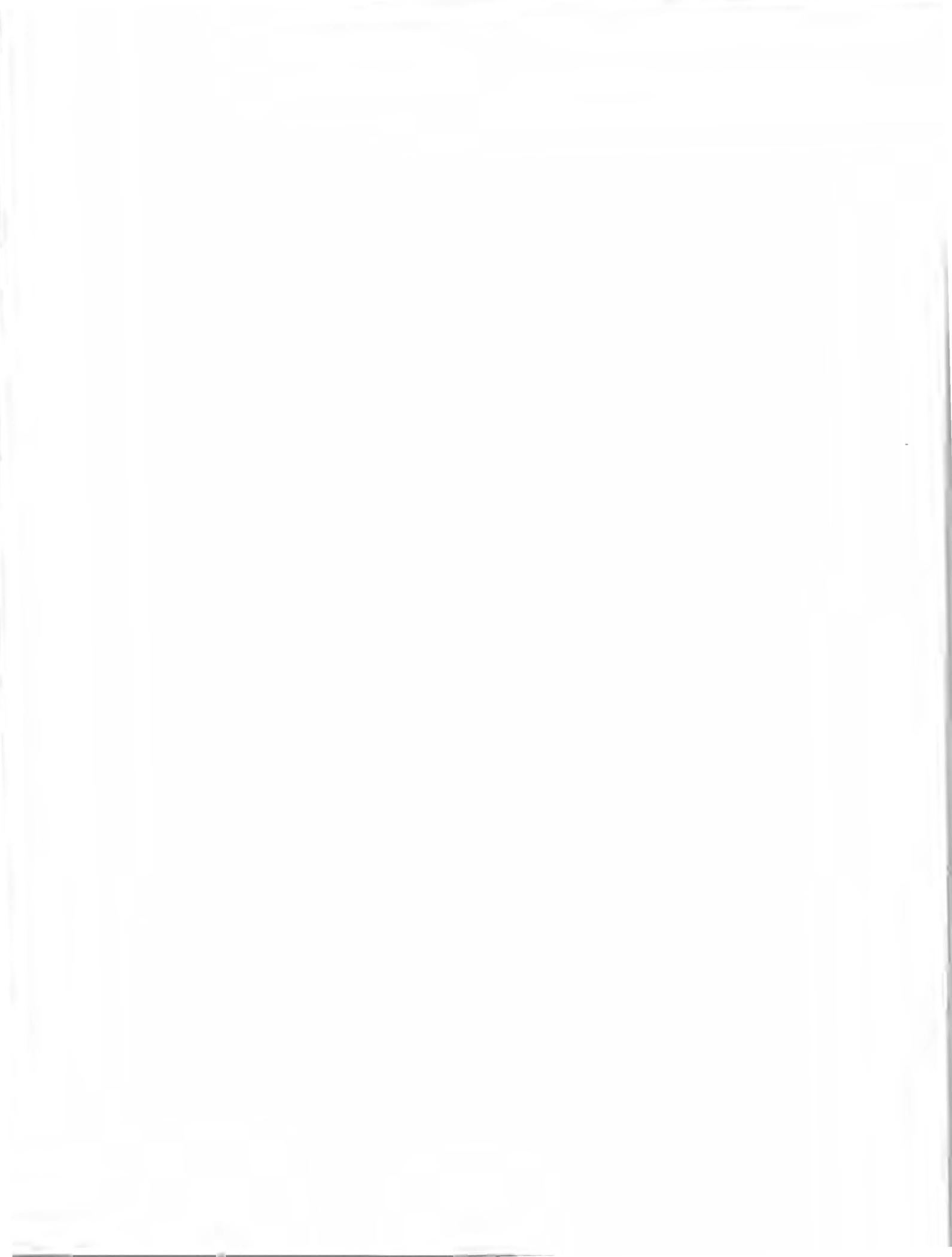




THE WORLD BANK IN Bangladesh





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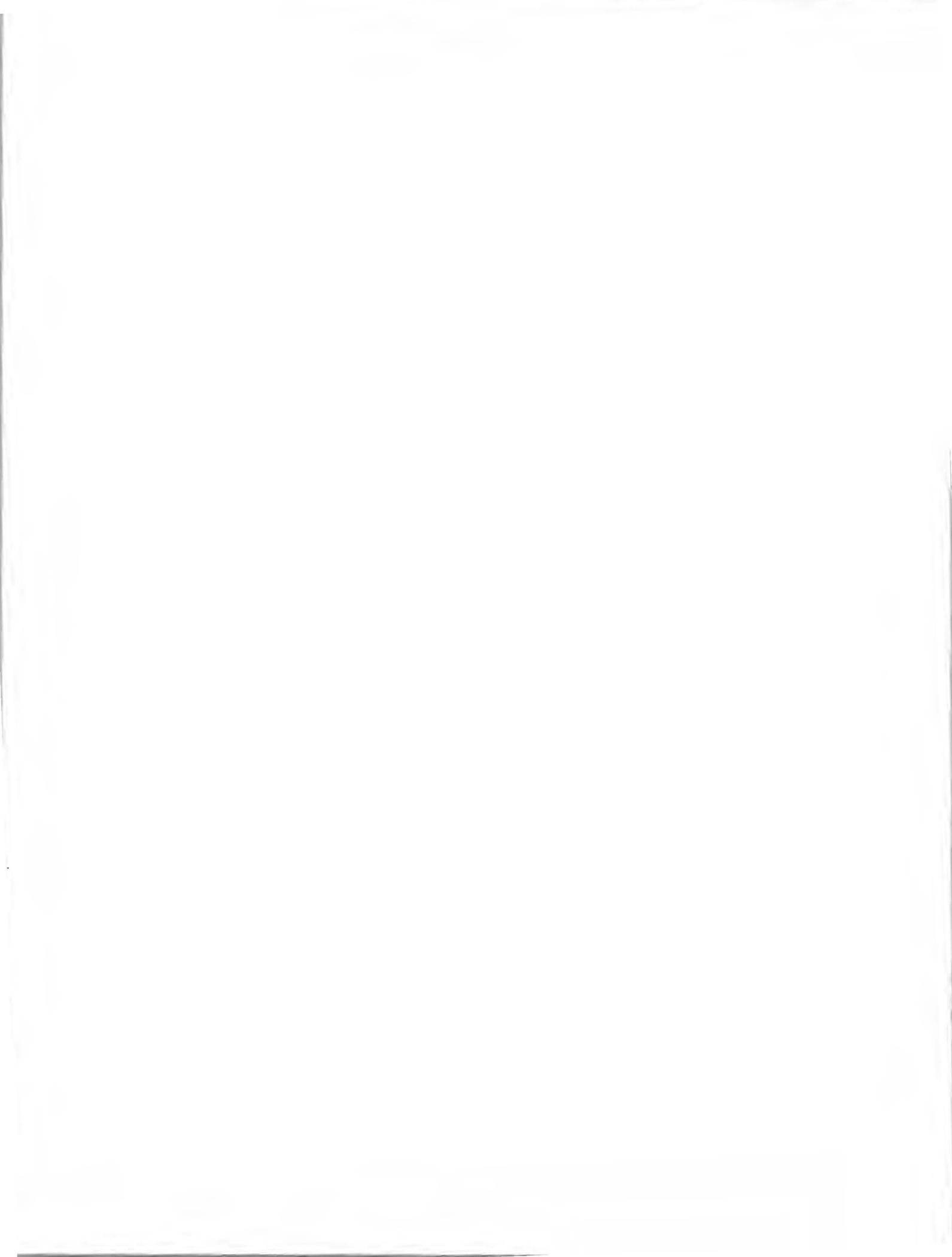
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FOREWORD

Bangladesh is both an inspiration and a challenge for policymakers and practitioners of development. It is one of the poorest and most densely-populated countries in the world, yet it has achieved impressive progress since its independence in 1971. With a vibrant economy that has grown at nearly 6 percent per year in the last decade, Bangladesh has seen the number of poor drop by one-third during the same period. Today, more Bangladeshis are living longer, healthier lives, and more children are stepping into classrooms. With higher income, better infrastructure and healthier and more educated citizens, Bangladesh now aspires to become a middle-income country by its fiftieth anniversary in 2021. It is an ambitious goal to be sure, but within reach.

In this remarkable journey, the World Bank, through its concessional lending arm, has enjoyed a strong relationship with Bangladesh that spans four decades. It has supported Government efforts in economic stability and growth, power, infrastructure, disaster management, human and social development and poverty reduction. Since 1972, the World Bank has committed more than US\$ 16 billion to advance Bangladesh's development priorities and accounted for more than a quarter of disbursed aid in the country.

While the poverty reduction efforts to date have been extraordinary, Bangladesh still faces daunting challenges on the path to prosperity. About 47 million people—nearly one-third of the population—continue to live below the poverty line. To realize its vision of becoming a middle-income country, sustained reform efforts are needed to tackle the many development bottlenecks. These range from strengthening governance, narrowing the power and transportation gaps, reducing vulnerability to external shocks and managing urbanization, among others.

For the World Bank, Bangladesh is also a key player in contributing to the global goals of reducing poverty and boosting shared prosperity by 2030. The pages of this publication provide a glimpse of the ongoing World Bank projects in Bangladesh that seek to address some of the most pressing obstacles to achieving these goals. They showcase an important partnership aimed at creating opportunities for the disadvantaged, the poor and the vulnerable. It is my hope that these pages convey what we have come to learn through many years of engagement with this dynamic and resilient country—that with strong commitment, sound policies and effective government, Bangladesh has enormous potential to offer its people a better, brighter future.

