provide long- term financing to projects, lack of due diligence capacity and lack of a functioning syndication market.
- (iii) Land constraint: Utility scale solar or wind require large amount of land. Being a densely populated country, land is the major challenge for developing utility-scale RE.
- (iv) Project Development Challenges: These barriers include insufficient data on resource availability, lack of technical studies, and inadequate preparation and due diligence of projects.

## APPROACH

The project is financing a 75 MW solar panel energy park in the Feni district, implemented by the Electricity Generation Company of Bangladesh (EGCB); the plant will be fully operational by end of 2023. The project has also established a Renewable Energy Financing Facility managed by the Infrastructure Development Company Limited (IDCOL). . Finally, the project provides resources to the Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority (SREDA) to support policy development, capacity building, a biogas pilot, and RE resource assessment,

The project engages both the public and private sectors and includes a combination of measures to address barriers. The Project will increase installed capacity of renewables through piloting and gradually scaling up investments in key market segments. The project will also help mobilize up to \$120 million from the private sector and commercial banks and another \$92 million from other sources of financing. The Renewable Energy Financing Facility will provide credit to developers of both rooftop solar PV and large-scale, land mounted solar PV.

The design of the Project considers the government strategy to develop a pilot through a public power generation utility in parallel to development of competitive tenders on public land for private sector IPPs.

## RESULTS

- **310 MW** generation capacity of renewable energy constructed.
- **\$120 million** private capital mobilized.
- **377,000 tons per annum** of carbon dioxide emissions reduced.



## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The project is currently in its implementation phase. The EGCB 75 MW project is almost completed, IDCOL has financed about 50 MW of rooftop PV and identified a strong pipeline of rooftop PV sub-projects, and SREDA is implementing a number of technical assistance activities with key stakeholders.



## Electricity Distribution Modernization Program

### BASIC INFORMATION



**APPROVAL DATE:**  
December 21  
**2021**



**END DATE:**  
December 31  
**2026**



**TOTAL COMMITMENT:**  
**\$500** million



**IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:**  
Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board  
Power Cell, Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources

## ENSURING RELIABLE, AFFORDABLE, AND CLEAN ELECTRICITY SUPPLY IN RURAL AREAS



### OVERVIEW

In the last decade, Bangladesh achieved a more than fourfold increase in electricity generation capacity and delivered electricity connections to more than 99 percent of its population. The Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board (BREB) implements one of the largest rural electrification programs in the world, delivering access to more than 90 million people. But the electricity distribution network has not kept pace with the remarkable increase in generation and demand. The lack of resilience and poor reliability of the distribution system is affecting Bangladesh's economic competitiveness and business environment. The Electricity Distribution Modernization Program helps increasing the delivery, reliability, and efficiency of electricity supply in Dhaka and Mymensingh Division of the BREB network.

## CHALLENGE

There are several challenges towards ensuring sustainable and affordable electricity in Bangladesh. First, electricity demand is projected to more than double by 2030, calling for an urgent increase in the capacity to deliver reliable and affordable electricity. Second, power utilities such as BREB still rely on manual methods for billing, metering, network operations and maintenance, hindering the sector's performance and jeopardizing the system in the face of exogenous shocks such as the COVID-19 related restrictions and natural hazards. Third, Bangladesh would need a significant amount of financing to rehabilitate and upgrade its electricity networks by 2041, but the segment has suffered from inadequate investments. Finally, as Bangladesh adopts renewable energy, electricity networks will need to expand and be refurbished to increase the penetration of variable renewable energy and reduce the cost of generating, transmitting, and distributing clean energy.

## APPROACH

The program will facilitate the transformation of Bangladesh's electricity distribution networks from a traditional grid architecture to one with the ability to support two-way flow of electricity and information. The project primarily helps to digitize and modernize 25 rural electric cooperatives or Palli Bidyut Samitis in Dhaka and Mymensingh Division and reduce electricity system losses. The project will help strengthen and expand the distribution network, including by improving its climate resilience and implementing new digital technologies, including Advanced Metering Infrastructure and Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) systems. The investments will aim at increasing the readiness of the power system to integrate distributed energy sources, by supporting the integration of distributed solar power in coordination with pilots of battery energy storage systems. The program will also strengthen the institutional capacity of the Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board (BREB) through preparation of a Rural Distribution Master Plan, and technical assistance to the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources through Power Cell.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The program will contribute to providing reliable, affordable, and sustainable electricity supply in Bangladesh. By modernizing and strengthening the system

## RESULTS

- **6,790 Gigawatt-hour** electricity delivered to BREB customers.
- Up to **30%** reduction in electricity system losses.
- **9 million** people get access to reliable and affordable electricity supply.
- **31,000 km** of distribution lines to be improved or constructed.
- **200,000** advanced meters to be deployed.
- Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition and **40 MWhs** of Battery Electricity Storage.
- System pilots completed in BREB distribution network.



and related institutions, the program will facilitate the energy transition and enable an effective response to the challenges and opportunities in the sector.



## Enhancement and Strengthening of Power Transmission Network in Eastern Region Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

#### APPROVAL DATE:

March 29  
**2018**

#### END DATE:

December 31  
**2024**

#### TOTAL COMMITMENT:

**\$450.64**  
million

#### IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:

Power Grid Company of  
Bangladesh

## UPGRADING ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION IN EASTERN BANGLADESH

### OVERVIEW

In recent years, the power generation capacity has significantly increased in Bangladesh. Proportionate investments in the transmission and distribution segments are required to ensure reliability of the electricity service. This is the backdrop against which the World Bank financed Enhancement and Strengthening of Power Transmission

Network in Eastern Region Project was designed; the objective being to mainly increase the transmission capacity and reliability of the electricity network in the eastern region. This initiative will not only boost the area's transmission system but will also enhance climate resilience.

## CHALLENGE

Among the sector's considerable goals, alleviating Bangladesh's transmission system bottlenecks is critical to ensuring that the increasing number of consumers connected to the grid receive reliable, good quality electricity supply. The network is currently under pressure due to the rapid growth of demand for electricity. A considerable number of grid substations and transmission lines are overloaded thus exacerbating the unreliable electricity supply in major load centers. The expansion of the electricity grid is further constrained due to land acquisition challenges, given that Bangladesh is a densely populated country. Based on current demand projections, the Bangladesh backbone grid should have capacity to transmit 50GW peak power by 2041. Hence to ensure that the investments in power generation capacity will not have the intended benefits, adequate and timely upgrade of electricity transmission and distribution systems is needed.

## APPROACH

The Enhancement and Strengthening of Power Transmission Network in Eastern Region Project will expand the electricity transmission network in the eastern region, covering greater Comilla and Noakhali and part of greater Chittagong. It will facilitate the connection of new electricity consumers and suppliers to the grid and improve the reliability and quality of supply within the project areas and beyond. The targeted investments include upgrade existing transmission lines and substations and the construction of new transmission lines and substations to meet the growing electricity demand.

By supplying uninterrupted power to Mirsharai Economic Zone, port, airport or other key economic facilities, the project will support the growth of economic activities, job creation, and integration of renewable energy.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

Network investments under this project are expected to maximize leverage of public finance for further development by unlocking private sector growth and bringing a transformational economic impact in the eastern region. The project is also expected to enable imported electricity after the establishment of a High Voltage Direct Connect (HDVC) interconnection at Comilla with Tripura (importing 500MW of power).

## RESULTS

- **9,040 MVA** increased transformation capacity in the project area.
- **70 times** reduced average interruption frequency per year in the project area.
- **290km** new transmission lines constructed.
- **157km** existing transmission lines rehabilitated.
- **13** new substations constructed and 1 rehabilitated.





## Gas Sector Efficiency Improvement and Carbon Abatement Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
July 27  
**2023**

END  
DATE:  
December 31  
**2028**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$300**  
million

IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:  
Petrobangla

Titas Gas Transmission  
and Distribution Company  
Limited

Pashchimanchal Gas  
Company Limited

## IMPROVING EFFICIENCY IN GAS DISTRIBUTION

### OVERVIEW

Conscious of both its increasing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions levels, the Government of Bangladesh committed to achieving an ambitious climate change agenda. The government revised its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) in August 2021, calling for actions, such as improving energy efficiency in the industrial sector and reducing fugitive methane emissions, which include leakages from gas production, processing, transmission, and distribution

pipeline networks. These actions contribute more to achieving Bangladesh's NDCs than all others in the transport, agriculture, and commercial sectors combined. The Gas Sector Efficiency Improvement and Carbon Abatement Project will help Bangladesh improve the efficiency of gas distribution and end-use through pre-paid metering systems for residential and industrial consumers and reduce methane emissions along the natural gas value chain.

## CHALLENGE

Bangladesh's upstream energy supply chain weighs heavily on its GHG emissions. The bulk of the country's emissions stem from production and use of oil and natural gas. Natural gas plays a dominant role as the primary energy source in Bangladesh, comprising 68 percent of the country's primary energy consumption in 2021. Methane (CH<sub>4</sub> or natural gas) emissions from venting and leakages in the oil and gas value chain were estimated at 257 kilotons (kT), roughly equivalent to 7.7 million tCO<sub>2</sub>. These emissions were mainly from upstream and midstream links of the value chain. Methane, the primary component of natural gas, is a potent GHG with a climate warming potential more than 25 times that of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), but its effects are more short-lived. It remains in the atmosphere for approximately 12 years, compared to centuries for CO<sub>2</sub>, making its rapid reduction one of the most important, cost-effective climate actions in the short- to medium-term. In the gas sector, it may be possible at avoid more than 70 percent of methane emissions with existing technology, approximately 45 percent of which can be avoided at no—or negative—net cost.

## APPROACH

The Project aims to achieve three outcomes that are designed to support Bangladesh's climate ambitions and its NDCs: (a) increasing efficiency of natural gas end-use to reduce gas demand; (b) reducing GHG emissions by improving monitoring in the gas network to identify and repair methane leaks; and (c) improving the enabling environment to abate carbon emissions throughout the country's oil and gas value chain.

The Project will help roll out prepaid gas meters to currently unmetered residential customers of Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Limited (TGTDL) and Pashchimanchal Gas Company Limited (PGCL), two of Bangladesh's 6 gas distribution companies. It will also help installing Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) and Geographic Information System on PGCL's network to improve gas flow monitoring. This will support Petrobangla, the national petroleum company, in detecting CO<sub>2</sub> and methane emissions from the Oil & Gas (O&G) sector operations, assessing their volume, location, concentration, and intermittency. It will also help to prioritize carbon abatement opportunities and funding options throughout the O&G value chain to reduce its carbon footprint and carbon intensity of O&G production and use.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- **1.228 million** prepaid gas meters rolled out to residential customers.
- **50** smart meters rolled out to industrial customers to pilot increased digitalization of gas use by large customers.
- **650 metric ton** of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduced annually.



## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

While Bangladesh accounts for less than 0.35 percent of global GHG (IMF 2019), the country became one of the most active proponents of planning and action on climate change. The government's Energy Efficiency and Conservation Master Plan up to 2030 calls for lowering energy intensity (national primary energy consumption per unit of GDP) in 2030 by 20 percent to 2013 levels. The Project is designed to support these objectives by encouraging conservation in residential gas consumption through proper metering and improving network monitoring to help identify and remedy leakages in the gas distribution network. It also provides technical assistance, as an initial step, to help detect GHG emission sources; identify and prioritize opportunities to reduce these emissions in existing infrastructure along the energy value chain; and develop regulatory frameworks for monitoring, reporting, and verifying protocols for sustained carbon abatement that can be implemented through policy initiatives and with public and private climate financing.









# Transport





## Bangladesh Regional Waterway Transport Project 1

### BASIC INFORMATION

#### APPROVAL DATE:

June 23  
**2020**

#### END DATE:

December 31  
**2026**

#### TOTAL COMMITMENT:

**\$500**  
million

#### IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:

Roads and Highways  
Department

Local Government  
Engineering Department

## IMPROVING DOMESTIC AND REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY THROUGH INLAND WATERWAYS

### OVERVIEW

As a riverine country, Bangladesh has a large and vibrant Inland Water Transport (IWT) sector. It has some 700 rivers, streams, and canals with a total length of about 24,000 km. Approximately 6,000 km are navigable during the monsoon (wet) period, shrinking to about 3,900 km in the dry periods. Though not as large as in the more developed countries, it carries approximately 194 million tons of cargo and about

one-quarter of all passenger traffic. The Bangladesh Regional Waterway Transport Project 1 (BRWTP1) is financing interventions aimed at improving IWT for cargo and passengers along the heavily trafficked Chittagong-Dhaka-Ashuganj river routes, and in so doing, stimulating traffic growth on the waterways and away from the already heavily congested roads along these routes.

## CHALLENGE

Despite its importance, the IWT has received little attention in the last few decades with only limited resources allocated to its development. The waterways receive only 4 - 7 percent of total transport sector funding. Current issues faced by the IWT sector include little funding allocated to maintenance of waterways other than ferry crossing routes and consequently inadequate dredging maintenance which fails to address rapid and continuous processes of sedimentation, outdated hydrographic capability and limited data acquisition for river maintenance and other planning purpose, poor navigation aid system and very limited night time aids, poor safety culture, including outdated rules and regulations concerning the design, licensing, construction, operation and maintenance of IWT vessels, insufficient vessel shelters, and the lack of facilities for searching and rescuing people in distress, and insufficient and dilapidated river port facilities for general cargo trade and passenger transport. Many terminal facilities consist of no more than wooden planks used to embark and disembark passengers which are a challenge for mothers with small children, pregnant women, elderly people and the disabled.

## APPROACH

The BRWTP1 will support navigation channel maintenance and improvement, navigation safety improvements, the construction, rehabilitation, and modernization of select river terminals, development of River Information Systems (RIS), institutional capacity development, and funding for research and development to enable continuing sector improvement and sustainability. This includes work on sector policies and strategies needed to improve revenue collection and management, incentivize public and private sector investments especially related to container transport, and mitigate and improve IWT's impact on the social and physical environment.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

To ensure sustainability of project investments and sector improvement, several key principles have been incorporated into the Project design. First, a performance-based maintenance approach is being piloted to innovate the more usual practice for river maintenance and is a departure from customary dredging contracts applied in Bangladesh which have not achieved desired results. Furthermore, the Project is also focusing on policy, regulatory and institutional development for the IWT sector to improve the

## RESULTS

- **Increased navigability** of the project river routes.
- **Increased availability** of Aids to Navigation.
- **Reduced travel time** on the Dhaka-Chittagong Corridor for cargo vessels.
- **Increase** in regional trade and transit traffic.



competitiveness and attractiveness of IWT, including attracting private sector investment, maintaining competitive transport costs, incentivizing modal shift, and getting to cost-recovery and eventually profitability for BIWTA.





## Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project 1

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
April 5  
**2017**

END  
DATE:  
December 31  
**2026**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$150**  
million

IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:  
National Board of Revenue  
Bangladesh Land Port  
Authority  
Ministry of Commerce

# MODERNIZING TRADE LOGISTICS AND IMPROVING INTEGRATION AND COMPETITIVENESS

## OVERVIEW

Bangladesh is well placed to play an important role in regional trade and logistics networks, and as a transit country in South Asia. There are corridors and associated border crossing points that connect Bangladesh to neighboring countries involving all modes of transport. Some corridors connect West Bengal, India, and the Southwestern region of Bangladesh to landlocked Bhutan, Nepal and the North-East Region (NER) of India. However, high logistical costs due to poor infrastructure and trade facilitation are

constraining Bangladesh from playing a more active role in regional integration despite its strategic geographical location. The Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project supports the Government of Bangladesh to improve the conditions for trade through improving connectivity, reducing logistics bottlenecks, and supporting the adoption of modern approaches to border management and trade facilitation.

## CHALLENGE

Bangladesh's relative cost advantage from being a low labor cost producer is diminished by poor performance in trade facilitation. For example, Bangladesh manufacturers' 'Order to Delivery Cycle' is 35 to 50 percent longer than many of their competitors. Trade-related infrastructure is inadequate, and border crossing times at some land ports are measured in days, rather than hours. The land ports are unable to accommodate existing and potential trade volumes, contributing to transport and clearance delays for traded goods. Furthermore, a significant proportion of Bangladesh's international trade procedures remains paper-based and continue to be managed manually, causing delay for border clearance, and hampering private sector competitiveness.

## APPROACH

The Project is supporting the development and improvement of four land ports - Sheola, Ramgarh, Bholaganj and Benapole - along the Southwest to Northeast Corridor that are key to facilitating regional and transit trade. It also supports the development of a National Single Window system, which will allow traders to submit all import, export, and transit information via a single electronic gateway, instead of submitting the same paperwork to multiple government agencies. Lastly, the Project focuses on supporting policies and investments to remove bottlenecks experienced by women in trade and business, facilitate skills development and bringing in more women traders into formal trade networks and global value chains.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

As global and regional markets become more competitive, the demand for shorter lead times is mounting. Improving trade infrastructure and facilitation will be critical for Bangladesh to sustain and accelerate export growth, including with its regional neighbors. While trade with India increased more than five-fold, from \$1.8 billion in 2005 to over \$9 billion in 2018, this is less than half of its current potential. The Regional Connectivity Project will introduce modern approaches to border and customs management, including the evolution towards integrated land border facilities and an enabling environment for domestic and cross-border collaboration between land port and customs administrations. Recognising that comprehensive border

## RESULTS

- **More than doubling** of freight volume at land ports.
- **Two-thirds reduction** in truck clearance at land ports.
- **40% reduction** in average time taken to meet regulatory requirements associated with import and export.



management and customs improvement require both a clear vision and strong political will and commitment, the project is also supporting an inter-ministerial National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee (NTTFC) to coordinate all trade and transport-related policies and activities in Bangladesh.





## Operation for Supporting Rural Bridge

### BASIC INFORMATION



**APPROVAL DATE:**  
January 9  
**2019**



**END DATE:**  
June 30  
**2025**



**TOTAL COMMITMENT:**  
**\$340.39**  
million



**IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:**  
Local Government  
Engineering Department

## RURAL BRIDGES-CONNECTING FOR A BETTER LIFE



### OVERVIEW

As Bangladesh's plain terrain is crisscrossed by hundreds of rivers and canals, bridges play a critical part in the country's road transport system. For every 4.5 km of roads in unions or upazilas, a bridge is needed to connect two disjointed road sections. While Bangladesh enjoys an extensive paved rural road network, lack of bridges in 36,311 locations make up for one-fifth of the existing gaps in rural road network, which are yet to be built. The Operation for Supporting Rural Bridges (SupRB) helps to improve the rural road communication and climate resilience through building, maintaining, and improving rural bridges in 61 districts.

## CHALLENGE

There are approximately 331,741 existing rural bridges and culverts on important Upazila and Union roads, but many of them are in damaged and poorly maintained condition. Climate events often hinders the timely completion of works. Good governance and transparency are critical to ensure quality and resilience features of physical works and timely completion. The major challenges faced by the Program include the COVID-19 pandemic and complexities relating to maintenance and preparation of new construction of Bridges Schemes.

## APPROACH

The Program is supporting 61 out of 64 districts of Bangladesh. The program aims to utilize the existing government system as much as possible.

The Program is making efforts to maintain, widen or rehabilitate existing bridges and building new ones in Upazila and Union roads. It is also creating jobs for local people. The Program is supporting the government's existing bridge program for developing and maintaining rural bridges and relevant capacities. It is also updating the rural bridge information and management system and improving contract and fiduciary management systems.

The project supports institutional strengthening and capacity building activities, including creating 20 new headquarters-level positions to strengthen LGED's institutional capacity, development and operationalization of Grievance Redressal System and of smartphone-based field inspection application, development, formalization, and implementation Guidelines for the Planning, Design and Implementation of Climate Resilient Rural Bridges, strengthen the Internal Audit Team, Preparation of Bridge condition Inspection and maintenance manuals including training etc.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The program has been designed to tackle governance challenges, and incorporated measures to ensure quality and climate resilience of bridgeworks. For instance, the Program has made a provision for comprehensive technical audits. There are scopes for LGED to better plan for selecting and prioritizing through the use of RuBIMS (rural bridges management information system) and contract planning and contract management areas through the use of ePMS

## RESULTS

- **49,839 meters** of bridges maintenance completed and a total of 90,500 meters of bridges to be maintained.
- **4,000 meters** to be rehabilitated: 391 meters rehabilitation have been completed.
- **2,500 meters** to be widened under capacity expansion: 58 meters capacity expansion have been completed.
- **1,458 meters** new bridges constructed. 18,936 meters to be replaced and newly constructed.
- Climate resiliency in rural bridge improved.



and e-CMS (once commissioned by government) and FIMS that help avoiding implementation delays and cost overruns. The Program has opened future opportunities for partnership with other Development Partner to support the government's rural bridge program following the Program concept.



## Western Economic Corridor and Regional Enhancement Program Phase 1

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
June 23  
**2020**

END  
DATE:  
December 31  
**2026**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$500**  
million

IMPLEMENTING  
AGENCIES:  
Roads and Highways  
Department  
Local Government  
Engineering Department

## IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY IN WESTERN BANGLADESH

### OVERVIEW

Bangladesh has made great strides in developing an extensive road transport system. Yet, poor quality of construction and maintenance of the primary, secondary and tertiary road network is common, resulting in poor riding quality, reliability, and impassable sections during the rainy season. The poor road conditions are resulting in high logistics costs, constraining Bangladesh from playing a more active role in regional integration despite its strategic geographical location. This is especially true in the western

region of Bangladesh, which is rich in agricultural production and holds potential of becoming a gateway for regional and international trade. The main highways connecting Western Bangladesh with Dhaka and beyond often remain heavily congested and road safety is an increasing concern. Farmers and local producers in the western region often suffer high post-harvest losses and incur high transport cost for taking products from farm to table due to poor conditions of secondary and tertiary roads.

## CHALLENGE

The road network in Bangladesh needs considerable investments for upgrading and maintenance. The primary road network is congested and in poor condition, operating at or near maximum capacity and is unable to keep up with rapidly increasing demand. The secondary and tertiary road network requires substantial investment in regular repair, rehabilitation, and upgrading. Additionally, the low but rapidly growing motorization rate poses serious threat to road safety, and unless rapid, scaled-up road safety investments are made, a continued upward trend in fatalities and injuries is inevitable. Further, Bangladesh's unique geographic conditions present challenges in developing and maintaining the transport system because of heavy rainfall, severe floods, greater temperature increase, and occasional severe draught.

## APPROACH

The first phase of the Western Economic Corridor and Regional Enhancement (WeCARE) Program will improve road connectivity along the Jashore-Jhenaidah national highway corridor covering four western districts. It will upgrade 48 km of national highway from Jashore to Jhenaidah, expand the highway from the existing 2-lane to 4-lane, improve safety, strengthen climate resilience, and improve digital connectivity by building fiber optic infrastructure along the corridor. Additionally, it will upgrade and rehabilitate targeted sections of the secondary and tertiary road network in Western Bangladesh, i.e., 260 km of existing rural roads, and improve 32 local markets to boost local economy. The project will enhance women's mobility and their role in the provision of transport infrastructure by addressing the societal, institutional, and individual barriers. The corridor will facilitate north-south trade with Bhutan, Nepal, and India as well as east-west trade with India through the Benapole and Bhomra land ports, which are the two most-used border crossing points between Bangladesh and India.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit the poorest hard with the loss of jobs and income. The project focuses on generating employment opportunities and increasing local female participation in the Transport sector labor force. The initiative draws on the Bank's GEMS platform, which provides a new technical solution for monitoring and continued transparency of work sites. A recent impact assessment has shown that Over 91 percent of the women employed under WeCARE were

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- **10%** improved efficiency of transport mobility on Jashore-Jhenaidah corridor.
- **5%** reduced post-harvest losses especially among small rural farm families.
- **50%** reduction in annual fatalities on Jashore-Jhenaidah corridor.
- **10%** of national and regional highways upgraded to climate resilient standards.
- **20** million people being benefitted.



able to meet day-to-day expenses compared to 13 percent at the start of the program. Financial counseling has helped 94 percent of the women save between a total of \$ 400 to 1,500 compared to only 25 percent of women with savings before the program. The assessments also point to new pathways toward a better life. 214 LCS workers have started their own small home-based enterprises ranging from cattle and poultry rearing to vegetable farming and sewing. Findings note an increase in access to financial services, ownership of assets, along with increased self-confidence among LCS workers. Aligned with the World Bank's priority to close gender gaps, the initiative is an example of how transport and road projects— a sector mainly dominated by men—can create opportunities for some of the most vulnerable women.

Additionally, the project supports the country's two key transport agencies— Roads and Highway Division and Local Government Engineering Department—to enhance emergency preparedness for any future pandemic or crisis.



## Bangladesh Road Safety Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

#### APPROVAL DATE:

March 28  
**2022**

#### END DATE:

June 30  
**2027**

#### TOTAL COMMITMENT:

**\$358**  
million

#### IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:

Bangladesh Police

Bangladesh Road Transport Authority

Directorate General of Health Services

Roads and Highways Division

## IMPROVING ROAD SAFETY MANAGEMENT AND OUTCOMES

### OVERVIEW

Road crashes kill more than 4,000 people every year in Bangladesh and countless more are seriously injured or disabled. With rapid increase of vehicles without adequate institutional mechanisms and investments to address road safety, the road safety situation has been worsening in the past decades. The Bangladesh Road Safety Project, the first stand-alone multi-sectoral road safety project for the World

Bank in South Asia, is supporting the country in planning and developing a long-term national program to improve road safety management and outcomes. It is supporting Bangladesh in achieving the road safety targets set out in the Sustainable Development Goals that call respectively for a halving of global road deaths and universal access to safe transport in cities by 2030.