Johannes Zutt

World Bank Country Director for Bangladesh

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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THIRD PRIMARY EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Educating tomorrow's leaders

Basic Information

Start date: 25 August 2011

End date: 31 December 2015

Total commitment: US\$ 300 million

Implementing agency: Ministry of Primary and Mass Education

Overview

Education provides children with the basis for attaining dignity, better livelihoods, and a better quality of life when they grow up. By developing children's latent capabilities, it contributes to a skilled workforce and acts as a powerful tool for reducing poverty and boosting economic growth in the future. The **Third Primary Education Development Program (PEDP III)** aims to support the government in improving the quality of education as well as increasing the net enrolment and completion rates in primary education.

Challenge

Bangladesh has made remarkable progress in primary education. Enrolment rate is above 90% and gender parity has been achieved. The sector is large with more than hundred thousand institutions, about 16.5 million students and more than 3 hundred thousand teaching staff. Despite the progress, only close to 70 percent of the children enrolled complete grade 5 and among them only 44 percent go on to the secondary level. Children drop out mainly as they cannot afford tuition, books and other educational materials or live too far from the school. The quality of education is also a concern. Many schools are still overcrowded, teacher qualifications and motivation remain low and exams test mostly memory recall.

Approach

PEDP III builds on the experience of previous programs. It aims to enhance the quality of teaching in Bangladesh, and to reduce disparities in access and learning in primary education. PEDP III stands out from previous programs as its financing is linked entirely to results being achieved on the ground. Funds are disbursed when key targets, known as Disbursement Linked Indicators (DLIs), are met. All nine Development Partners (ADB, AusAID, CIDA, DFID, EU, JICA, SIDA, UNICEF and the World Bank) have agreed with the Government to a common results framework. The DLIs cover nine areas which are a subset of the Government's program for primary education. The DLIs for quality enhancement cover: development of an 18-month Diploma program and teacher training in this program; development and incremental introduction of competency based examinations; merit based teacher and head teacher recruitment and timely distribution of textbooks (within a month of the start of the academic calendar), including an updated curriculum. The DLIs aiming to support reduction in disparities include the widespread introduction of pre-primary education especially in disadvantaged areas, needs based infrastructure development to reduce overcrowding and to improve the quality of the facilities and school level planning. DLIs are also set for enhanced sector financing and effective monitoring. This new method of funding not only ensures that the program targets are met, but also seeks to make the achievements sustainable.

Results in Numbers

96.8% primary school enrolment rate and **73.8%** completion rate.

More than **13,000** trained teachers recruited.

100 million text books distributed by first month of the academic years to more than **85%** schools.

25% of the primary completion exam converted to competency based.

Out of the 9 DLIs for each year, **8** achieved for the first year and 7 for the second year to date.

Towards the Future

As a highly innovative sector-wide program PEDP III is expected to contribute to Bangladesh's long-term objective of human capital development for sustaining poverty reduction and economic growth. Over time all alternative, second-chance education type interventions are meant to be mainstreamed into the regular PEDP program.



REACHING OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN II

'Second chance' education



Basic Information

Start date: 2 October 2012

End date: 31 December 2017

Total commitment: US\$ 130 million

Implementing agency: Ministry of Primary and Mass Education

Overview

Bangladesh has made significant progress in education over the past two decades. Still, many school-aged children from the poorest families in Bangladesh either do not enroll or discontinue school due to poverty. The Reaching Out- of- School Children II (ROSC II) project aims to reduce the number of out-of-school children through improved access, quality and efficiency in primary education, providing disadvantaged children an opportunity to complete grade 5 and transition to secondary education.

Challenge

In 2004, nearly 1.5 million primary school-aged children were out of school in Bangladesh. The government's program focused on the formal primary sector that supported about 17 million students and still many children were out of school. These were the children who had missed out schooling at the "right age" or had been forced to drop out, mainly because of poverty. Many could not afford to buy uniforms or books, to pay for transport if they lived far from the school or might have been needed to earn vital income to feed the family. As a consequence, these children were deprived of education which drastically reduced their chances of finding higher- earning jobs that could lift them and their families out of poverty.

Approach

ROSC II is built on the success of the first ROSC project that provided a second chance for primary education to nearly 780,000 poor children in 23,000 ROSC Learning Centers in 90 low-income upazillas. ROSC reintegrates out-of-school children into education through learning centers, called Ananda Schools (schools of joy), which provide education stipends to underprivileged children to lessen the burdens on their families as well as distribute free books, stationeries and school uniforms. The Ananda Schools are established in upazillas with high poverty and low enrolment and completion rates. These schools blend formal education with a non-formal mode of provision with support from NGOs, earning Bangladesh international acclaim for its excellence. The schools run differently from normal primary schools: ROSC students tend to be older (between 8 and 14 years of age) than regular primary school students, students and teachers follow a flexible school timing to suit their mutual needs, and students are taught by a single class teacher, till they are ready to appear for the Grade 5 examination and can then join the mainstream secondary schools. In 2012, 83% of ROSC students passed the national grade 5 examinations, setting themselves on the road to progress to secondary level education. The project also attempts to empower disadvantaged rural communities to establish, own and manage their own Ananda Schools with support from the government and the local education NGOs. 80% of all ROSC school teachers were women and close to 90% of

all school management committee heads were women as well. ROSC II will continue to support students in currently operational Ananda Schools established in 2010 and 2011 to enable students to complete grade 5; and scale up the operation in another 100 new upazilas. The project will also pilot similar initiatives in selected urban slums and for domestic workers, and a pre-vocational skills training scheme for older ROSC students. A major emphasis of ROSC II is on enhancing the quality of education provision to disadvantaged children through increased attention to teacher development, teaching-learning support as well as on having an elaborate system of monitoring these activities in the remote and disadvantaged areas through the use of information and communication technologies.

Expected Results by 2017

720,000 children in **148** most disadvantaged and remote upazilas brought back to school.

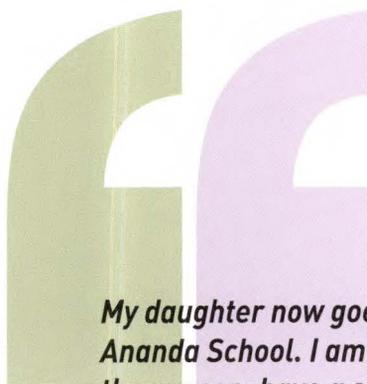
50% of these children will be girls.

85% student attendance rate and **78%** completion rate for Ananda School children.

12000 children benefitted from urban slum pilot.

Towards the Future

ROSC's success in demonstrating that informal channels can be used to deliver basic education has created demand throughout the country. Consequently, the Government has accepted the ROSC model for provision of non-formal education to the out-of-school children in the rest of the country under the Primary Education Development Program III (PEDP III).



My daughter now goes to the Ananda School. I am happy, we the women, have a say in our children's education —
Nazma, a proud mother.

SECONDARY EDUCATION QUALITY AND ACCESS ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

Incentivizing secondary education

Basic Information

Start date: 31 July 2008

End date: 30 June 2014

Total commitment:
US\$ 130.7 million

Implementing agency:
Ministry of Education

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Overview

Thanks to a series of measures taken over the last couple of decades, more children than ever before, especially girls, are now continuing their education at the secondary level in Bangladesh. However, it still remains a challenge for the children from low-income families to have access to good quality education. The **Secondary Education Quality and Access Enhancement Project (SEQAEP)**, implemented since 2008, aims to improve the quality of secondary education and to increase access and equity among poor boys and girls, including those living in remote areas.

Challenge

Prior to 2008, the primary school completion rate was 50 percent, and fewer of these children moved onto secondary education. Only one in 5 children entering Grade 6 managed to complete Grade 10. Income played a crucial part in the education of a child as gross enrolment rate for the richest 50 percent children was 75 percent but enrolment for poorest 50 percent was only 38 percent. Simultaneously, while there has been a significant enrolment growth for poor girls during the recent years supported by a range of female stipend programs, the enrolment levels for poor boys have remained stagnant. Moreover, due to a lack of systematic learning assessments at the primary and secondary levels, the quality of teaching has been difficult to assess.

Approach

To address these challenges, the Government of Bangladesh launched SEQAEP in 2008, with the support of World Bank. SEQAEP provides proxy means-tested stipends and tuition to disadvantaged girls and boys as well as incentives to students, teachers and schools in 125 upazilas so that they can perform better. Students eligible for the stipend receive from US\$ 15 to US\$ 40 a year, depending on their grades, and benefits are conditional on students maintaining 75 percent average attendance, achieving a passing grade in final examinations, and remaining unmarried until they complete Grade 10. An initiative has been taken through the Bishwa Sahitya Kendra, a reputed literary and cultural education institute of the country, to improve students' reading habits, side by side with measures to provide water and sanitation facilities in schools and strengthen their management and accountability systems. All SEQAEP schools have parents-teachers associations (PTAs). Teachers are being trained in English and Mathematics, institutions are now offering additional classes to improve English and Math skills of their students, and financial rewards are also being given to those teachers who achieve pass targets of over 70 percent of the class and to institutions that consistently increase the number

of students appearing in and passing the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examination. The introduction of internationally recognized assessments is expected to both allow a quantitative analysis of these measures and enhance their impact.

Results in Numbers

An increase in the share of poor children in total secondary enrolment to **38% in 2012**, up from 30% in 2008.

2.3 million students benefit from SEQAEP, **54%** of them girls in **6,700** secondary schools.

20% increase in secondary school enrolment due to stipends, especially among poor children.

46% of students graduating from secondary school, up from 30%.

270,000 students benefitted from the incentives awards.

107,000 additional classes conducted.

940,000 students benefitted from the reading habit development program.

By the time I reached Class 9 all four of my siblings were in secondary school. It would have been impossible for my father, a farmer, to pay our tuition fees but for the stipend — Parvin, a student.



Towards the Future

At present, SEQAEP is active across one-third of Bangladesh. The SEQAEP experience and results are expected to contribute to improving the overall quality of education in Bangladesh and a more effective and systematic targeting of poor children for widening their access to education. The approach is likely to be replicated nationally. To deepen the impact of successful project interventions, particularly the PMT scheme, the Government and the World Bank have jointly agreed to prepare SEQAEP Additional Financing (AF) project with scaled-up coverage of schools and upazilas and project extension to 2016.

SKILLS AND TRAINING ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

A STEP towards better employability



Basic Information

Start date: 10 June 2010

End date: 30 June 2016

Total commitment: US\$ 79 million

Implementing agency: Ministry of Education

Overview

To ensure better employment opportunities for the Bangladeshi labor force, in both local and overseas job markets, skills development and vocational education have to be aligned with the market demand. The **Skills and Training Enhancement Project (STEP)** aims to strengthen public and private training institutions, also known as polytechnic institutes, to improve the quality of skills training and employability of trainees, both at home and abroad, including those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds.

Challenge

In recent years, remittance from migrant workers has been a driving force of the Bangladesh economy. However, Bangladeshi migrant workers, who speak little English, have poor basic formal education and few vocational industry-specific skills, often face severe job insecurities. They are usually the first to lose their jobs as the economies of the popular migrant destinations begin to experience any economic recession. They also fail to avail themselves of the better jobs that require higher skills. Even at home, their lack of relevant skills and a mismatch between supply and demand leads to very poor employability and lower wages for them. Furthermore, the recent increase in the demand for skilled labor, both nationally and globally, continues to pose a threat to the Bangladesh economy as the skill-base of workers here is severely limited.

Approach

STEP aims to increase the skill levels of the workforce to ensure competitiveness in both the labor and product markets. Enhancing the range and quality of vocational training will help the country to more effectively utilize the overseas employment opportunities and increase Bangladesh's remittance earning. Through effective vocational training, the project hopes to increase the average wage that a migrant can demand in the international labor market as well as reduce the risk of unemployment in times of financial crisis. At home, with the increase in skills, the export industry will be able to diversify the product base it offers to consumers. STEP is designed to address the key issues concerning the Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) sector in a number of ways. Firstly, by incorporating views from industries and civil society it seeks to ensure that the programs being offered are relevant to the needs of the labor market. Secondly, it would ensure that the teacher-trainer vacancies that have remained open for a period of six months or more are filled. Thirdly, the project breaks new ground by supporting both public and private institutions and thereby creating a level playing field. Institutions that perform well in terms of pass rates, number of teachers trained, and placement rates of students within a period of six months after completion of the program, will receive a performance grant of US\$ 200,000 on top of their initial implementation grant of up to US\$ 1 million. Finally, the project provides stipends to students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. Students receiving a stipend must maintain 75 percent annual attendance and 45 percent pass marks in the annual examinations. STEP also aims to pilot new TVET schemes, especially at the SSC level, in an attempt to link schools with community and other training providers. Furthermore, it plans to pilot an apprenticeship program, orient students to vocational education and training in their early years and revise the curriculum with a focus on technical skills.

Results in Numbers

52,000 diploma students from **93** polytechnic institutions received stipends.

43 out of **93** polytechnics are public institutions.

30 polytechnics selected for implementation grants and **50** training providers selected as short-course training providers.

24,000 trainees received training from these training providers, **25%** of them being women.

Towards the Future

The project will introduce key reforms at the institutional level to improve the functioning of the TVET sector. Recently, CIDA has come forward to contribute around US\$ 20 million grants to the project.



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HIGHER EDUCATION QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

Connecting minds in higher education

Basic Information

Start date: 17 March 2009

End date: 31 October 2015

Total commitment: US\$ 81 million

Implementing agency: University Grants
Commission, Ministry of Education

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Overview

Enhancing the quality and relevance of higher education is currently one of the issues at the top of the government's agenda. The **Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project (HEQEP)** aims to bring forth both innovation and accountability within universities and lay the foundation for better learning and research in the tertiary education sector.

Challenge

Tertiary education faces many deep-rooted and intertwined challenges. Bangladesh apportioned about 2.1 percent of its GDP to education, but just 0.12 percent was allocated to tertiary education – a very low share by any standards. Low levels of funding leaves little money for investing in research, labs, equipment, computers, books or electronic journals, and infrastructure maintenance for improvement of teaching, learning and research. An effective mechanism to link universities' research and industry and business, whether at home or abroad, is still absent. Weak connectivity and inadequate ICT penetration in the higher education institutions limit knowledge exchanges and research collaborations amongst academic communities at home and with international peers. Finally, there was a lack of an appropriate funding mechanism to encourage basic and applied research in the universities.

Approach

HEQEP promotes academic innovation in both public and private universities through a competitive funding mechanism, known as the Academic Innovation Fund (AIF). The AIF aims to establish enabling conditions to enhance the quality and relevance of teaching, learning and research in universities; and introduce efficient instrument for the allocation of additional public funds to universities with an emphasis on innovation and accountability. It has clear selection criteria and allocates resources through three competitive windows: improvement of teaching and learning, enhancement of research capabilities, and university-wide innovations. The AIF also promotes self-assessment of 25 academic programs in 15 universities as a first step towards the establishment of quality assurance mechanism for the tertiary education sub-sector. So far, 194 grants have been awarded to 27 public universities and two private universities. 96 grants were given to revamp teaching and learning and help universities carry out self-assessments, 73 to enhance research capabilities and 25 grants for establishment of institutional and library automation, campus network, improvement of laboratory facilities, and refurbishment of training institute. The project has established the Bangladesh Research and Education Network (BdREN) to provide universities high speed dedicated connectivity. This enables teachers, researchers and students to access the latest knowledge and to engage in collaborative research across institutions of higher learning within the country and abroad. BdREN is also connected to global networks in Eurasia (TEIN 3), USA (Internet 2), Ireland (HeaNet), Continental Europe (GEANT 2), and Asia-Pacific region (APAN). A fully operational digital library facility, the UGC Digital Library (UDL), has also been established with 34 public and private universities. The UDL subscribes to electronic-resources from acclaimed international electronic journals such as ACM, Emerald and JSTOR. The project also aims to enhance transparency and accountability in the use of public resources and to build the management and institutional capacity of the higher education sector.

Results in Numbers

194 academic innovation grants awarded to **27** public and **two** private universities.

4 public universities and UGC connected through BdREN.

15% of students and faculty members with advanced internet connectivity.

28 public and **6** private universities accessing research databases and peer reviewed journals through UGC Digital Library (UDL).

Towards the Future

The government has requested for additional funding to scale up the project activities to establish a quality assurance mechanism in Bangladesh universities. AIF has given impetus to revamp and institutionalize government's own competitive funding mechanism.



HEALTH SECTOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Building a healthy nation

Basic Information

Start date: 26 May 2011

End date: 31 December 2016

Total commitment: US\$ 358.9 million

Implementing agency: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare



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Overview

Bangladesh has made remarkable progress in improving health outcomes. However, despite the progress of recent years, many in Bangladesh continue to struggle to access quality health services – negatively impacting on individuals, households; and costing the economy millions of dollars in days lost due to poor health. The **Health Sector Development Program (HSDP)** aims to support the commitment of the Government of Bangladesh to ensure equitable access to quality health services and to strengthen health systems with the ultimate goal to achieve better health outcomes, particularly for women, children, the poor and the marginalized.

Challenge

Bangladesh has been awarded the United Nations Millennium Development Goal Award 2010. Since 1990, infant and child mortality rates have declined by more than two-thirds and the country is also on track to reach MDG 5 to improve maternal health and MDG 4 to reduce the under-five mortality rate by two thirds. Still, significant development challenges remain in the health sector, including the double burden of non-communicable and communicable diseases. The percentage as well as the absolute number of malnourished women and children in Bangladesh remains among the highest in the world. Added to this is the increasing and changing demand for health services, influenced by aspects such as population dynamics; urbanization and climate change. Public spending on health is low in comparison to other countries and many patients are paying out of their own pockets to access medical services – catastrophic health expenditure pushes people further into poverty.

Approach

HSDP aims to provide essential health services that improve reproductive health, from family planning and antenatal care to scaling up emergency obstetric and newborn care services and ensuring 24/7 services in selected district hospitals and upazila health centres. This is a follow-on to the long standing World Bank support for the Government's sector wide programs in the health sector. Based on the successes and lessons learned from past programs and in recognition of the challenges ahead, the Government has initiated implementation of a US\$ 8 billion sector wide program, the Health, Population and Nutrition Sector Development Program, from 2011 to 2016. The HSDP of the World Bank is fully aligned with this program, playing an important role in operationalizing commitments to improve essential health services and strengthen the systems. The program aligns multiple development partners to the country's priorities in health, nutrition and population, and uses country systems for implementation and monitoring. The program also strengthens health sector planning and resource management, human resources development, management of pharmaceuticals, health information systems and maintenance of health care facilities. Further, the program will focus its support on the low performing geographic areas such as Sylhet and Chittagong. HSDP further seeks to improve the control and treatment of both communicable and non-communicable diseases through vaccinations as well as by scaling up HIV/AIDS interventions for the most-at-risk groups, improving the quality of treatment for tuberculosis and strengthening malaria control and treatment in 13 highly endemic areas. For non-communicable diseases, HSDP aims to improve awareness of cardio-vascular disease risks, provide better diagnosis and management of diabetes and improve screening for cancer. All these services are supported by an improvement in management and budgeting, better regulatory and supervisory roles as well as decentralized local-level planning.