## CHALLENGE

Institutions for road safety management in Bangladesh are not adequately empowered or held accountable for safety outcomes. There is a lack of coordination between the relevant ministries (including transport, health, and home affairs) to address road safety in a strategically planned manner. Other issues affecting road safety in the country include insufficient funding and a lack of priority for road safety. The current system of recording, analyzing, and reporting crashes in Bangladesh is cumbersome, error-prone, time-consuming, and unsuitable for analysis and benchmarking. Nearly 60 percent of road crashes are on inter-urban national and regional highways, highlighting the need to systematically tackle highway and district-level safety issues; the rest are in urban areas. Vehicle regulations and inspections are also inadequate to cater to the rapid growth in vehicle ownership. Furthermore, post-crash care systems in Bangladesh are at a nascent stage of development. Finally, there is little recognition of the road safety risks associated with gender-differentiated mobility patterns and little response to the prevailing problem of sexual harassment that female road users face.

## APPROACH

The Bangladesh Road Safety Project will help Bangladesh improve road safety and reduce fatalities and injuries from road traffic crashes in selected high-risk highways and district roads. In two national highways—N4 (Gazipur-Elenga) and N6 (Natore to Nawabganj)—the project will pilot comprehensive road safety measures, including improved engineering designs, signage and marking, pedestrian facilities, speed enforcement, and emergency care.

It will undertake road safety pilots in selected urban areas and district roads. It will help modernize the capacity of the Traffic Police and highway patrol to manage speeding and prevent risky road user behavior by instilling a combination of automated enforcement systems, such as CCTVs, electronic messaging, and physical measures to slow down traffic speed, including patrol vehicles and crash scene clearing equipment. To improve post-crash care, it will set up an ambulance service via a toll-free number and upgraded emergency care services in selected district hospitals, and Upazila Health Complexes along the two national highway corridors.

The project will undertake campaigns to create road safety awareness and behavioral change. It will support the development of a long-term national program and a National Road Safety Strategic Action Plan to improve road

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- **30%** reduction in road traffic crash fatalities on selected high-risk portions of the highway network.



safety. It will also undertake campaigns to create road safety awareness and behavioral change.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

To support the Government of Bangladesh's long-term vision of a sustained results-oriented program for road safety, the project lays a strong emphasis on capacity building and priority investments for the key stakeholder agencies, that will support the establishment of empowered and accountable road safety institutions. The strengthened institutional framework, policy changes, and adequate funding, all supported under the project, will lead to the development of a National Road Safety Program that will be sustained beyond the course of the project.



## Accelerating Transport and Trade Connectivity in Eastern South Asia – Bangladesh Phase 1 Project



### BASIC INFORMATION

**APPROVAL  
DATE:**  
June 28  
**2022**



**END  
DATE:**  
June 30  
**2028**



**TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:**  
**\$753.45**  
million



**IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:**  
Bangladesh Land Port Authority  
Department of Customs in National  
Board of Revenue  
Roads and Highways Division

## REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

### OVERVIEW

The deepening relationship among the countries of eastern South Asia (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal) on regional trade and transport is reflected by the increasing number of regional and bilateral connectivity agreements. Although trade between them increased from \$3 billion in 2005 to over \$18 billion in 2019, opportunities for growth through regional trade remain largely untapped. In South Asia, regional trade is around 5 percent of total trade, which compares poorly with East Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, where regional trade accounts for 50 percent and 22 percent of total trade, respectively.

Bangladesh is well placed to play a key role in regional trade and logistics networks and act as a transit country in South Asia. There are key corridors and border crossing points that connect Bangladesh to neighboring countries using various modes of transportation like roads, railways, and inland waterways. Some of these corridors connect the western region of Bangladesh to the north and east and beyond to landlocked Bhutan, Nepal, and the northeastern region of India. Bangladesh can also facilitate movement between South Asia, Myanmar, and the rest of East Asia.

## CHALLENGE

Low regional trade reflects the high cost of connectivity. Several countries in the region trade on better terms with distant economies than with their neighbors. It is less expensive for a company in Bangladesh to trade with a company in Brazil or Germany than with a company in India.

Several factors account for the high cost on trade and transport in Bangladesh, including inadequate transport and trade infrastructure, cumbersome regulations, manual processes, and protective tariffs and non-tariff barriers. A significant proportion of Bangladesh's international trade procedures and processes are manual, which introduce a layer of complexity, delay border clearances, and act as a costly impediment to the private sector. Furthermore, infrastructure has come under increasing strain as exports have doubled and imports almost tripled over the past decade.

Bangladesh's primary road network is congested and in poor condition, operating at maximum capacity with average speed less than 30 km per hour. Bangladesh's trade infrastructure, such as land ports and custom houses, is inadequate to accommodate the existing and projected trade volumes. The inadequate infrastructure at land ports, coupled with inefficient, manual, and paper-based processes - contributes to delays at border points for traded goods. Delays of four to five days at the busiest border points between Bangladesh and India are common. The return on investment in infrastructure and systems is undermined by policy, regulatory, and procedural impediments to regional trade.

## APPROACH

The Accelerating Transport and Trade Connectivity in Eastern South Asia (ACCESS) Program is a regional initiative aimed at helping Bhutan, Bangladesh and Nepal address the key barriers to regional trade — manual and paper-based trade processes, inadequate transport and trade infrastructure, and restrictive trade and transport regulations and processes. An ACCESS regional coordination and peer-to-peer learning platform has been established facilitate learning among participating countries, including India on border management, customs, transport, transit, and infrastructure resilience.

The ACCESS Bangladesh project supports the development of (i) Automated Border Management Systems at key border points, (ii) the resilient improvement of the Sylhet-Sheola (43 km) section of the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar

## RESULTS

- **30%** increase in freight throughput at key border points.
- **30%** in travel time along the project corridor.
- **40%** reduction in annual fatalities along the project corridor.
- **10%** physical customs inspection rate, down from the previous 25%.

Economic Corridor, (iii) increasing the infrastructure capacity and efficiency of the Benapole, Bhomra, and Burimari land ports, the three busiest land ports in Bangladesh, (iv) construction of the Custom House Chattogram and Customs, Excise and VAT Training Academy, Chattogram, and (v) technical assistance to support contemporary border management, risk management, transit facilitation, customs cooperation, and harmonizing customs requirements.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The ACCESS Program prioritizes transport corridors and trade that serve as the backbone of the physical and economic integration of the subregion. The program balances transport, trade, and digital infrastructure interventions with complementary trade and transport facilitation and policy measures to maximize development impacts. The Program design has considered that the demand for more infrastructure space may represent systemic inefficiencies that are resulting in cargo clearance delays. As such, the investment in modern logistics infrastructure will follow a re-engineering of processes and support the adoption of modern border management approaches. Sustainability is a core objective of the ACCESS Program. The emphasis on building institutional capacity, as well as bringing in international good practices - digitization and automation in particular, and green and resilient construction, will strengthen the participating countries' ability to develop quality, reliable, sustainable, and resilient infrastructure.









Urban





## Dhaka City Neighborhood Upgrading Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
March 29  
**2019**

END  
DATE:  
June 30  
**2024**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$100.5**  
million

IMPLEMENTING  
AGENCIES:  
Dhaka South City  
Corporation

## A MORE LIVEABLE DHAKA CITY

### OVERVIEW

Dhaka's population grew from 3 million in 1980 to over 19 million today. Due to inadequate infrastructure, lack of public amenities and severe traffic congestion, the residents face many difficulties in their everyday lives.

The Dhaka City Neighborhood Upgrading Project addresses some of these challenges and aims to enhance Dhaka's livability, specifically targeting the Dhaka South City

Corporation area. This initiative seeks to address the city's infrastructural and environmental issues by improving public spaces like streets, parks, and community centers. The project emphasizes pedestrian safety, increasing green spaces, multifunctional community centers, waterfront area revitalization and heritage conservation. The project is expected to benefit approximately 1 million people in Dhaka.

## CHALLENGE

With more than one-third of the country's urban population living in Dhaka, it is one of the world's most densely populated cities. Dhaka plays an important role in achieving the country's vision of upper-middle income country. For this, it must overcome its challenges in poor livability and resilience—people face challenges from inadequate infrastructure, severe congestion and pollution. We have seen in other countries that well-designed public areas such as streets, sidewalks, parks, open spaces, lighting, public buildings, and market areas can make a big difference in quality of life. These experiences have also shown that engaging a variety of stakeholders including community groups, private sector and non-profits, throughout the design process assist in building shared ownership for long-term success. The project is aiming to address these challenges by targeted localized neighborhood-scale interventions, leveraging community engagement to ensure neighborhood needs are taken into account.

## APPROACH

The Project is enhancing public spaces and urban services in four neighborhoods—Kamrangir Char, Lalbagh, Sutrapur-Nayabazar-Gulistan, Khilgaon-Mughda-Bashabo—under the Dhaka South City Corporation. It is undertaking interventions that are designed through a collaborative process with beneficiaries and other stakeholders. The project is financing improvements in public spaces such as streets, sidewalks, parks, open spaces, multipurpose community centres, waterfronts, and heritage conservation. It includes a focus on the needs of vulnerable users of public spaces such as women, youths, elderly and disabled.

Within the four selected neighbourhoods, the implementing agency has selected, screened and designed each subproject considered for financing based on specific criteria such as contribution to project objectives, citizen Community engagement, technical feasibility, Economic Viability etc. The project is looking at two areas: public space enhancement and place management as part of Urban Planning. While the public space enhancement focuses on Neighborhood-level public space upgrading and city-wide pilot traffic management improvements, the place management component is dealing with asset management and O&M.

## RESULTS

- **20%** increase in number of people accessing enhanced public spaces.
- **1,000,000** people including 500,000 women will have better living conditions.
- **12 new** multipurpose community centers designed and developed.
- **1 Heritage** Conservation intervention completed.
- **30 hectares** of public spaces improved.
- **30 kilometers** of roads rehabilitated.
- **10 intersections** have management strategies developed for them.
- **100%** outreach to community of selected neighborhoods regarding improvement in public space with approved plans for O&M and programming.



## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The Project will contribute as a rapid result pilot case for future expansion of sustainable urban public space improvement in other major cities in Bangladesh with increased capacity of the City Corporations as lead implementing agencies in sustainable urban development. The Project will also contribute to the broader scheme of development for metro Dhaka.



## Local Government COVID-19 Response & Recovery Project



### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
February 24  
**2022**



END  
DATE:  
December 31  
**2025**



TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$300**  
million



IMPLEMENTING  
AGENCIES:  
Local Government  
Engineering Department

# STRENGTHENING URBAN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS' RESPONSE TO COVID-19 AND FUTURE SHOCKS



### OVERVIEW

During the COVID-19 pandemic, communities around Bangladeshi cities and towns experienced highly negative health impacts, jobs and livelihood losses, and a deterioration of basic services. Urban local government institutions (ULGIs) are well-positioned to play an important role in responding to and recovering from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and, especially, in supporting the urban poor. With Bangladesh being extremely vulnerable to climate change, ULGIs themselves need urgent support in order to strengthen climate resilience, and become better prepared to respond to future shocks, such as disease outbreaks and climate-induced disasters.

## CHALLENGE

Similar to global trends, urban areas in Bangladesh have been much more affected by COVID-19 than rural areas due to high density, challenges in practicing social distancing, and the concentration of informal settlements and informal economic activities. An urban monitoring survey carried out in June 2022 estimated that 93 percent of enterprises owned and operated by the poor reported lower revenues than before COVID-19. These impacts are more severe for the poor living in slum areas due to their limited coping strategies and depleted savings and assets. Existing gender inequalities in Bangladesh have also been exacerbated due to COVID-19. Micro-surveys carried out after the COVID-19 outbreak indicate that employment outcomes for women are deteriorating to a greater degree compared to men.

## APPROACH

The Local Government COVID-19 Response and Recovery Project (LCGRRP) aims to strengthen the response of municipalities and the city corporations to the COVID-19 pandemic and their preparedness for future shocks. The project provides COVID 19 response grants to ULGs to effectively respond to and recover from the pandemic in a coordinated manner, by providing basic and climate resilient urban services, ramping up local-level COVID-19 recovery measures in services, health, jobs and livelihoods, carrying out community outreach and raising awareness, and promoting local economic development.