Results in Numbers

40% reduction in maternal mortality, down to 194 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2010.

31.7% births attended by medically trained professionals in 2011, up from **18%** in 2007.

95.5% coverage of Vitamin A supplementation among children under five years in 2011, up from **88.3%** in 2007.

86% of children under 23 months receiving basic vaccination in 2011, up from **81.9%** in 2007.

2.3 children per woman in 2011 after a decade-long plateau during the 1990s around 3.3 children per woman.

61.2% contraceptive prevalence rate in 2011, up from **55.8%** in 2007.

12,258 Community Clinics functional in 2012.

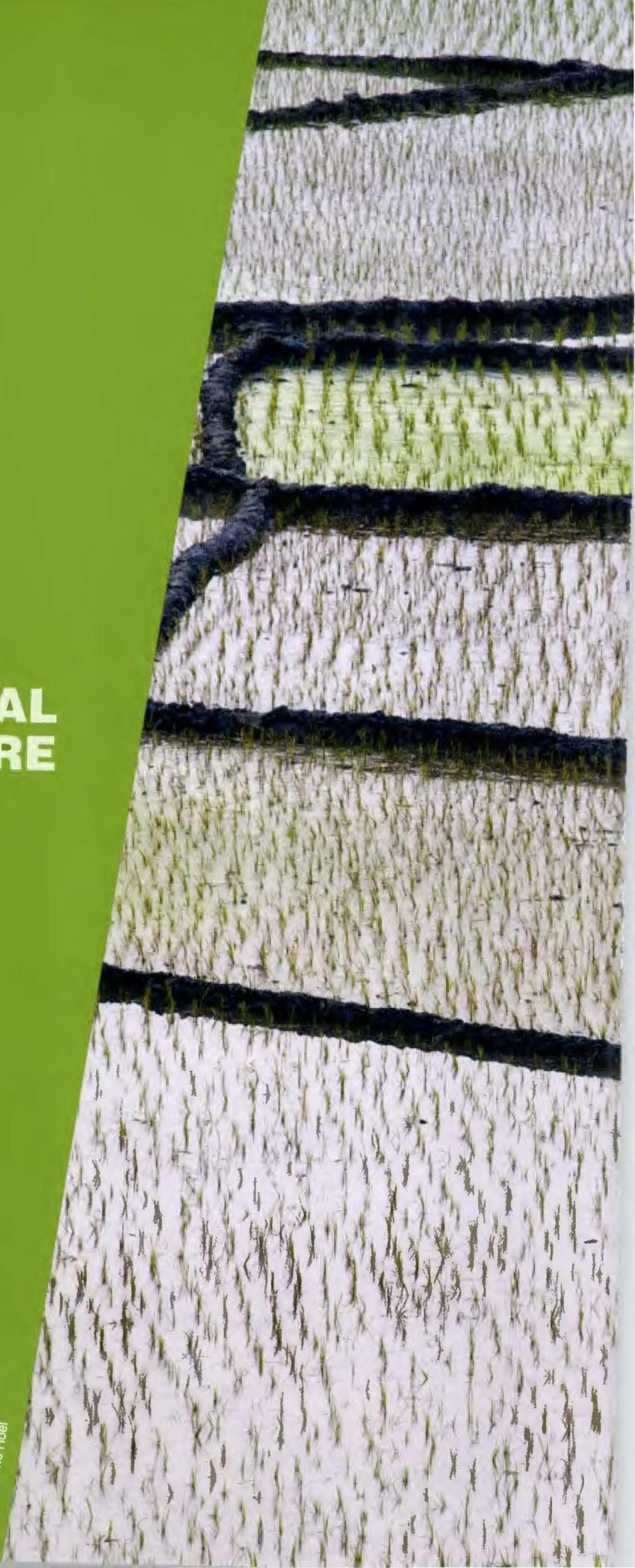
87.5% coverage of measles immunization for children under 12 months in 2011, up from **82%** in 2009.

63.5% of children exclusively breastfed up to 6 months of age in 2011, up from **43%** in 2007.

Towards the Future

External funding for the HSDP includes the Multi Donor and Single Donor Trust Fund of US\$ 341 million and the World Bank's IDA credit of US\$ 359 million. Seven development partners have pooled their finances in the Multi-Donor Trust Fund: AusAID; CIDA; KfW; Sida; DFID; USAID and UNFPA. The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN) has also pledged to pool their financing in the near future.

RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE





SECOND RURAL TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Better rural connectivity



Basic Information

Start date: 20 September 2012

End date: 30 April 2018

Total commitment: US\$ 302 million

Implementing agency: Local Government Engineering Department

Overview

Connection to schools, markets and health facilities help a nation prosper and improve the quality of people's lives. In Bangladesh, extreme seasonal weather such as floods, cyclones and droughts as well as frequent use by heavy goods vehicles mean that roads need to be repaired on a regular basis. The **Second Bangladesh Rural Transport Improvement Project (RTIP II)** provides rural communities with improved access to social services and economic opportunity and builds the capacity of government institutions to better manage rural transport infrastructure.

Challenge

Despite the wide network and large investments on the country's road network, the condition of rural roads needs regular repair and rehabilitation. The quality, construction, and carrying capacity of part of the secondary and tertiary road network are poor. In 2000, only 37 percent of the population lived within 2 km of an all-season road. About 13,000 km of Upazila Roads, out of 36,500 km were all-weather standard and most of the rural Union Roads remained unpaved. Hence large portions of the secondary and tertiary road network remained impassable during the rainy season. Inland waterways are an important mode of transportation for the poor as it is cheaper than road or rail transport, more energy efficient and environmentally friendly. Furthermore, it provides access to very remote areas and offshore islands where there is neither road nor railway communication. About 12 percent of the rural population in Bangladesh has water transport as its only mode of transport.

Approach

RTIP II builds on the success of the preceding project which covered over 44,000 square km of 21 districts, developing both rural trade and transport infrastructure by focusing on the physical improvements of inter-linked roads, small bridges and culverts, growth centre markets and river jetties. The project maintained and improved more than 3000 km of rural roads, 120 growth centres and 30 jetties. 50,000 person years of employment were created in project areas, out of which 30% were poor women. These new and improved roads, many of which are built by destitute women, make it easier for children to go to school, for expectant mothers to reach hospitals in an emergency and for both local farmers and consumers to reach markets. An evaluation study has shown that the average travel times and transportation costs have already reduced by more than 50 per cent, for both motorised and non-motorised vehicles. Better rural roads have led to a 65% reduction in travel time during the monsoon season and 58% reduction during the dry season for motorised vehicles. RTIP II has expanded coverage to improve road connectivity in the country side. The project aims to maintain and improve around 5,250 km of union parishad and upazilla roads in 26 districts for better rural connectivity. The project will also pilot the restoration of rural waterways to provide year round connectivity to the poor and isolated rural communities who have no road access but have access

to waterways, which are open for service only part of the year. The project also includes rehabilitation and development of market centers at strategic locations that will be essential to the economic activity of the rural population in Bangladesh. These market centers will be accessible through the rural roads and rural waterways and will have dedicated allocation of shops for women traders to promote women participation.

Expected Results by 2018

5,250 km of rural roads in 26 districts maintained.

22 million people living near roads and waterways benefitted.

Towards the Future

RTIP II is also developing a comprehensive rural road transport safety framework to help reduce the alarming number of injuries and fatalities that occur on Bangladesh's roads. The project also plans on implementing sustainable enhancements to the Local Government Engineering Department's capacities in planning, monitoring, finance, asset management, administration and governance.



***My steady earnings
have also helped
my family save for a
better future –
Morgina from Gazipur.***



SECOND RURAL ELECTRIFICATION AND RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Lighting up rural communities

Basic Information

Start date: 20 September 2012

End date: 31 December 2018

Total commitment: US\$ 386 million

Implementing agency: Infrastructure Development Company Limited (IDCOL); Power Cell and Rural Electrification Board

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Overview

Life comes to near standstill after sunset for the great majority of Bangladeshis living in the countryside. Only about 40 percent of rural households have access to grid electricity, and even these consumers suffer frequent and prolonged power cuts due to lack of supply. The **Second Rural Electrification and Renewable Energy Development Project (RERED II)** aims to increase access to electricity in off-grid rural areas through renewable energy sources.

Challenge

At present, against a peak demand of about 8,000 megawatt (MW), current supply is only about 6,000 MW. The urban areas with large industrial loads are prioritized for power supply leaving the rural areas with a disproportionate share of the power cuts. Further, the dispersed nature of rural settlements and the numerous rivers that crisscross the country make grid electrification in many areas of Bangladesh both difficult and expensive. Though progress is being made by the government to counter the power generation shortages, it is clear that reliance on grid electricity alone will not allow the Bangladesh government to realize its vision of universal access to electricity by 2021.



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Approach

RERED II is building on the success of the earlier project, which has supported more than 650,000 new connections to the power grid in Bangladesh and installed more than 2 million solar home systems in remote rural areas. Since RERED's inception in 2009, the project contributed to increasing access to electricity in Bangladesh by 3.5 percent. A recent impact evaluation study on SHS have confirmed increased study time for children, increased mobility and sense of security for women, and increased use of contraceptives and fall in recent fertility in SHS households, thanks to awareness from watching TV. The RERED II project continues to support the installation of solar power systems and other renewable energy options in remote rural areas where grid electricity is not economically viable. More than 80,000 solar homes systems are being installed every month, making it the fastest growing solar home systems program in the world. The implementing agency is a Government owned financing institution, IDCOL. A total of 30 Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) called Partner Organizations (POs) are installing SHS through a micro-credit scheme. Under the program, POs procure and install the systems in rural households as per technical standards set by IDCOL. Households pay 15% down payment while 85% is repaid by households for a 3-5 year credit period at market interest rates (12-15%). After the systems are installed, the POs apply for re-financing from IDCOL (at 6-8% interest rate for a repayment period of 8-10 years) for part of the micro-credit extended to the households. After technical and other verifications, IDCOL releases the credit and a fixed subsidy (currently \$28 per system) to the POs. This refinancing provides the POs with funds to install more systems.

Expected Results by 2018

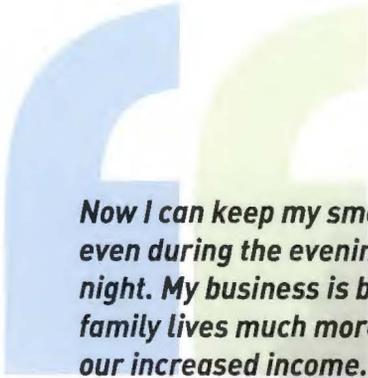
550,000 solar home systems to provide electricity in remote villages.

More than **80,000** solar home systems installed every month.

1 million rural households with clean cooking solutions.

Towards the Future

The RERED II project is piloting renewable energy based mini-grids in remote rural areas and is also supporting solar irrigation pumps. The project also aims to provide clean cooking solutions to over 1 million rural households, which will benefit women and children in particular and support distribution of energy efficient Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFL) in exchange for incandescent lamps to help address the severe energy shortages in Bangladesh.



Now I can keep my small restaurant open even during the evenings and till late at night. My business is booming and my family lives much more comfortably with our increased income. My children are also doing much better at school –

Farida.

BANGLADESH RURAL WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECT

Bringing safe water to rural homes

Basic Information

Start date: 22 March 2012

End date: 30 June 2017

Total commitment: US\$ 75 million

Implementing agency: Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE)

Overview

Seventy-two percent of the Bangladeshi population lives in rural areas and does not have uniform access to safe water. Shallow aquifers are often highly contaminated by arsenic and other pollutants such as salinity, iron, and bacterial pathogens. The **Bangladesh Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project (BRWSSP)** aims to provide hygienic sanitation and safe water for around 1.6 million people living in rural areas with high arsenic or saline infiltration.

Challenge

National rural water supply in Bangladesh is estimated to be around 97 percent coverage, however, water quality issues and contamination by arsenic has significantly lowered this figure to around 83 percent. Around 82 million people live in arsenic affected areas throughout the country. As such, arsenic is the single largest threat to safe water service provision. The quality of sanitation coverage is another area of concern. While there has been significant movement in Bangladesh away from 'open defecation' towards 'fixed point defecation,' a study by the Water and Sanitation Program revealed that only 37 percent of the latrines are hygienic. Whilst the government has confirmed the risks from arsenic and recognised the need to take action, in practice the institutional arrangements for water supply and sanitation services at the national level are not sufficiently coordinated to face the challenges of the sector. Hygiene promotion is similarly inadequate. The poor infrastructure and facilities for water and sanitation services along with increased demand is making it difficult to provide reliable water and sanitation services.

Approach

Built on the success of a previous World Bank pilot project, BRWSSP aims to scale up piped and non-piped water facilities to provide safe and clean water to villagers in around 380 unions in 33 districts with acute arsenic contamination and low coverage of safe water supply. The project also aims to provide hygienic sanitation facilities, thus bringing forth a comprehensive improvement of water and sanitation in all the project target areas. The project will scale up the successful initiative of the earlier project where private sponsors work together with the community and the local government in a public-private partnership to develop and operate schemes for 12 – 15 years. The sponsors will put equity contribution in infrastructure development under the PPP arrangement, which is a pioneer in rural water and sanitation sector in South Asia. Deep tube-wells connected to piped water supply systems are a safe and viable option, especially in high density villages. The project is also financing investment for construction of about 14,000 water point sources mainly deep tubewells in hot-spot upazilas where piped water supply is not geographically or economically possible. Local villagers and Union Parishad officials will be at the center of decision-making, starting from site selection to implementation and maintenance of the schemes. Union Parishads will own the infrastructure assets. The piped and non-piped water schemes, as well as hygienic sanitation facilities, will be implemented through local partnerships involving beneficiary communities, local governments, non-governmental and community-based organizations and private entrepreneurs. Furthermore, in selected disaster affected areas, the project is supporting the Government's emergency disaster response mechanism through provision of the expansion of water supply services. Meanwhile, to fight the poor condition of sanitation, BRWSSP aims to provide financial incentives for the poor to construct hygienic latrines, strengthen the markets to be able to react to the rise in demand through capacity building in the local private sector as well as increase the role of the government to ensure that the latrines are

maintained and accessible to all. An awareness raising campaign will further support the program in bringing a better standard of sanitation throughout the country.

Expected Results by 2017

1,650,000 people with access to improved water sources.

20,000 community water points constructed or rehabilitated.

70,000 new piped household water connections.

1,700,000 people with access to hygienic latrines.

Towards the Future

A study is underway using AusAID Trust Fund to check the viability of PPP type service contracts in small Pourashavas (municipalities) where no piped water supply currently exists and where there is a demand for safe water supply.



WATER MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Safe, sweet water



Basic Information

Start date: 18 September 2007

End date: 30 June 2015

Total commitment: US\$ 102.26 million

Implementing agency:
Bangladesh Water Development Board and WARPO

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Overview

Water touches almost every aspect of daily life, yet ironically in a nation all too familiar with monsoon rains, safe and sweet water doesn't reach everyone. The **Water Management Improvement Project (WMIP)** seeks to rehabilitate damaged water infrastructure by involving the local communities in water resource management and bolstering the ability of the country's principal water institutions, particularly Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) and Water Resources Planning Organization (WARPO).

Challenge

Bangladesh is the terminal floodplain delta of three large rivers, the Ganges, the Brahmaputra and the Meghna, with over 90 percent of their catchments' areas situated outside the country. Each year during the monsoon season, about 20 to 30 percent of the country is inundated, flooding over 6 million hectares to depths ranging from 30cm to 2m. However, whilst creating opportunities for highly productive farming and fishing systems, these are balanced by the risks of deep flooding, erosion and drainage. By contrast, in the post-monsoon period, soil-moisture content declines rapidly and the water deficit needs to be compensated by irrigation. Agriculture gets the largest share of available water and this in turn affects navigation, drinking water supply, environment, rural health and sanitation. Salinity intrusion, water logging and the contamination of the groundwater aquifer by arsenic further exacerbate this problem. Much work has been done in recent decades to prepare for disasters, but water management remains a critical issue.

Approach

WMIP supports the government's goal to decentralize the authority of Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) and hand over the management responsibilities to community organizations, where feasible. By taking the emphasis off flood control and focusing more on water management, the project shifts the responsibility from technicians and bureaucrats to a wide variety of community stakeholders who may participate at any stage of the project development cycle. WMIP covers a total of 130 existing schemes in an area of about 800,000 ha with an approximate population of 9.5 million. It is estimated that about 500,000 poorer households will benefit, mainly through increased employment opportunities and higher production of crops and fish. Furthermore, the project also aims to rehabilitate the BWDB schemes damaged by the 2007 floods and later on by 2009 cyclone. Following these natural disasters, about US\$ 44.5 million of the project fund has been allocated for rehabilitation activities. WMIP also aims to reform the Government institutions involved in the water sector, improving the governance and transparency thereby enhancing their performance to better manage water systems. With this joint approach, the project not only promotes rational management, optimal use and access to water for production, health and hygiene, but also ensures availability of clean water in sufficient quantities for multipurpose use and preservation of the aquatic and water dependent ecosystems.

Results in Numbers

390 km of embankments, **85** water control structures and **20km** of protective works repaired or reconstructed.

300,000 families will benefit from better protection.

8 million person-days of employment.

797 Water Management Organizations (WMOs) formed.

Towards the Future

The project plans to introduce new hydromet technologies to help BWDB better monitor the water flows in the system and also upgrade the ICT infrastructure. BWDB needs strategic involvement and technical capacity building for sustainable water management. The participatory scheme cycle management (PSM) approach of the project involving the beneficiary communities from identification up to monitoring and evaluation facilitates the Government's policy of participatory water management mandatory for all public sector institutions. The communities are involved through 797 new and reconstituted water management organizations (WMO) in all the 67 schemes under the project.



We could not believe that BWDB will consider our opinion in selection of interventions for scheme rehabilitation. Looking at the civil work underway, we regret that we were foolish not to duly participate in the identification and planning stages — A member of Water Management group in the Dublakuri Katakhal Scheme in Mymensingh.

SAFETY NETS





BANGLADESH SAFETY NET SYSTEMS FOR THE POOREST PROJECT

Safety nets to protect the poor

Basic Information

Start date: 26 June 2013

End date: 31 December 2017

Total commitment: US\$ 500 million

Implementing agency: Department of Disaster Management and Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics



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Overview

Existing studies suggest that some of Bangladesh's safety net programs have shown to be effective at reducing poverty and improving gender outcomes. The **Bangladesh Safety Net System for the Poorest Project (SNSP)** aims to improve the equity, efficiency and transparency of major social safety net programs to benefit the poorest households.

Challenge

Despite Bangladesh's remarkable progress of lifting 16 million people out of poverty in the past decade, poverty remains a stubborn problem, with about 47 million people living in poverty and 26 million in extreme poverty. To support the poor and vulnerable, the Government of Bangladesh implements a number of public social safety net programs that involve spending more than 2% of GDP yearly. Despite these interventions, 70% of poor people still do not receive any safety net support, mainly due to shortcomings in identifying poor beneficiaries and program administration.