In the medium term, the project will also help to strengthen ULGI capacity to better prepare for climate change, disasters and health shocks, by providing technical assistance to all ULGs to prepare local preparedness plans for future shocks, including health and climate crises. It will also support incorporation of climate considerations into municipal budgets, infrastructure, and services, and improve the climate resilience of local infrastructure.

The project's COVID 19 Response Grants (CRGs) will rely on existing fiscal transfer systems to channel project resources to ULGs and monitor results on the ground. The CRGs will be provided to 329 municipalities and 10 City Corporations (all ULGs except Dhaka North and Dhaka South City Corporations which are being supported by other initiatives).

## RESULTS

- Nearly **30 million** people in urban areas will benefit directly or indirectly from project activities.
- **329** Pourashavas and 10 City Corporations will have a stronger capacity to respond to climate, disaster, and health-related crises.
- About **10,000** women will benefit from employment under public works schemes.



## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

Multisectoral coordination and participatory preparation of local COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plans (CRRPs) by the ULGs will ensure complementarity with ongoing sectoral COVID-19 response interventions targeting individuals and households needs. ULGs are working with already established Town-Level Coordination Committees (TLCCs) and City Development Coordination Committees (CDCCs) to lead the preparation and implementation of local CRRPs. Guidelines have been developed and adopted to ensure that rehabilitation and development of essential services, infrastructure and economic assets will integrate resilience designs to strengthen disaster and climate risk mitigation, and will be implemented through labor-intensive works to promote local job creation and economic recovery.







# Finance and Competitiveness





## Export Competitiveness for Jobs Project



### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
June 1  
**2017**

END  
DATE:  
June 1  
**2025**



TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$100**  
million



IMPLEMENTING  
AGENCIES:  
Ministry of Commerce

# ENHANCING COMPETITIVENESS FOR EXPORT DIVERSIFICATION AND BETTER JOBS



### OVERVIEW

The Bangladesh economy has undergone important structural shifts, and the industrial sector has become a large contributor to growth and employment. The Export Competitiveness for Jobs (EC4J) project directly contributes to the Government's policy objective of diversifying exports beyond ready-made garments (RMG), which currently make up 82 percent of exports. The project helps to diversify exports in labor intensive and globally competitive industries such as leathergoods, footwear, light engineering, and plastics sectors. It also helps to improve environmental and social compliance standards and create more and better jobs.

## CHALLENGE

Firms in the non-RMG manufacturing sector in Bangladesh are seeking to integrate into global value chains but development is held back because of insufficient technology and skills adoption, and a general lack of compliance with international environmental, social, and quality standards. Market failures such as information asymmetry between foreign buyers and Bangladeshi sellers regarding standards and accreditations in high-income markets and coordination failures where market participants are too disorganized to effectively address issues of mutual interest, such as policy advocacy, articulation of demand for skills, and agreement on common needs for technology adoption, act as impediments to growth.

## APPROACH

The project supports private companies address some of the constraints they face in regard to accessing export markets, enhancing productivity, improving environmental, social and quality standards, and accessing shared infrastructural facilities. It focuses on a Market Access Support Program to address critical constraints for the private sector to access international markets and integrate in global value chains- by enhancing knowledge, skills and capacity to improve compliance standards, a Productivity Enhancement Program to address constraints related to quality and productivity improvements through skills and technology diffusion- by establishing technology centers, and a Public Investment Facility for Infrastructure Constraints to address infrastructure constraints - by supporting development cluster infrastructure. The implementation engages multiple stakeholders, including private sector associations in the relevant sectors, and government agencies as required.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The project activities are generally on a positive track and the implementation is expected to gain momentum in the coming months as the grants are fully disbursed and the construction of the technology centers starts.

## RESULTS

- **82.68%** annual increase in exports of targeted sectors in FY23 from FY16 baseline.
- **176,932** jobs created in targeted sectors.
- **107,673** direct project beneficiaries; 38% of whom are women.
- **570** firms received Export Readiness Fund to assess and improve the environmental social and quality compliance and to diversify into new markets resulting in \$17.97m of private co-investment.





## Bangladesh Insurance Sector Development Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
March 20  
**2017**

END  
DATE:  
February 28  
**2024**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$65**  
million

IMPLEMENTING  
AGENCIES:  
Insurance Development  
and Regulatory Authority

## INCREASING INSURANCE COVERAGE AND PROTECTION

### OVERVIEW

Development of a robust insurance sector is highly important for Bangladesh sustainable economic growth, social inclusion and protection of people and businesses from potential risks and losses. Devastating impact of COVID pandemic on people's lives, health, income and jobs have shown a great importance of insurance protection, especially for more vulnerable groups of population as well as regions and businesses impacted by climate change or other shocks. Usage of various insurance products (such as health or life insurance, property, motor vehicle, crop or liability insurance) helps individuals, families, farmers, businesses and organizations to reduce losses and better manage risks,

especially at time of crisis. The insurance sector is also important for mobilizing longer term savings and supporting investments into the economy. Despite high importance of insurance sector and continued growth of the number of insurance policy holders, the insurance sector in Bangladesh remains small and underdeveloped. Insurance penetration, as measured by the share of insurance premiums collected by insurance companies to GDP, remains at 0.5 percent of GDP, which is the lowest ratio in Asia, compared to 4.2% in India and 2.3% in Vietnam.

## CHALLENGE

The key challenges include low institutional capacity of the insurance market regulator Insurance Development and Regulatory Authority (IDRA) and domestic insurance companies, lack of project implementation experience and low technological advancement. Other challenges include the underperforming of state-owned insurance companies and lack of tailored products to suit the people's needs. Moreover, products quality, delivery channels, claims management and payment practices need to improve significantly in order to see higher market growth and more customers.

## APPROACH

The project supports the authorities of Bangladesh with implementing the key reforms necessary to advance sound growth of insurance market, development and offer of new insurance products, and protection of insurance policy holders. The project focuses on strengthening the institutional capacity of the insurance regulator - Insurance Development and Regulatory Authority (IDRA), advancing insurance sector regulatory framework more in line with international standards, enhancing business processes and performance of two state-owned insurance corporations—Sadharan Bima Corporation (SBC) and Jiban Bima Corporation (JBC), and building capacity of Bangladesh Insurance Academy (BIA) to expand insurance training and market awareness.

## RESULTS

- **40%** of the domestic insurance market would be supervised by smart Risk-based Supervision (RBS) of IDRA by 2024.
- **24 million** insurance policy holders (life and non-life) by 2024.
- At least **70 insurance companies** will be following the corporate governance guidelines issued by IDRA by 2024.

The project supports implementation of the first phase of insurance market reforms. It includes strengthening IDRA regulatory requirements and supervisory capacity necessary to adopt a risk-based supervision (RBS) approach to improve insurance market practices, governance, and increase policy holders' protection. Investments under BISDP also envision modernization and automation of business processes and core operational systems of IDRA, JBC, SBC and BIA, development of new insurance products and delivery channels for JBC, SBC, along with enhanced market training and awareness, consumer protection and better claims management.





## Investment Promotion and Financing Facility Project II

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
April 05  
**2017**

END  
DATE:  
April 30  
**2027**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$256.7**  
million

IMPLEMENTING  
AGENCIES:  
Bangladesh Bank

# HARNESSING PRIVATE PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE GROWTH

## OVERVIEW

Bangladesh needs faster and higher growth to attain its vision of becoming an upper middle income country by 2031. Inadequate infrastructure is among the key binding constraints to higher growth. The World Bank is supporting the Government of Bangladesh through the Bangladesh Investment Promotion and Financing Facility II (IPFF II) project for promoting long-term financing for private sector-

led infrastructure in diverse sectors including economic zones, renewable energy, information and communication technology, port development, and solid waste management. IPFF II project was built on the success of the first phase (original IPFF) where 21 sub-projects were financed in power, ICT, health, water treatment, and port sector.

## CHALLENGE

In Bangladesh, the required investment in infrastructure is hugely constrained by challenging public fiscal space and lack of adequate private participation in infrastructure sectors. Government is promoting private sector-led infrastructure projects, but because investment activities are overwhelmingly dependent on short term commercial bank lending, the private entrepreneurs are finding it difficult to source long-term equity and debt for funding the long-term assets created under the infrastructure investments.

## APPROACH

The project helps build local financial institutions' capacity to provide long-term financing to private companies to undertake diverse infrastructure projects. It follows a financial intermediary lending model of financing whereby partial debt financing (up to 50 percent of the total project cost) is provided for 8 – 20 years through participating financial institutions (PFIs), selected based on rigorous performance indicators. The private investment sponsor that receives the funding utilizes the proceeds for construction and implementation of the infrastructure sub-project.

## RESULTS

- **\$417.35 million** equivalent of private capital mobilized, from the markets by on-lending of US\$213.37 million resulting in a leverage ratio of 1.96.
- **22,434** jobs created, of which 4,431 are women, through the 9 supported sub-projects.
- **21** banks and non-bank financial institutions have partnered with the project and have met minimum eligibility criteria and enhanced their capacity to lend for longer-term infrastructure subprojects.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The Project will collaborate with IFC Investments and Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC), and capital markets development initiatives of the World Bank Group for fostering an ecosystem where diverse financing instruments like project bonds, guarantees, credit enhancements, mezzanine financing, securitizations etc can be issued and invested by institutional investors like mutual funds, pension funds, life insurance funds along with the banks.







## Bangladesh Private Investment & Digital Entrepreneurship Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
June 19  
**2020**

END  
DATE:  
December 31  
**2025**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$500**  
million

IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:  
Bangladesh Economic Zones  
Authority,  
Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park  
Authority,  
Economic Relations Division

## PROMOTING PRIVATE INVESTMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

### OVERVIEW

In recent years, the manufacturing—particularly the ready-made garments (RMG) sector—has been a major driver of the economic growth. It employs more than four million workers, most of whom are women, and accounts for 84 percent of the country's total exports. However, the pace of job creation has almost stalled in the RMG sector. In the aftermath of the

COVID-19 pandemic, Bangladesh will need to increase private investment—especially foreign direct investment (FDI)—to raise productivity levels, diversify exports and accelerate economic transformation. Economic zones and hi-tech parks will be critical to attract private investment, diversify export and create more quality jobs.

## CHALLENGE

To reach the next level of economic transformation, Bangladesh will need to attract more FDI. Bangladesh Export Zones Authority (BEZA) was established to lay the foundation for a market of serviced industrial land to attract private investment and create jobs in manufacturing and industry. It is critical that BEZA strengthen its core expertise and build capacity in areas important to its continuing success, including planning, asset and financial (pricing) management, safeguards management, monitoring and regulatory enforcement, and space for private participation.

## APPROACH

The project promotes and attracts direct private investments in selected public and private economic zones and software technology parks where it helps address binding supply-side constraints. It helps create an enabling environment for Bangladesh to maintain and attract domestic and foreign producers by significantly strengthening BEZA's capacity to manage social and environmental safeguards, implement Public- Private Partnership for infrastructure and green zone, and strengthen institutional capacity through policy reforms.

The project supports to develop the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Shilpa Nagar II (BSMSN-2) economic zone in Mirsarai-Feni, including climate-resilient road networks with stormwater drainage, solar power, gas network, Central Effluent Treatment Plant, waste management system. This state-of-the-art green and resilient economic zone, when

## RESULTS

- **150,000** new jobs created.
- **\$3.7 billion** in direct private investment in economic zones.
- **150 companies** using green and resilient services and facilities.
- **30,000 tons** per year of greenhouse gas emissions avoided.

completed, will set an example for sustainable, resilient and environmentally sound industrial development in Bangladesh.

It is also supporting to establish Dhaka's first digital entrepreneurship hub in the Vision 2041 Software Technology Park and turn it into a green building. The project is also strengthening digital entrepreneurship through training and innovation support, with special emphasis on women digital entrepreneurs. This includes a program to mentor, advise and train digital entrepreneurs for start-up and scale-up facilities and University Innovation Hubs in technological universities and business schools.

By creating jobs and attracting private investment, the project will help economic recovery from the pandemic.









# **Governance, Equity and Digital Development**



## Bangladesh Strengthening Public Financial Management Program to Enable Service Delivery

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL DATE:  
March 29  
**2019**

END DATE:  
June 30  
**2024**

TOTAL COMMITMENT:  
**\$100.5**  
million

IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:  
Ministry of Finance

## PAVING WAY FOR STRONGER PUBLIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

### OVERVIEW

Bangladesh's PFM reform journey started in 1989-1990 with the Committee on Reforms in Budgeting and Expenditure Control (CORBEC). In 1993, the government with donors' technical assistance, initiated "Reforms in Budget and Expenditure Control (RIBEC)" which aimed at reforming budget and expenditure control system and process. A follow on "Financial Management Reform Program (FMRP)"

was launched in 2003. In 2010, the government and five development partners supported a large multi donor trust funded "Strengthening Public expenditure Management Program (SPEMP)", administered by the World Bank. In FY 2018, the World Bank approved the Strengthening Public Financial Management Program to Enable Service Delivery.