Approach

SNSP aims to benefit four million households, comprising of 18 million poor people, by co-financing a portion of expenditures of major safety net programs while strengthening their effectiveness. SNSP offers a results-based financing modality, where 86% of the funds reimburse Government expenditures made under safety net programs against specific performance indicators. These include allocating increased resources to the poorest, particularly poor women, and introducing an objective targeting system better to identify the poor. Further, the project will focus on expanding the provision of cash-based transfers through the banking system. SNSP will introduce modern program management information systems and grievance redress mechanisms; it will ensure stronger monitoring along with increased beneficiary access to information on rules and entitlements; and it will provide technical assistance for developing and administering a transparent system of identifying the poor that would reduce the overall costs and errors associated with beneficiary identification. The five safety net programs the project will support are implemented by the Ministry of Disaster Management

and Relief, and include the Employment Generation Program for the Poorest (EGPP), Food for Works (FFW), Test Relief (TR), Gratuitous Relief (GR) and Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) programs. The project will also support the Statistics and Informatics Division in developing a database of poor households that would facilitate better targeting for safety net service delivery and would contribute to improve the coordination among various safety nets implemented by different ministries.

Expected Results by 2017

18 million poor people to benefit from more effective safety net programs.

5 large GoB safety net programs supported.

Towards the Future

The project became effective on September 2013.



BANGLADESH DISABILITY AND CHILDREN AT RISK PROJECT

Tackling disability, protecting children

Basic Information

Start date: 1 July 2008

End date: 31 December 2014

Total commitment: US\$ 35 million

Implementing agency: Jatiyo Protibondhi Unnayan Foundation; Department of Social Services



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Overview

Bangladesh has made significant progress over the last decade in reducing poverty; however, the government recognises that particular marginalized groups, have few targeted programs and services to meet their needs. In particular, people with disabilities and children-at-risk suffer from a lack of access to adequate educational services, health and rehabilitation services and safety nets. This lack of access has led to exclusion from social and economic activities. The **Bangladesh Disability and Children at Risk (DCAR)** project aims to expand coverage and improve quality of services for these for people with disabilities and children at risk by strengthening and scaling up government service delivery systems.

Challenge

Disability has far reaching consequences in the social and economic development of a country. People with disabilities are often marginalized, forgo schooling and cannot enter the labour market. The lack of social services to support them often leads to family members having to forgo paid employment to stay at home to provide care, pushing the family into deeper poverty. The cost of disability in Bangladesh is estimated to be US\$ 1.2 billion, or 1.74 percent of GDP per annum (2008 estimates). For vulnerable children, the cost of reversing their lack of human development opportunities in later years is far greater than the cost of investing in their human development during childhood. To increase social cohesion and reduce poverty in Bangladesh, the quality of social care services and economic opportunities for people with disabilities as well as vulnerable children needs to be improved. This is particularly challenging in a weak capacity environment where implementing entities often lack the requisite technical skills and management tools.

Approach

DCAR is supporting the Jatiyo Protibondhi Unnayan Foundation (JPUF) in adding new Disability Service Centers (DSCs) to an existing Government program, upgrading technical facilities, providing assistive devices to the disabled, enhancing outreach to remote areas of the country, and institutionalizing specialist training for service providers. The project also aims to improve and expand the network of services for children at risk and strengthen the institutional capacity of the Department of Social Services (DSS). Integrated Child Protection Service (ICPS) Centers have been established in seven divisional cities, including crisis management services, referral services, psychosocial counselling, skills training and development, reintegration services, case management, and health and education. The project also seeks to strengthen the Ministry of Social Welfare (MoSW), by supporting the development and roll-out of a management information system for key programs of the MoSW, including the DSCs, child protection services, and several large social pension programs.

Results in Numbers

37,000 persons- with-disabilities receiving services.

1,400 children-at-risk receiving services.

20 Disability Service Centers (DSCs) established in various district headquarters.

7 Integrated Child Protection Service Centers (ICPSCs) established in divisional cities.

Towards the Future

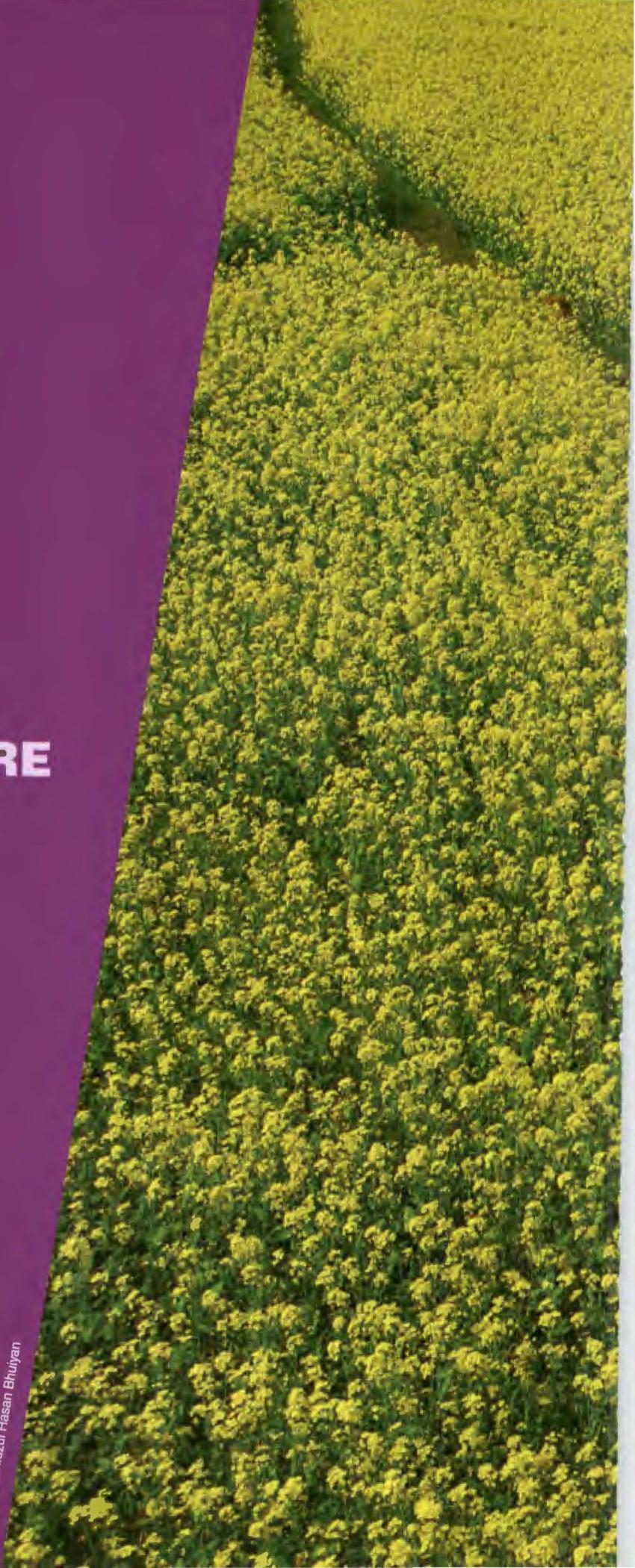
Given the delayed start in implementation and subsequent cost savings, the project will be restructured in the first quarter of FY 2014 to provide for a greater emphasis on outreach services.



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AGRICULTURE

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INTEGRATED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY PROJECT

Adapting agriculture in disaster-prone areas



Basic Information

Start date: 12 August 2011

End date: 30 September 2016

Total commitment: US\$ 46.31 million

Implementing agency: Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock

Overview

Bangladesh has come a long way since the early 1970s, when attaining food security was a distant dream. Now, the country is almost able to feed its own population. Pockets of extreme poverty still persist though, especially in areas with unfavourable agricultural environments. The **Bangladesh Integrated Agricultural Productivity Project (IAPP)** aims to enhance the productivity of agriculture, including livestock and fisheries, in pilot areas, which are particularly prone to adverse seasonal weather conditions such as droughts and flash floods.

Challenge

Agriculture provides livelihoods for over 60 percent of the population of Bangladesh. However, people living in the flash flood and drought prone districts in the northwest and the saline affected tidal surge areas in the south struggle year after year to produce enough food to eat or earn a living. Development indicators show that these regions suffer from higher poverty than the national average. The latest Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES, 2008) indicates that poverty rate in the northwest is 57 percent and in the south is 52 percent against the national average of 40 percent. The link between unfavourable agricultural environments, where farmers lack knowledge and technology, and chronic poverty coupled with food insecurity is abundantly clear in these areas.

Approach

IAPP aims to use technology and training to enhance agricultural production in the flash-flood and drought-prone northern districts of Rangpur, Kurigram, Nilfamari, and Lalmonirhat and saline-affected tidal surge areas in the southern districts of Barisal, Patuakhali, Barguna and Jhalokhati. IAPP would benefit about 175,000 crop farmers, 60,000 livestock farmers and 60,000 fish farmers in the selected eight pilot districts. The project focuses on alleviating poverty and increasing food security through intensification of major crops such as cereals, diversification of high-value non-cereal crops such as fruit and vegetables, and development of non-crop agriculture such as fishery, poultry and livestock. Knowledge plays a critical role. Livelihood field schools improve farmers' understanding and skills base as well as demonstrate the use of new technologies for those wishing to adapt current technology or adopt new technology to intensify and diversify agricultural yield. IAPP also aims to release new and improved crop varieties as well as more productive fish species. In other areas the projects will refine crop production management practices and perform adaptive trials of aquaculture technology. Community mobilization and extension will comprise of activities relating to supporting farmers' groups in adopting new improved technologies and practices, and enabling them to further spread them through farmer-to-farmer interactions. Finally, by conserving and utilising surface water and improving availability of irrigation water and efficiency of its use, farmers will be able to increase cropping intensity.



Results in Numbers

236,000 farmers with increased productivity.

157 tons of certified seeds of different crops distributed to farmers.

255 tons of certified seeds produced by Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation.

1,850 Livelihood Field Schools formed by the Department of Agriculture Extension, providing training to farmers.

More than **2,500** demonstrations on various crops.

More than **2,025** fish farmers received training on three different technologies and **100** fisheries officers received technical skills development training.

1,600 fishery demonstrations, of which **378** are fish nursery.

24,000 farmers have already adopted various improved agricultural technologies including fisheries and livestock.

2 new varieties (both wheat) have already been introduced and **7** more are in process of development for release.

Towards the Future

The project aims to reach nearly 300,000 beneficiaries, improve 25,000 hectares of irrigated land, and introduce over 20 improved production packages. The Global Agriculture Food Security Program (GAFSP) intends to accept proposals for new financing from January 1, 2014. As part of this, the Government of Bangladesh would be eligible to submit a proposal for Additional Financing for the IAPP.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND GROWTH

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INVESTMENT PROMOTION AND FINANCING FACILITY PROJECT

Developing infrastructure through Private-Public Partnership



Basic Information

Start date: 2 May 2006

End date: 31 December 2015

Total commitment: US\$ 307 million

Implementing agency: Bangladesh Bank

Overview

In the backdrop of 8 percent growth target required to attain middle income country status by 2021, Bangladesh needs to double its current investment in infrastructure as early as it can. Given the resource constraints in public sector, Private- Public Partnership (PPP) is being used as a complementing tool in reducing the investment gap for infrastructure. The **Investment Promotion and Financing Facility (IPFF)** Project is helping to build the capacity of the local financial institutions for longer term financing to private-public partnership ventures in infrastructure.

Challenge

Due to the on-going preference for shorter term financing and with limited capacity, the local financial institutions are not yet keen to finance infrastructure projects for a longer term like 10 – 15 years. As a consequence, infrastructure development programs, which are long-term in nature, are suffering. At present the financial markets are unable to contribute substantially to infrastructure financing, except for smaller projects without external (or government) support. A new lending facility is needed to bridge this gap.

Approach

IPFF aims to increase private sector investment in a range of infrastructure sectors through PPP following Financial Intermediary Lending (FIL) model. The financial institutions, selected based on some qualification criteria, can apply for IPFF fund through Bangladesh Bank for financing infrastructure sub-projects. The project also provides technical assistance for identifying PPP projects starting from the feasibility stage, transactions advisory, and tendering. IPFF has already delivered eight fully operational small power plants and added 228 MW to the national grid providing cheap and reliable electricity. In addition to facilitating investment in power sector, IPFF is also working to bring in private provision in other critical infrastructure areas as ports, container terminals, water treatment plants, waste disposal projects, and others. With support from IPFF, the PPP Office, in collaboration with Board of Investment and Bangladesh Bank organized a number of international conferences to attract foreign investors. The project also provided technical assistance to launch three feasibility studies in Health and Port sector. In order to accelerate the pace of project implementation, the World Bank and the Government of Bangladesh recently restructured the project. The restructured project broadens the scope to finance ventures from health, education and information communication technology (ICT) sectors and reallocated more resources for supporting PPP Office in preparing the sub-projects.

Results in Numbers

8 fully operational power plants.

228 MW added to national grid through public-private partnership and to the Dhaka and Chittagong export processing zones.

1 central water treatment plant financed, first of this kind in Bangladesh.

Towards the Future

Following restructuring the project team has focused on strengthening the pipeline both for the short and medium term. At present the project is working on two power plants (each 55 MW), two waste treatment plants, one inland container terminal, and two water treatment plant. IPFF is also working with Ministry of Shipping and the PPP Office for tendering of construction of two jetties in Mongla Port, the country's 2nd sea-port.



SIDDHIRGANJ PEAKING POWER PROJECT

Taking power production to new peaks



Basic Information

Start date: 30 October 2008

End date: 31 March 2016

Total commitment: US\$ 350 million

Implementing agency: EGCB, PGCB, and GTCL

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Overview

Around fifty five percent of the households have electricity connection in Bangladesh. The **Siddhirganj Peaking Power Project (SPPP)** aims to build infrastructures and create good institutions to provide 335 MW of electricity to the national grid and supply natural gas to the Siddhirganj region.

Challenge

Energy demand in Bangladesh has increased on an average of eight percent per annum with peak demand reaching more than 8,000 MW. However, electricity generation per head remains amongst the lowest in the world and at present generation capability is 6,000 MW, falling considerably short of

peak demand. During the peak times, load shedding is a regular occurrence causing disruptions to economic activities forcing many industries to go for costly back-up generators. Unreliable power supply costs the country about 2% of GDP. The energy sector is financially weak, access to capital is severely constrained and prices do not cover costs. Increasing shortages of natural gas, the primary fuel used in power generation, have added to the sector's woes.



© Shehab Uddin

Approach

The project was originally designed as a 300 MW peaking power plant (gas-fired) to meet the shortages during peak periods. Given the increasing energy demand and continued supply shortages, the Government decided to upgrade the peaking units to a combined cycle technology to produce higher amount of electricity with lower gas consumption. This will meet base load as well as peak demands. Combined cycle technologies also contribute to less carbon emission and higher thermal efficiency. An additional financing (US\$160 million) is required to meet the additional capital cost of the combined cycle technology. EGCB is responsible

for implementing the power plant component of the project and has awarded the contract to supply and install a 335 MW combined cycle power plant at Siddhirganj. PGCB is implementing an 11 km 230 kV transmission line to evacuate the power generated by the power plant. GTCL is implementing a 60 km 30-inch gas pipeline to improve the reliability of gas supply to the power plant area. In addition to supporting the physical infrastructures, the project is providing institutional development supports to the three implementing agencies, including the provision of an Owners' Engineer for EGCB and GTCL, an Operation & Maintenance contractor for EGCB, and an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) tool for both EGCB and GTCL.



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Expected Results by 2016

335 MW of electricity to be added to the national grid by **March 2015**.

Gas supply to Siddhirganj power hub will improve through a direct gas transmission pipeline from Bakhrabad.

Power evacuation system completed by October 2013.

Institutional strengthening of the implementing agencies (EGCB, GTCL and PGCB) continued.

Towards the Future

The World Bank is exploring further opportunities to make investment in rural electrification and renewable energy, distribution and energy efficiency and energy saving.

PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT PROJECT

Boosting business with new economic zones

Basic Information

Start date: 1 March 2011

End date: 30 June 2016

Total commitment: US\$ 120 million

Implementing agency: Ministry of Finance;
Economic Relations Division

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Overview

Lack of serviced land and quality infrastructure has been identified as the two recurring constraints for private sector development in Bangladesh. In partnership with the UK-Department for International Development, The **Private Sector Development Support Project (PSDSP)** facilitates investment to set up Economic Zones for the emerging manufacturing and services sectors of the economy with the aim to create more jobs.

Challenge

Scarcity and cost of land in Bangladesh, due largely to its topography as well as the sheer size of its population, is systematically ranked among the major obstacles for doing business. Much of the land is waterlogged or occupied, either formally or informally. This is compounded by an inefficient land administration system and deficiencies in urban planning making the serviced land market highly informal and non-transparent. Access to reliable power is another primary binding constraint to growth. Firms in urban areas reported losing 12 percent of their sales to electricity outages (ICA 2008), more than any other comparator country in the region.



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Approach

The PSDSP promotes diversified private sector investment by improving the business environment and access to industrial land through Economic Zones. The project is supporting the government in facilitating the establishment of private economic zones by providing financing for off-site and last mile infrastructure, starting with the Kaliakoir Hi-Tech Park. The PSDSP is also supporting firm level training and process development to enable better collaboration between enterprises in the economic zones and their suppliers. The project builds on Bangladesh's previous assistance for the country's "Export Processing Zones," which today employ nearly 350,000 people, both in terms of physical investment to create new zones as well as institutional strengthening. The new economic zones will provide infrastructure and streamlined procedures to businesses, both in manufacturing and service industries. Enabling increased investment in business will create jobs and accelerate growth to help Bangladesh reduce poverty significantly. The Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) has identified five additional sites, which will be licensed to private sector developers as economic zones. Of these, zones on the Mongla and Sirajgonj sites have been identified as good candidates for taking directly to the market under a competitive tender. Simultaneously, the project is supporting feasibility studies for proposed zones on the remaining 3 sites, Mirershorai, Anowara, and Sherpur. The project continues to assist the existing export processing zones and the Bangladesh EPZ Authority in the areas of social and environmental monitoring and compliance systems. Among other initiatives, the PSDSP will assist with establishing an Environmental/Green Zones Unit to coordinate all the environmental issues in the EPZs. Finally, given its mandate to strengthen sectors, the PSDSP is currently focusing on the ICT sector and has provided support for the Bangladesh Association of Software & Information Services (BASIS) Institute of Technology and Management (BITM).

Expected Results by 2016

US\$10 million in direct investment in the economic zones.

15% increase private firm level investment in new zones.

5,000 new jobs, **50%** for women.

Towards the Future

The PSDSP hopes to transform the face of Bangladeshi manufacturing and eventually lead to the creation of 15 million jobs by laying the groundwork for economic zones in the country.