## CHALLENGE

Despite impressive the improvements in PFM, there is significant room to improve several PFM areas which are limiting effective delivery of services to citizens. Key limitations include i. less than optimal budget absorption capacity; ii. shortcomings in the revenue forecast and expenditure budgets; iii. Insufficient fiscal and performance monitoring of State-owned Enterprises (SOEs); iv. weak internal control and internal audit; v. significant delays in the preparation of fiscal reports and audit of central accounts; vi. Poor executive response: Audit findings and recommendations is not acted upon in a timely manner.

## APPROACH

To resolving the PFM bottlenecks by strengthening the institutions and systems, under the stewardship of Finance Division, MoF, a comprehensive Bangladesh PFM strategy 2016-21 was prepared. A PFM Action Plan 2018-23 to support effective implementation of the PFM Strategy, with clearly defined 5 strategic goals was approved by the Minister for Finance. The plan sets out government's PFM priorities and included 14 components. The SPFMS program has been helping the government to implement 8 out of 14 components of the PFM Action Plan.

The program aims at helping improve fiscal planning, pension and debt management and SOE. Additionally, the SPFMS allows the necessary flexibility for the government to course correct as needed to achieve the reform targets.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

SPFMS will significantly improve the PFM systems and the achievement of results under the Program will lead to resource availability to enable service delivery for the citizens of Bangladesh. The recent PFM Summit FY 23 served as a crucial platform for policymakers, financial experts, and stakeholders to chart a new course for the future of public financial management. The govt is contemplating a strong and sustainable PFM to meet the aspiration of a prosperous Bangladesh. To this end, a new Bangladesh PFM Action Plan and Strategy 23-28 is discussed and being approved in FY 23.

## RESULTS

- Over **37 million** beneficiaries of the Integrated Budget and Accounting System iBAS++ in 2022-2023.
- **1.2 million** Government Civil and Defense employees receive salary.
- **840,737** retirees receive pensions without any hassles.
- Over **18 million** students receive stipends.
- Close to **13 million** social safety net beneficiaries.
- **30 million** poor and vulnerable people receive social protection benefits.
- **35 million** families received cash transfer amounting to over BDT 2 crores, during COVID-19.
- **BDT 400 to 500** crore annual savings for the Government of Bangladesh.





## National Strategy for Development of Statistics Implementation Support Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
March 22  
**2018**

END  
DATE:  
February 27  
**2024**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$15**  
million

IMPLEMENTING  
AGENCIES:  
Bangladesh Bureau of  
Statistics

## RELIABLE DATA FOR BETTER PLANNING

### OVERVIEW

Quality statistics are necessary for development and poverty reduction efforts. Timely and accurate statistics provide evidence for policy decisions. Bangladesh is taking steps to enhance the availability, quality, and reliability of statistics by implementing the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS). The NSDS Implementation Support Project

focuses on coordinating statistical activities, bolstering human resources and ICT infrastructure, improving core statistics quality, promoting access to official statistics, and project management. It aims to produce timely and accurate statistics to aid policymaking.

## CHALLENGE

To support the fast-growing economy of Bangladesh, there was an urgent need to establish a world-class national statistical system (NSS) capable of producing quality core statistics in a manner easily accessible to policymakers and the public. This required several improvements in the statistical system, including updating legislation, policies, and institutional arrangements to provide the system with legal and institutional support. There was also a need for improving management systems, human and ICT resources, statistical infrastructure. Finally, the system needed to strengthen the interaction between users and producers so that users' feedback is incorporated in data production and the process becomes more user-centric.

## APPROACH

The NSDS was developed with a focus on meeting the needs of all users of official statistics, promoting effective dissemination of statistics, and strengthen all statistical services to support the growth of Bangladesh's rapidly developing economy. As a result, the NSDS Implementation Support project was designed to improve the capacity of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) to produce quality core statistics and make them accessible in a timely manner to policymakers and the public. Through project financing and collaboration with key experts, BBS was able to train over 5,000 staff on basic, intermediate and advance level trainings and leverage technology for all its major activities, including surveys and censuses by using Computer-Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI). As a result, preliminary reports for core surveys were produced within the first 3 months of survey completion. To further support the coordination and management of statistical activities, develop human resources, and enhance data access and use, the project continued with the formation of the National Advisory Council on Statistics (NACS), offering of intermediate and advance subject matter training to staff, and signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with other data producers.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The BBS is undertaking a review and update of the current NSDS (2013-2023) to implement the statistical modernization agenda for the next 10 years and ensure more inclusive statistical ecosystem is in progress. There is broader engagement and potential subsequent initiatives to modernize Bangladesh's statistical systems and sustain the gains made under the current project.

## RESULTS

- Over **4,618** BBS staff trained on different basic, intermediate, and advance subject matter trainings.
- **National Advisory Council on Statistics** (NACS) established to enhance data coordination.
- Advance released calendar prepared as well as **8** key reports or strategic documents/plans.
- Memorandum of Understanding signed with data producers to **enhance data sharing**.
- Computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) introduced for key surveys and censuses, including the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES), Quarterly Labor Force Survey (QLFS), and Population and Housing Census (PHC).
- Selected core surveys' microdata anonymized and made accessible.





## Bangladesh: Enhancing Digital Government & Economy Project

### BASIC INFORMATION



**APPROVAL DATE:**  
June 19  
**2020**



**END DATE:**  
September 30  
**2025**



**TOTAL COMMITMENT:**  
**\$295**  
million



**IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:**  
Bangladesh Computer Council

## FOUNDATION FOR A DIGITAL ECONOMY

### OVERVIEW

The Government of Bangladesh (GOB) has sought to digitalize government and public services to citizens and businesses, as well as prepare the overall economy for the country's next phase of growth and economic development and resilience.

The EDGE Project will support part of that program, focusing on investments that will strengthen the foundations for digital government and service delivery, and help

Bangladesh to position itself as a competitive participant in the global digital economy. These investments will also support the country's ability to respond to pandemics like COVID-19 and future health or climate-related crises, by creating the means for the GOB to rely on digital technologies for business continuity. The Project will also prepare young people for the jobs needed in a fast-digitizing global economy whose trade flows might shift in the wake of the pandemic.

## CHALLENGE

Bangladesh's reliance on labor intensive manufacturing for exports and on remittances from low-skilled workers makes it vulnerable to the disruptive impact of emerging technologies and the Fourth Industrial Revolution unless it gears up for digital transformation.

COVID-19 has impacted economic activities across all sectors. Private consumption, the main engine of growth, is expected to slow and declining remittance inflows will likely reduce household income. The decline in exports, and fall in industrial production, are expected to dampen growth.

Further, Bangladesh remains to be one of most vulnerable countries to climate change. Therefore, it is critical have proper digital infrastructure in place to continue operating and delivering services in the face of natural disasters.

## APPROACH

The project will establish an integrated, cloud-computing digital platform for all government agencies and improve digital education, training, and publicity activities to strengthen the awareness and knowledge of digital technologies and cyber security risks. This will build resiliency for future crises as the platform will enable the government to operate virtually and deliver critical public services to citizens and businesses.

It will help the government develop legal frameworks, policies, rules, and implementation capacity to establish an enabling environment that is consistent with a digital government and digital economy. A Digital Leadership Academy will be established under the Bangladesh Computer Council (BCC) to serve as the government's digital innovation hub and training for its civil service.

The project will train more than 100,000 youth in digital and disruptive technologies and establish Centres of Excellence with academia and the ICT industry. It will create 100,000 jobs, with a special focus on women. It will raise the revenues of IT firms by \$300 million and promote local IT firms in international markets. The project will help for establishment of training, research and innovation centres to improve digital skills of students, develop emerging technology strategies and plans for research and innovation, and build research and innovation capacities, including through the technology partnerships

## RESULTS

- **\$200 million** in cost-efficiency savings through use of Integrated Digital Platform by GoB agencies.
- **61** GoB Ministries and Divisions with improved end-point cybersecurity.
- **100,000** jobs, 30% of which are for women.
- **\$300 million** increase in revenue of IT industry firms supported by the project activities.
- A shared, **cloud-computing platform** to be established for use by any GoB agency to build, operate and maintain its sector-specific systems, applications, and services.
- **10** Research and Innovation Centers (RICs) will be established to support training and build the research capacities of students.









# **Environment and Natural Resources**





## Bangladesh Sustainable Coastal and Marine Fisheries Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
October 05  
**2018**

END  
DATE:  
June 30  
**2025**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$240**  
million

IMPLEMENTING  
AGENCIES:  
Department of Fisheries  
Social Development  
Foundation

## BLUE ECONOMY FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

### OVERVIEW

The seafood sector is strategically important for the Bangladesh economy, food security, and the livelihoods of millions of fishermen and stakeholders along the production chain. To ensure fisheries' sustainability and enable responsible private-sector-led growth, the Government has set an ambitious reform agenda, which the Sustainable

Coastal and Marine Fisheries Project (BSCMFP) supports. This is the first phase of a longer-term programmatic effort to increase coastal and marine fisheries' contribution to the country's Blue Economy, poverty reduction, and environmental stability.

## CHALLENGE

The seafood sector has emerged as a major growth driver, consistently contributing around 4 percent of GDP for the last decade. Still, the proportion of the fishing community living in poverty and extreme poverty remains high, at 24 and 13 percent, respectively. Lack of effective marine fisheries governance, growing overfishing, and resource degradation further threaten fisheries and fisheries-dependent livelihoods. While the country has consistently ranked among the biggest aquaculture producers globally, the productivity levels for most smallholder farmers remain among the lowest. Poor access to financing and markets are barriers in the sector's capture and culture segments. Besides, the availability of food, habitat, and appropriate ocean conditions for fish stocks are shifting due to climate change. In line with priorities outlined in the GOB's Blue Economy Initiative, public sector interventions are needed to catalyze a sector-wide shift "from "volume to value" by enabling responsible private-sector-led growth.

## APPROACH

The Bangladesh Sustainable Coastal and Marine Fisheries Project (BSCMFP) is the first operation in a two-phase program to improve the management of coastal marine fisheries and aquaculture. It will help improve fisheries management systems, infrastructure, value chain investments and encourage private sector investment. The project will strengthen institutional capacity and invest in wider community participation in fisheries co-management to enhance best practices to reduce fishing pressure. The project will enable sustainable fisheries sector investments and growth activities, improve infrastructure and production practices, empower communities, and enhance livelihoods.

Marking the World Bank's first reengagement in Bangladesh's fisheries sector in nearly two decades, the project will help stimulate fisheries sector reforms.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

Building on the sector governance and management achievements pursued under the current project, the second phase of the program is expected to invest in consolidating the sector reforms, building on the fisheries management improvements, scaling up pilots to improve

## RESULTS

- **8,500** artisanal fishing vessels brought under effective monitoring and surveillance along with improved management of targeted coastal belt capture and introduction of fisheries management plans.
- **39,636** fisher households received support in form of revolving loan to improve access to finance and for livelihood activities outside the capture fisheries sector.
- **7,500** shrimp aquaculture smallholders have access to improved productivity, financing, and markets.
- **77,826** coastal aquaculture farmers received emergency cash support during COVID-19 pandemic.
- The availability of more productive and disease-resistant shrimp post-larvae for inputs has **more than doubled** in the Bangladesh market.



coastal communities' and fishers' livelihoods; and continue to close the infrastructure and technological gaps to enable sustainable private sector participation, to generate higher-value capture from domestic and export-oriented capture and culture fisheries.



## Sustainable Forest & Livelihood Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
October 05  
**2018**

END  
DATE:  
December 31  
**2024**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$175**  
million

IMPLEMENTING  
AGENCIES:  
Bangladesh Forest  
Department

## IMPROVING FOREST COVERAGE FOR BETTER RESILIENCE

### OVERVIEW

Healthy forests are critical for livelihoods for forest dependent communities. About 19 million Bangladeshis depend on forests for their livelihoods. Yet, the forest cover is decreasing: the proportion of land under forests in Bangladesh is only 11 percent, which is significantly lower than the Asian average of 26 percent. Forest degradation is primarily caused by clearing for agriculture and infrastructure development, unmanaged fuelwood

and timber extraction and shifting cultivation induced fires in hills.

The Sustainable Forest and Livelihood (SUFAL) project helps to improve forest cover and enhance carbon sequestration through sustainable management of forest resources and introduction of a collaborative forest management approach involving local communities.

## CHALLENGE

In the last several decades, Bangladesh witnessed a steady decline in forest cover. Largely driven by unsustainable logging, conversion of forest areas into settlements, pastures, croplands, wastelands, or land used for recreational or industrial purposes. Rapid land use changes threaten the country's remaining forests. The forest cover has been declining by 2.1 percent in the last three decades alone. At present, only 13.20 percent of forests in Bangladesh has tree cover with density of 30 percent and above.

The Bangladesh Forest Department (BFD) faces challenges to effectively manage the remaining natural forests and prevent degradation due to high population density and incidences of encroachment.

## APPROACH

The project supports an important shift in BFD's approach to managing forests: (i) from a purely law enforcement approach towards collaborative forest management; and, (ii) from a regulatory approach to service delivery to enhance private sector engagement.

The project also supports forest dependent communities with alternative livelihoods to reduce poverty and their dependence on forest resources in the coastal, hill and central districts. In Cox's Bazar where displaced Rohingya population took shelter, the project is helping the host communities by providing alternative income generation activities, improving the availability of wood for fuel in a sustainable way and reducing human-wildlife, particularly elephant, conflict.

The Forest Department, for the first time, is empowering communities by transferring funds to their accounts to improve the partnership. The project is being implemented in 147 Upazilas (sub-districts) of 27 districts. These areas include most natural forests and Protected Areas outside Sundarbans and Chittagong Hill Tracts.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The project will generate significant economic returns. The project will provide funds to communities for Alternative Income Generation Activities and option of using them as revolving funds to re-finance income generating activities. The government is committed to scaling up forest sector investments.

## RESULTS

- **80,000 hectares** of land is brought under collaborative forest management with improved forest cover.
- **41,000** households from 615 beneficiary villages received training and funds for alternative livelihoods.
- A digital surveillance system for Site-Specific Planning to implement customized interventions catering to specific biophysical and microclimatic needs for ensuring sustainable use of forest resources.







## Sustainable Enterprise Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
March 29  
**2018**

END  
DATE:  
February 29  
**2024**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$110**  
million

IMPLEMENTING  
AGENCIES:  
Palli Karma-Sahayak  
Foundation (PKSF)

# EMPOWERING MICROENTERPRISES FOR GREEN GROWTH

## OVERVIEW

Microenterprises diversify economic activity and contribute significantly to poverty alleviation. In Bangladesh, half of population depend on 9 million existing microenterprises for their livelihoods. These microenterprises constitute 56% of the country's total employment and 25% of its GDP. However, there is little evidence that these microenterprises are growing sustainably. Moreover, they often impact the environment negatively.

Bangladesh is also known for its success in pioneering approaches that support microenterprises. Organizations such as Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), an apex microcredit funding and capacity building organization established by the Government to reach out to the poor, started microenterprise loan programs in 2002, implemented through 178 Partner Organizations throughout the country. The Sustainable Enterprise Project (SEP) is supporting this partnership with the government to help microenterprises adopt cleaner technologies.

## CHALLENGE

Cumulatively, the impact of microenterprises on the environment is substantial. While critical to the nation's economy, the rapid growth of the manufacturing and agribusiness sectors has led to rapid depletion of natural resources and massive air, soil, and water pollution. A 2014 survey showed only 6 percent of microenterprises disposed of solid wastes properly. Depletion of natural capital and pollution can undermine economic growth and the wellbeing of the population. Negative environmental externalities caused by microenterprises are often because the consequence of owners lacking the knowledge and funds to invest in practices and technologies that help to reduce the use of natural resources and pollution. Owners also lack access to new markets and ancillary value chain services, which keep them from growing. Microenterprises are also highly exposed to nature-related hazards as Bangladesh is one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change.

## APPROACH

The Sustainable Enterprise Project (SEP) supports more than 50,000 microenterprises in the manufacturing and agribusiness sectors. SEP has encouraged non-banking financial institutions to support green growth initiatives and shift their portfolio assets to include environmental protection, pollution and contamination reduction, and better workplace safety—considerations that are too often overlooked among Bangladesh's microenterprises. The project also promotes the adoption of environmentally sustainable practices and technologies and supports the creation of common services for clusters. It also promotes the use of basic safety standards in production and aims to certify eco-labeled products. In this way, SEP helps microenterprises to provide better quality jobs, increase their competitiveness and boost their growth while improving environmental sustainability and climate change resiliency.

Through SEP, more than 80 percent of beneficiary microenterprises have adopted improved environmental and occupational practices, such as: masks and PPEs for the use of workers; hand washing facilities and separate toilets for men and women; fire extinguishers and first aid boxes; Safe drinking water for workers; air ventilators; Energy-saving technology (transparent roof sheets) and LED; improved wiring that reduces the risk of accidents; provision of solid waste bins with waste sorted at source and recycled, etc.

## RESULTS

- **54,472** microenterprises in 37 districts, of which 84% are owned by women benefitted from the project
- **29,905** microenterprises improved environmental and occupational practices.
- **70%** Microenterprises adopted environmentally sustainable practices (ESP) for over 12 months and almost 79% MEs were willing to continue the adoption of ESP in future.
- **72%** microenterprises were trained in environmental management, good agriculture practice, business development, marketing, branding, coping with COVID-19, and various technical topics.
- **19** shared service centers were established providing microenterprises access to design, product development, and promotion services.
- **32,850** microenterprises have adopted at least one environmentally sustainable practice.
- **70%** of microenterprises continue adopting environmentally sustainable practices after one year of the initial intervention.
- **23** clusters have been provided with 64 common services.
- **60,240** microenterprises have signed loans, with more than 70% of them receiving training for the adoption of environmentally sustainable practices.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

Despite its innovative approach and scale, SEP covers only 0.55% of the 9 million microenterprises in Bangladesh, and only 1.60% of PKSF-organized microenterprises. Many more microenterprises could benefit from access to enhanced partnerships, knowledge transfers, and innovations in technology and financing, especially as the demand for sustainable products grows. Both demand and supply of sustainable products and services need to be nurtured as they are foundational to Bangladesh's long-term green growth.



## Bangladesh Environmental Sustainability and Transformation Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
December 1  
**2022**

END  
DATE:  
October 31  
**2029**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$250**  
million

IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:  
Department of Environment  
Bangladesh Bank  
Bangladesh Road Transport  
Authority  
Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park  
Authority

## TOWARDS A GREENER BANGLADESH

### OVERVIEW

As per World Bank estimates, air pollution and lead exposure are responsible for more than one-fifth of the premature deaths in Bangladesh (2019). Strong environmental regulations, strict environmental enforcement and green financing will incentivize the private sector to invest in pollution management and green growth. The Bangladesh Environmental Sustainability and Transformation (BEST)

project aims to support the Bangladesh Government to strengthen the capacity in environmental management and to pilot new financing mechanisms to promote green investments in targeted sectors. Its areas of focus include environmental governance and infrastructure, green financing for air pollution control, vehicle emissions control, and e-waste management infrastructure.

## CHALLENGE

Bangladesh experiences severe degradation of its environmental quality and ecosystems, from air and river pollution, inadequate chemicals and waste management, among other factors. The upcoming World Bank's Country Environmental Analysis (2023) shows that the four major environmental health risks – ambient and indoor air pollution, exposure to lead (Pb) contamination, and inadequate water, sanitation, and hygiene – were associated with over 272,000 premature deaths and 5.2 billion days lived with illness, which has an annual cost equivalent to 17.6 percent of GDP in 2019. Environmental degradation is causing high economic costs to the country while threatening its competitiveness for sustained growth in the long run.

Incomplete and lax environmental standards, weak monitoring and enforcement regime, and limited pollution control infrastructure have led to high costs for Bangladesh's exporting industries to comply with international buyers' environmental and social standards. While the country has made efforts to develop the government's capacity for pollution control and create incentives for compliance with environmental regulations, additional support is needed to improve the country's environmental governance to safeguard a green, resilient, and inclusive recovery of its economy.

## APPROACH

The BEST Project focuses on two priorities: strengthening environmental management capacity and increasing private sector participation in green investments.

By supporting priority environmental regulatory and institutional reforms, investing in critical environmental infrastructure, and strengthening the technical capacity of Department of Environment (DoE) staff, the project will enable DoE to better perform its legal mandates on pollution management, a key step toward improved environmental quality and promotion of green, resilient, and inclusive development. The project will set up continuous air quality monitoring stations, effluent treatment plant monitoring systems and also a first-ever network of continuous surface water quality monitoring stations to start monitoring of water quality of Dhaka rivers and targeted international rivers in real time. With Bangladesh Bank, the project will pilot a Green Credit Guarantee Scheme (GCGS) to incentivize the financial sector to support green investments to reduce air pollution.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- Amended Environmental Conservation Act and multiple regulations, standards and guidelines adopted by the Government.

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- **30** district offices, one environmental research and training center, and more 900 staff recruited based on new organogram and environmental cadre for improved DoE infrastructure.

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- **5** divisional laboratories for improved the operation of its air quality monitoring stations, 20 continuous surface water quality monitoring stations, 67 low-emission monitoring vehicles and 15 low-emission monitoring vessels to transport monitoring equipment and the DOE staff to field locations, for improved analytical and monitoring capacity of DoE.

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- Over **21 million** people living in Greater Dhaka and beyond will be benefitted by the reduced air pollution from project interventions supported by the GCGS and the new VICs.

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- **1 million** metric tons of Green House Gas emissions and 1.7 thousand of particulate matter (PM) emissions from targeted sources will be reduced through the GCGS projects.

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- **4** VICs will be set up to inspect about 46,000 vehicles annually.

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- **3,500 metric tons** of e-waste will be processed annually.

The project will help Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) construct vehicle inspection centers (VICs) using private-public partnership modality. The project will also set up an E-waste management facility with Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority (BHTPA). Women, who are the most affected by climate change and some of the major environmental health risks, will be engaged as critical stakeholders in project implementation. The project will also benefit female staff of DoE with training and other capacity building opportunities.





## Sustainable Microenterprise and Resilient Transformation Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

#### APPROVAL DATE:

April 27  
**2023**

#### END DATE:

December 31  
**2028**

#### TOTAL COMMITMENT:

**\$250**  
million

#### IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:

**Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF)**

## MAKING MICRO-ENTERPRISE SECTOR CLEAN AND CLIMATE-RESILIENT



### OVERVIEW

Bangladesh is known for its pioneering approaches that support Micro Enterprises (MEs) to alleviate poverty. Microenterprises contribute up to 25 percent of GDP and provide 56 percent of jobs in the country, providing the base for key economic sectors like manufacturing, agriculture, and services. The MEs provide viable alternatives for unemployed individuals or those in low-wage jobs. However, as MEs elevate economic growth and generate employment opportunities, that comes at the cost of inefficient use of resources, degradation of the environment and natural resources, increased pollution, and reduced climate resilience, substantially affecting human health and the ecosystem. The Sustainable Microenterprise and Resilient Transformation project (SMART) aims to help the micro-enterprise sector become resource-efficient, clean and more climate-resilient.

## CHALLENGE

To achieve environmental sustainability, MEs need to address a myriad of deeply rooted challenges, including a) MEs' owners are often unaware of resource inefficiencies, cleaner production practices, and access to finance to adopt climate-resilient Resource Efficient Cleaner Production (RECP) and green practices for growth; b) MEs often follow unsafe practices that expose workers to occupational health risks and are more at risk to produce contaminated products; c) MEs have limited access to finance for adopting climate-resilient RECP and green practices; d) MEs have poor uptake and restricted access to high-value green and organic markets; e) Despite the disproportionate impacts of climate change on women, there is a stark under-representation of women-owned MEs adopting climate-resilient RECP practices in the country.

## APPROACH

SMART project focuses on transforming the ME sector into a more dynamic, lower-polluting, resource-efficient, and climate-resilient sector. It will support measures that enhance climate resilience by adopting RECP knowledge, technology, and business processes. Additionally, the project will use digital monitoring, tools, and solutions to enhance business practices; and collect key environmental performance indicators of clean air and water, waste, and GHG emissions. To do so, SMART will provide technical assistance to acquire knowledge and capacity on climate-resilient RECP through an institutional approach that includes environmental assessments, the development of environmental and financial digital tools, enhancement of common facilities and enabling environmental systems for clusters. To enhance green growth, it will provide access to finance by supporting investments in climate-resilient RECP practices that enhance MEs' productivity and competitiveness. The project will also enhance institutional capacity and knowledge.

The project will target both formal and informal MEs in specific sectors with high environmental improvement potential. Women entrepreneurs will remain in focus.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

SMART will be contributing to Bangladesh's long-term environmental sustainability, and it's aligned with the 8th Five Year Plan, Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), and the National Adaptation Plan (NAP), 2022, which are the country's roadmaps to promote economic growth and

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- **80,000** loans provided to MEs to enable green growth.
- **64,000** supported MEs adopting at least two climate-resilient RECP practices. Of them,
  - **65%** supported female owned MEs.
  - **50,000** supported MEs tracking at least one environmental key performance indicator (m3 of wastewater, kwh energy, solid waste in tons, ammonia in parts per billion, CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent of GHG emissions).
- **100** common facilities established or upgraded and operational.



poverty reduction and pay special attention to MEs and environmental sustainability.

SMART long-term impact is to transform the ME sector into a more dynamic, lower-polluting, resource-efficient, and climate-resilient ME sector.



## First Green and Climate Resilient Development Credit

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:

April 27  
**2023**

END  
DATE:

June 30  
**2024**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:

**\$500**  
million

IMPLEMENTING  
AGENCIES:

Finance Division, Ministry  
of Finance

## EMPOWERING A GREEN, RESILIENT AND FUTURE-READY BANGLADESH



### OVERVIEW

The First Green and Climate Resilient Development (GCRD) Credit is a significant step by Bangladesh to embrace a future that is both clean, efficient, and prepared for the challenges of climate change. The first in a series of three development policy operations, the GCRD Credit seeks to ensure the nation's growth is sustainable and climate conscious. Promoting key policy and institutional reforms, the credit focuses on enhancing the country's public planning and financing systems for delivering green and resilient projects and introducing reforms for cleaner, more efficient production.

## CHALLENGE

While navigating the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, Bangladesh faces new macroeconomic challenges from global commodity price surges, slowing global growth, elevated domestic inflation, and strong pressures on its balance of payment. Bangladesh also needs a paradigm shift in its growth model to ensure a lasting economic recovery. Bangladesh's trajectory towards rapid urbanization and manufacturing growth has led to environmental degradation, with alarming levels of pollution, reduced climate resilience, and depletion of natural resources. Environmental degradation has impacted the health, productivity, and welfare of the Bangladeshi people, and impairing human capital formation and retention. Additionally, Bangladesh faces a high level of vulnerability to the effects of climate change. The Global Climate Risk Index ranks Bangladesh as the world's seventh most-affected country in 2000-2019. Internal climate and rural-urban migration will put additional pressure on cities and essential services – such as water supply, sanitation, and energy – that are already constrained, especially for the most disadvantaged groups.

## APPROACH

The First GCRD Credit aims to assist the Government of Bangladesh in its transition towards green and climate-resilient development. This goal will be achieved by enhancing public planning, financing, and the delivery of green and climate-resilient initiatives, as well as advocating for vital sector reforms to foster greener, more efficient production and services. The credit aligns with the recommendations of the Country Climate and Development Report (CCDR) and operates in tandem with the Recovery and Resilience DPC series, which focuses on post-COVID-19 recovery and future resilience. The DPC series embodies commitments from national development plans, emphasizing the integration of economic, environmental, and climate concerns into planning and budgeting. It seeks to incorporate green and climate-resilient priorities in public investments, encourage sustainable practices in local governance, and establish a framework to effectively carry out development plans. Furthermore, the program reflects lessons learned from previous development policy finances, emphasizing strong analytical foundations, high-level leadership, long-term planning, and engagement with line ministries.

## RESULTS

- **7%** of bids in public procurement to come from women-owned businesses.
- **7,500** industry units, project facilities and individuals to be inspected by DoE's Enforcement Wing and mobile courts for environmental compliance per calendar year.
- Approximately **5%** reduction in households using solid fuels as primary cooking fuel.
- **67%** reduction in Government expenditure in fuel subsidies for diesel (HSD), heavy fuel oil (HSFO) and octane.
- **1000** GWh of cumulative energy savings from the DPC-supported energy efficiency policies.
- Reduction in liquid fuel (HSD and HSFO) used annually for power generation (**1.67 million tons**).
- **30** new municipalities with water tariff models.
- Improved score of Bangladesh in Dimension 1 - Budget Alignment with Climate Change Strategies of the PEFA Assessment.



## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The World Bank has started the preparation of the Second Green and Climate Resilient Development Credit, as well as technical assistance and investment operations to support the Government of Bangladesh to design and implement green growth reforms.









# Climate Change and Resilience





## Bangladesh Urban Resilience Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
March 24  
**2015**

END  
DATE:  
June 30  
**2024**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$171.87**  
million

### IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:

Dhaka North City Corporation

Dhaka South City Corporation

Sylhet City Corporation

Fire Service and Civil Defense

Rajdhani Unnayan Katiripakhha

Department of Disaster Management

## CLIMATE RESILIENT CITIES FOR TOMORROW



### OVERVIEW

Bangladesh is among most disaster-prone countries in the world. It is highly exposed to a variety of hazards such as floods, cyclones, and earthquakes. The Government of Bangladesh has instituted disaster risk reduction policies and invested in infrastructure along coastal areas to mitigate the risk from floods and cyclones, primarily after the catastrophic cyclones of 1970 and 1991. Over the years, government has demonstrated that investment in flood management and cyclone preparedness saves lives, reduces economic losses and protects development gains. Despite these tangible gains, the vulnerability of Bangladesh's urban areas is not as well understood, or addressed, in the country's policy framework. Disaster Risk Management in an urban context is significantly challenging.

## CHALLENGE

With seven million people living in Dhaka City, and 15 million people living in the wider metropolitan area, Dhaka is particularly at risk. Land use planning regulations, and public service delivery in the urban areas have not keep up with the pace of growth. The current regulatory environment is somewhat opaque and the enforcement mechanisms for urban development control do not address structural safety, creating an environment that lacks practical enforcement capability and accountability. In this context, physical and social vulnerabilities keep increasing and any hazards, such as floods, fires, building collapses, or earthquakes, present a formidable threat to life and prosperity.

According to the Fire Service and Civil Defense, there are about 20,000 fires on average each year. The lack of local capacity to conduct search and rescue, which requires heavy lifting equipment and specialized training, often leads to slow response processes that can have dramatic repercussions in an emergency context. Dhaka is also vulnerable to seismic risk, driven less by the high frequency of earthquakes than by the structural deficiencies of the city infrastructure. Moreover, the city and its inhabitants are poorly prepared to respond to a crisis of this scale within the metropolitan area.

Recent floodings in Sylhet and other major urban areas of the country have highlighted an urgent need for further interventions.

## APPROACH

The Urban Resilience Project aims to strengthen the capacity of Government agencies to respond to emergency events and to strengthen systems to reduce the vulnerability of future building construction to disasters in Dhaka and Sylhet. The Project reinforces an emergency management system which will be put in place and will mobilize the resources at all levels and assign roles and responsibilities more efficiently. It will develop the consensus-driven analytical foundation required for longer-term investments to reduce risk in the built environment of Dhaka, Sylhet and other cities in Bangladesh. The project will put in place the institutional infrastructure and competency to reduce long-term disaster vulnerability in Dhaka.

## MOVING FORWARD

Going forward the results and interventions of this project will be useful for the Government of Bangladesh in advancing towards resilient cities and fighting major hazards like earthquakes for Dhaka and Sylhet. Also, this project can act as a model for future investments to improve resilience in Dhaka and other major cities of Bangladesh.

## RESULTS

- **15.5 million** people living under Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC), Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC), and Sylhet City Corporation (SCC) benefit indirectly.
- About **68 wards** of Dhaka North and South City Corporations and **20 wards** of Sylhet City Corporation provided with decentralized emergency response services.
- **3** Emergency Operation Centres and **2** Command and Control Rooms established for the city corporations and FSCD.
- A **Geographic Information System (GIS)** based asset inventory and web GIS based asset management system prepared for DNCC, DSCC & SCC.
- Over **1,500** government officials have been trained on emergency operations and disaster risk management.
- Systems established to reduce vulnerability of buildings and Risk Sensitive Land use Plan developed for Dhaka city.
- Electronic Construction Permitting System launched by RAJUK.







## Multipurpose Disaster Shelter Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

#### APPROVAL DATE:

December 16  
**2014**

#### END DATE:

December 31  
**2024**

#### TOTAL COMMITMENT:

**\$375**  
million

#### IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:

Local Government  
Engineering Department

## SHELTER FROM THE STORM

### OVERVIEW

Bangladesh has built an extensive network of cyclone shelters that has played a crucial role in the successful effort to protect people from the cyclones in the coastal area. The Multipurpose Disaster Shelter Project enables 14 million

people in nine coastal districts to have access to safe havens during cyclones. The shelters are used as primary schools during regular weather.

## CHALLENGE

Bangladesh is situated at the triangular head of the Bay of Bengal, which makes the country prone to cyclones, floods and storm surges. Nearly 40 million people live on the 710 km-wide coastal plain. The Government estimates that over 7,000 disaster shelters will be needed by 2025 to improve disaster resilience across the 19 coastal districts.

## APPROACH

The Multipurpose Disaster Shelter Project (MDSP) has focused on constructing new disaster shelters and improving existing disaster shelters, which serve as primary schools at times of regular weather conditions. These cyclone shelters are built to withstand winds of over 260km an hour and have incorporated climate resilient design. They are equipped with solar panels and rain water harvesting system. The buildings are accessible by ramps and designed to hold over a thousand people and hundreds of livestock. The project is also building connecting roads and communication networks for ensuring easy accessibility to the shelters. Bangladesh has a long-standing experience in constructing multipurpose disaster shelters, notably through the predecessor Emergency 2007 Cyclone Recovery and Restoration Project, also supported by the World Bank. MDSP is further improving the design of shelters and introduce steel structure for greater durability.

## MOVING FORWARD

The number of disaster shelters is still well below what is needed. Ensuring 100% coverage is a high priority of the Bangladesh government and the Bank, especially given the increased frequency and intensity of cyclones. Designs are constantly being upgraded to improve the accessibility and facilities at the buildings, including provisions for pregnant women and people with disabilities, improved water storage and rainwater harvesting, and energy efficiency. Solar panels with batteries are included in each shelter for emergency power supply. Innovations in materials, designs and procurement strategies are making it possible to build more, better, and faster. The construction of over 500 shelters is the largest simultaneous construction of this kind, and the recent use of steel structures has reduced construction time by around 25%.

## RESULTS

- **335** new shelters and **117 km** of all-weather access roads constructed; 410 existing shelters have been rehabilitated.
- **880,000** people are provided protection, including more than 100,000 livestock in vulnerable coastal communities.
- **2,200** new and improved classrooms built for more than 200,000 primary school children.
- **65** new shelters to be built and 13 existing shelters will be rehabilitated by December 2023.





## Bangladesh Weather and Climate Services Regional Project

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
June 03  
**2016**

END  
DATE:  
November 30  
**2024**

TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$80.3**  
million

IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:  
Bangladesh Meteorological  
Department  
Bangladesh Water  
Development Board  
Department of Agricultural  
Extension

## IMPROVING WEATHER AND CLIMATE INFORMATION FOR RESILIENCE



### OVERVIEW

Due to its unique geographical position, Bangladesh is exposed to extreme weather events like cyclones, floods, and droughts as well as climate change. Prior to this project, unavailability of reliable weather and climate data was one of the major challenges faced by every sector and lack of consistent and timely weather forecasting and information directly affects the productivity of key sectors like agriculture. The Bangladesh Weather and Climate Services Regional Project (BWCSRP) facilitates modernization of the country's overall meteorological and hydrological system including weather forecasting, flood forecasting, early warning systems, and delivery of weather and climate services.

## CHALLENGE

Due to the hydrometeorological risks Bangladesh is facing, timely and tailored hydromet services as well as robust early warning systems are critical to avoiding damages and losses, and to maximize productivity of climate sensitive sectors and ultimately create socio-economic benefits. Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD) and the Hydrology Division of the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) required considerable investment and transformation for this, considering the limitations in observation networks, technology, human resources, and modern scientific advancements. Multiple sectors, including agriculture, water, and energy, demand tailored and actionable hydromet information.

## APPROACH

The project aims at strengthening the Government of Bangladesh's capacity to deliver reliable weather, water and climate information services and improve access to such services by priority sectors and communities. This is achieved through complementary interventions focusing at strengthening (i) the observation network, (ii) technical and information and communication technology, (iii) technical skills of hydromet experts and (iv) delivery of services to users, especially farmers.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The remaining interventions of the projects and next phases will have a transformational effect by focusing on improved users and service delivery for their needs in the area of weather and climate services in Bangladesh. It seeks to bring in innovation, both technological and process related, help the country access the latest advances in the field and build capacity through collaboration with universities.

## RESULTS

- **300,000 farmers** have access to actionable information provided by the Bangladesh Agro-Meteorological Information Service (BAMIS) portal.
- **487 Upazila** received Agromet Kiosks where farmers can search BAMIS for information.
- **64 districts** have digital display boards which present recent key information.
- **5.2 million** views in BAMIS portal since November 2022, where Agromet services are being disseminated in conjunction with 12 community radios.
- **57 students** finalized their master's program in the established Department of Meteorology in the University of Dhaka. Current enrolment includes 17 Bachelor and 15 Master's students.
- **Two master's** programs in Agro-Meteorology established at two universities with 28 students enrolled.







## Resilient Infrastructure for Adaptation and Vulnerability Reduction Project

### BASIC INFORMATION



APPROVAL  
DATE:  
July 15  
**2022**



END  
DATE:  
June 30  
**2028**



TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$500**  
million



IMPLEMENTING  
AGENCIES:  
Local Government  
Engineering Department

## REDUCING VULNERABILITIES THROUGH RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE



### OVERVIEW

Bangladesh is a deltaic country consisting of floodplains created by over 400 rivers and channels. Flooding in Bangladesh is common, recurring with varying magnitude and intensity, affecting a greater population than any other natural hazard. Floods and riverbank erosion in Bangladesh affect about one million people annually. Rising temperatures leading to more intense and unpredictable rainfalls during the monsoon season and the already high probability of cyclones are expected to further increase resulting in increased tidal inundation. The Global Climate Risk Index ranks Bangladesh as the world's seventh most-affected country in 2000-2019.

## CHALLENGE

Severe floods during the last week of June 2020, affected 5.4 million people; about 37 percent of the total area of the country was flooded affecting 33 districts; the disaster was the longest flooding period in the last 22 years. In 2017, large scale floods killed 145 people and affected about 8 million people in 32 districts, putting 1.5 million people in need of immediate food assistance. Frequent and recurrent floods have had a significant impact on lives and livelihood. Floods disproportionately affect the poor. During floods, families take cattle and belongings they can carry and evacuate to available public land, usually the grounds around public buildings and elevated roads that double as embankments. They stay in makeshift shelters in poor sanitary conditions, with precarious access to safe water and sanitation, insufficient and unsafe spaces for cooking and sleeping, and are exposed to a range of compounding risks from gender-based violence to illnesses that have short and long-term implications on health and nutrition outcomes. An assessment of the impact of natural disasters on primary schools found that 84 percent of sampled schools in disaster-prone areas experienced extended closures lasting an average of 26 days.

There is also a high mortality rate from lightning strikes, over 2,000 people died in lightning strikes in the country from 2011 to 2020.<sup>1</sup> In 2021, at least 177 people, including 122 farmers, were killed and 47 injured by lightning strikes across the country between March 31 and June 7.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> GoB, MoDMR. National Plan for Disaster Management (NPDM) 2021-2025.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/2021/06/18/experts-lightning-bangladesh-s-deadliest-natural-disaster>.

## APPROACH

The GoB has continuously strengthened its flood management plans and strategies and recognizes the need to further invest in non-coastal flooding. The Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100 has several priority projects on shelters with a focus on safeguarding the livelihoods of vulnerable communities by extending early warning services and floodproofing critical infrastructure. The project aims to improve disaster preparedness against inland flooding in 14 flood-prone districts. It will finance infrastructure and systems to increase the resilience of vulnerable populations in non-coastal areas against riverine and flash floods by building resilient flood shelters and community infrastructure and strengthening the capacity of government agencies and communities in disaster preparedness and response.

## RESULTS

- **500** new flood shelters with facilities for women, disable people, and children.
- **415 km** of rehabilitated and improved resilient community access roads.
- **1,400** Lightning protection systems.
- **500** community risk maps developed.



The intervention designs will factor in climate change and disaster risks. The multipurpose shelters and approach roads will provide benefits to the community beyond flood protection, including better connectivity through enhanced roads, new and improved school buildings, hygiene facilities, WASH and nutrition focused messaging and behavior change interventions.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

Data on flood shelter availability and their conditions will be increasingly critical to manage disasters as climate change increases the frequency and severity of both coastal and non-coastal flood events. A database will be produced as part of the project and will be a major contribution to future investment planning.

Designs are constantly being upgraded to improve the accessibility and facilities at the buildings, including provisions for pregnant women and people with disabilities, improved water storage and rainwater harvesting, energy efficiency and lightning protection systems. Innovations in materials, designs and community participation will make it possible to build more, better, and faster.







# Support to Displaced Rohingya and Host Community





## Emergency Multi-Sector Rohingya Crisis Response Project



### BASIC INFORMATION

#### APPROVAL DATE:

March 7  
**2019**



#### END DATE:

June 30  
**2024**



#### TOTAL COMMITMENT:

**\$265**  
million



#### IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:

Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief

Local Government Engineering Department

The Department of Public Health Engineering

## SERVICE DELIVERY FOR HOST COMMUNITIES AND THE DISPLACED ROHINGYA

### OVERVIEW

Through grant financing, the World Bank is helping Bangladesh provide basic services and build disaster and social resilience for nearly a million displaced Rohingya people who fled from violence in Myanmar. The funds also support the Bangladeshi communities living in the area.

### CHALLENGE

In 2017, fleeing from violence in Myanmar, hundreds of thousands of Rohingya people crossed the border into Bangladesh, in what is one of the fastest developing forced displacement crises in the world. The Rohingya took shelter in makeshift houses and congested settlements in a region that already had low access to basic infrastructure and services and is prone to cyclones and floods.

The influx placed enormous pressure on the host community and its infrastructure and services and strained already limited resources. The Rohingya account for about three-quarters of the combined total population in Teknaf and Ukhiya Upazila of Cox's Bazar. At least 80 percent of the Displaced Rohingya Population (DRP) are dependent on external assistance for survival. The situation of displaced women and girls, who account for 52 percent of the DRP, is particularly difficult. Women had been subjected to gender-based violence even before they fled and remain at risk in the camps, including to trafficking.

## APPROACH

The World Bank has supported the Government of Bangladesh through a phased and multi-sectoral approach to address both the immediate and medium-term needs of the DRP and the host communities in Cox's Bazar. Through the Emergency Multi-Sector Rohingya Crisis Response Project (EMCRP), it focused on strengthening the government's systems to improve access to basic services and build the disaster and social resilience of the DRP and host communities. The project is also committed to strengthening the local community's systems to improve access to basic services and build the disaster and social resilience of the population of Cox's Bazar district.

The project helps build and rehabilitate basic infrastructure, construct climate-resilient multipurpose disaster shelters as well as access and evacuation roads, improve social resilience, prevent gender-based violence and strengthen government capacity. The EMCRP original financing was followed by other World Bank interventions in support of the DRP, such as in health, and education. Furthermore, the project contributed to strengthening DRP camp management system especially camp in charges' governance and DRP engagement capacity as well as fostering community participation through the enhancement of the Rohingya volunteer network.

The Project is implemented with close coordination among two government ministries, three implementing agencies, bilateral development Partners, UN Agencies, and NGOs.

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

Despite the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing country macro-economic situation, the implementation of the project has gone very well, demonstrating the strong commitment of the Government of Bangladesh.

The Bank is providing enhanced implementation support and is actively participating in policy discussions with the government and development partners to achieve durable solutions to the overall Rohingya crisis. The Bank will continue to engage in dialogue with the GoB to support the medium-term dimensions of the DRP situation and to tailor future support accordingly.

## RESULTS

- **530,776** DRP and host community, of which 273,858 are women, have access to improved public infrastructure.

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- **227,320** DRP and host community have access to improved water sources of whom 217,200 are DRP and 10,120 are host community. Under the mini-piped water supply schemes, the project completed about 102 km of pipe network (transmission and distribution line) of different diameters. People are getting water from about 1772 tap stands in different camps from these mini-piped water supply schemes. Construction of 584 deep tube wells inside the camps have also been completed.

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- **104,243** DRP and host community have access to improved sanitation of whom 53,527 are women. The Project constructed 3,522 household toilets, 500 bio-fill toilets, 70 community latrines and 30 community latrines with composting biogas plants in the Rohingya camps, which are currently operational. In the host community, construction of 6098 individual toilets and 68 bio-fill toilets is completed.

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- **28** fire hydrants are constructed and operational under each mini-piped water supply schemes in different camps to support firefighting during the fire events. Following similar approach, 31 fire hydrants will be constructed in the host community under 31 piped water supply schemes in different upazillas of Cox's Bazar district.

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- **155** kilometers of climate resilient access roads were improved inside the camps, in the host community and as access roads to the camps from the host community. These roads benefit around 107,221 people in the host community including Ukhiya, Teknaf, Kutubdia and Maheshkhali Upazillas. 375 lightning protection systems have been installed which cover around 423,555 DRP.

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- **1500** solar streetlights have been installed in different camps.

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- Firefighting and search & rescue equipment was provided to the Fire Service and Civil Defense.

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- **24,000** women and girls are using GBV prevention/response services as a result of the project.

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- **175,541** households received stipends for participation in community works and services.

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- **7,718,181** workdays have been generated through community services, and 1,823,409 workdays through community workfare.

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- **773,751** beneficiaries including DRP and host community directly reached by communication activities as a result of the project.



## Health and Gender Support Project for Cox's Bazar District



### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL  
DATE:  
March 31  
**2020**



END  
DATE:  
June 30  
**2024**



TOTAL  
COMMITMENT:  
**\$150**  
million



IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:  
Ministry of Health and  
Family Welfare

# IMPROVING HEALTH & GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE RESPONSE SERVICES IN COX'S BAZAR

## OVERVIEW

Bangladesh has shown great generosity by providing shelter to around 1.1 million Displaced Rohingya People (DRP) in Cox's Bazar district. This has placed immense strain on existing infrastructure and social service delivery, increasing health and disaster risks for all. Furthermore, in Cox's Bazar, only about half of the medical professionals' positions are filled in government health facilities. The limited human resources are almost entirely focused on the Rohingya influx, leading to inadequate attention for routine services. The host population has experienced an increased exposure to

infectious diseases like diphtheria after a diphtheria outbreak in the camps.

The prevalence of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) is high within both the DRP and the host community. A 2015 survey on violence against women found nearly half of the married women in Chattogram experienced violence. GBV response services as part of the health system are limited. Some of the gaps include clinical management of rape, psychosocial support/mental health, and age appropriate GBV response services for adolescents.

## CHALLENGE

The Rohingya traditionally had poor access to and knowledge about health, nutritional, and population services. Immunization rates less than 4 percent prior to their arrival in Bangladesh, making children vulnerable to infectious diseases. Contagious diseases as well as water-borne diseases such as cholera, dengue and malaria pose a risk of spreading to the host population.

Furthermore, DRP women and girls tend to be more vulnerable to GBV. Approximately 52 percent of the displaced Rohingyas are women and girls, and most have been subjected to GBV prior to fleeing to Bangladesh. At the beginning of the influx, they came bearing visible signs of extreme levels of GBV; the shock, trauma and stress were palpable. The nature of GBV in the camps has evolved where now intimate partner violence, sexual harassment, early marriage, which is very common in the Rohingya culture. While more women are now stepping out of the confines of their homes, stringent social norms, fear of sexual assault, and rising domestic violence remain as risks.

## IMPLEMENTATION MODALITY

The primary implementing agency is the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) of the Government of Bangladesh, which directly implements a subset of activities. Furthermore, the MoHFW has contracted four United Nations agencies to implement specific project activities collectively, including the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The choice of these agencies is aligned with their comparative advantage in similar refugee and fragility related contexts.

## APPROACH

The project aims to improve the access to and utilization of health, nutrition, and family planning and GBV response in Cox's Bazar district. The project is unique in that as it is the first time health platforms are being used at all tiers of service provision to provide GBV response services. These initiatives include mobilizing health facilities with GBV case workers, developing referral pathways to improve and increase access to GBV services, and providing capacity building to health officials on the clinical management of rape and Mental Health and Psychosocial support to GBV survivors.

Cox's Bazar district's health indicators, such as the infant mortality rate and prevalence of stunting, fall below the

## KEY RESULTS

■ **18** Government health facilities in Cox's Bazar district providing 24/7 normal delivery.

■ In 2022, **107,398** children (0-11 months) in Cox's Bazar district have received three doses of pentavalent vaccines. Among them about 72% were local children while about 28% were displaced Rohingya children.

■ In 2022, **345,143** women and girls utilized GBV response services from the health facilities in CXB district. Among this, 333,116 women were from the Rohingya camps while 12,027 women were from the Host communities.



national average. The project is further responding to the “additional” needs of the host population emanating from the resource diversion that has occurred due to the influx and is adopting a more systematic and sustainable approach by strengthening the government system's capacity to deliver enhanced services in Cox's Bazar District.

The project is also renovating and upgrading health facilities, including reconstruction of 100 community clinics, District Sadar Hospital and the Mother and Child Welfare Center in the localities. It has filled in vacant positions for health professionals and ensured adequate medical supplies.

Women Friendly Spaces in the camps provide services such as psychosocial first aid, mental health support, GBV case management and midwifery services for Rohingya women and girls. Following these interventions, there is an increase in both local and the displaced Rohingya women's health-seeking behavior.











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