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LEVERAGING ICT FOR GROWTH, EMPLOYMENT AND GOVERNANCE PROJECT

Towards a knowledge-based economy



Basic Information

Start date: 20 September 2012

End date: 31 December 2017

Total commitment: US\$ 70 million

Implementing agency: Ministry of
Science and ICT

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Overview

Bangladesh possesses significant advantage in the information technology (IT) and IT-enabled services (ITES) industry due to the availability of a large English-educated talent pool and competitive labor costs. In addition, the industry possesses particular strengths in niche sub-segments, such as software programming, graphics and animation. Given these background the **Leveraging ICT for Growth, Employment and Governance Project** aims to generate employment by providing IT and ITES training to 30,000 Bangladeshi youth, diversify exports and make public sector governance more effective and transparent.

Challenge

Bangladesh's ICT industry has developed over the past decade with telecommunications generating total industry investments of US\$ 4.5 billion since 2002 and providing about eight percent of the government's total revenue per annum. In stark contrast, the IT industry has remained relatively nascent with total industry output estimated at US\$ 300 million per annum. However, Bangladesh possesses significant advantage that can help the country quickly ramp up the availability of the talent pool for the IT and IT-enabled services (IT/ITES) industry and tap into the tremendous potential of the global IT/ITES market for economic and social development. Furthermore, the government recognizes the need to leverage e-Government for public sector modernization. However the public agencies have systems and services that do not use

electronic services sufficiently in support of public sector reform efforts. The lack of shared IT hosting infrastructure, IT governance policies as well as standards and structures has exacerbated this issue and presents a major barrier to providing seamless e-services.

Approach

The project is developing the IT/ITES industry and establishing shared IT infrastructure and services to support public sector modernization and e-Government efforts. The project has a two-pronged approach. Firstly, it seeks to create around 30,000 direct jobs and 120,000 indirect jobs in the IT/ITES industry, which is expected to increase industry revenue by over US\$ 200 million by the end of the project in 2017. These initiatives will help the country tap into the vast potential of its youth in developing skills such as software programming, graphics and animation as well as simple data entry services. Secondly, by using IT in governance, the project hopes to significantly improve the government's efficiency and effectiveness by enabling all ministries/agencies to have a shared data centre for hosting their systems, exchange information and collaborate as well as improve the public sector's ability to secure data through information security policies, guidelines and

standards. With these basics in place, the government can improve their leverage of ICT for governance priorities in the country - including on-going and planned initiatives such as access to information, national identification program, decentralization, and local government development and service delivery.

Expected Results by 2017

30,000 direct jobs in the IT/ITES sector.

9,000 women will be employed.

US\$ 200 million increase in IT/ITES related revenue by 2017.

Towards the Future

The project's IT/ITES component is expected to catalyze the growth of the IT/ITES industry so that Bangladesh may partake more effectively in the global knowledge economy. The e-Government component will also provide the initial foundations for use of ICT in the government, and contribute to improved public administration and services in the longer term for citizens of Bangladesh.



DHAKA WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECT

Clean water for the capital

Basic Information

Start date: 2 December 2008

End date: 31 December 2015

Total commitment: US\$ 76 million

Implementing agency: Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (DWASA)

Overview

The 2004 floods highlighted the need for better drainage and sewerage in Dhaka. With a deteriorating urban planning environment, most natural channels and wetlands that help Dhaka cope with storm water flows have been filled in with unchecked expansion of settlement and accumulation of domestic and industrial wastes. Meanwhile, water and sanitation in the Dhaka slums was non-existent. The **Dhaka Water Supply and Sanitation Project (DWSSP)** aims to improve the sustainable delivery of storm water drainage, wastewater and water services by the Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (DWASA), which has the sole responsibility of providing these services in Dhaka.

Challenge

Dhaka's growing population of 12 million is placing serious strains on the city's ability to provide basic water, sanitation and drainage services to its citizens. DWASA already supplies water to about 70 percent of the population of the Dhaka City and its suburbs. However, delivery of these services throughout Dhaka is inadequate and uneven, and non-existent in slum areas. Indiscriminate dumping of industrial wastes and untreated sewage into the Buriganga, Balu, Turag and Shitalakhya rivers continues to strain an already overburdened sewerage network and worsen the water quality of the surrounding water bodies. Currently, the existing sewerage network covers only about 30 percent of the city area.

Approach

DWSSP is supporting the ongoing rehabilitation work in parts of the Khilgaon-Basabo, Abdullahpur, Shutivola, Shahjadpur, Baunia, Digun, Mohakhali and Gerani canals in a bid to improve storm water drainage and minimize urban flooding, particularly in the eastern part of Dhaka. Furthermore, installation of two major storm water-pumping stations in the Rampura and Kamlapur areas of Dhaka has begun. As part of the initiative to improve the investment planning in sanitation, particularly for the identification of key future wastewater collection and treatment investments in the city, the project has completed preparation of the Dhaka sewerage master plan. Finally, the project aims to design and implement a pilot to test whether water and sanitation service can be provided to the urban poor in selected Dhaka slums. Conceptual design, identification of the targeted slums, assessment of approaches to implementation, and assessment of options for facilities management are now underway.

Expected Results by 2015

4,000,000 direct beneficiaries from improved storm water drainage systems.

40 m³/s increase in permanent storm water pumping capacity.

250 m³/s increase in conveyance capacity of rehabilitated drainage canals.

20.8 km of storm water canals rehabilitated or developed.

Towards the Future

As the project faced initial delays, the progress and fund disbursement rate has been low. After a review of the project implementation, the Government of Bangladesh and the World Bank decided to restructure the project with reduced scope in order to bring implementation back on track. The project restructuring, with an extension of the project closing date, will allow the stormwater pumping stations to be completed and other key project activities – including the Drainage Master Plan, the remaining canal rehabilitation works, the redesign and preparation of a comprehensive strategy for Low Income Communities water supply and sanitation services, and key Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (DWASA) institutional strengthening initiatives – to be finalized within the extension period.



CHITTAGONG WATER SUPPLY IMPROVEMENT AND SANITATION PROJECT

Improving water and sanitation services



Basic Information

Start date: 23 June 2010

End date: 31 December 2015

Total commitment: US\$ 170 million

Implementing agency: Chittagong Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (CWASA)

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Overview

Chittagong is the second largest city of Bangladesh with a population of approximately 4 million.

The **Chittagong Water Supply Improvement and Sanitation Project (CWSISP)** aims to increase access to safe water and sanitation in an affordable and sustainable way, with a special focus on slum areas.

Challenge

Chittagong suffers from inadequate water production capacity and sewerage systems. The port city's water production capacity is only 40 percent of the estimated demand and the pipe network is run down. Currently, about 45,000 households are directly connected with treated piped water (out of about 600,000 households). A large percentage of the city continues to access water through shallow tube wells. The quality of this underground water is questionable, with high salt and iron levels, posing health risks to the public. In addition, very little investment has been made into sanitation and storm water drainage since the late 1980s. Chittagong still does not have a water-borne sewage system or effective storm water drainage service. The Chittagong Water Supply and Sanitation Authority (CWASA), lacks both the capacity and the finance to be able to set in place these systems.

Approach

CWSISP aims to increase the supply of safe potable water to over 3 million people living in Chittagong by installing a water treatment plant in Modunaghat and by rehabilitating and extending the storage and distribution facilities, especially in the under-served. Furthermore, the project will support the updating of Chittagong's wastewater management and drainage master plans. These plans will help identify priority investments in Chittagong city's drainage and sewerage networks, for initiatives aiming to improve the city's urban environment. The project will also support CWASA's pilot expansion of water supply and sanitation services in selected Chittagong slums, bringing better services to an additional 250,000 urban poor. Finally, CWSISP aims to strengthen the operations and institutional structure of CWASA by increasing the sustainability and accountability of

operations, and improving coordination for water, sanitation and drainage services between key stakeholder agencies in Chittagong.

Results

The project is half-way its original five-year implementation period, with most of the major project interventions yet to be started.

Towards the Future

The project is a potential candidate for restructuring. This will entail a reduction in the scope of investment activities that can be implemented within a reasonable extension period of 2 years. The exact scope of the restricting will be assessed during the Mid-term Review Mission tentatively scheduled for December 2013.



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GOVERNANCE AND TRANSPARENCY

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IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM FOR ENHANCED ACCESS TO SERVICES PROJECT

National ID for better service delivery

Basic Information

Start date: 10 May 2011

End date: 30 June 2016

Total commitment: US\$ 195 million

Implementing agency: Election Commission Bangladesh

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Overview

A reliable and authentic national identification system can serve as an efficient, secure data platform for delivery of multiple public services. Having a comprehensive national ID system is a prerequisite for proper targeting and verification of various public and private service deliveries. **Identification System for Enhanced Access to Services Project (IDEA)** Project aims to issue 90 million digitized national identity cards with robust security features.

Challenge

Absence of a comprehensive and reliable national identification system at times lead to non-transparency in service delivery and often leads to many people being excluded, especially the poor. In recent years, Election Commission Bangladesh (ECB) through its National Identity Registry Wing (NIDW) established a national identity (NID) database based on the internationally accredited electoral roll database. They handed each registered adult a NID card. However, these laminated cards lacked durability and still lent themselves to forgery. Creating links with services and improving security fell on the shoulders of the ECB; the verification services are full swing now only with the National Board of Revenue.

Approach

IDEA Project aims to upgrade data quality, replace the existing paper ID cards with more robust, hard-to-fake national ID cards and support the strengthening of the NIDW to administer the NID scheme, including the issuance of NID numbers and the gathering, updating, and usage of NID data. Furthermore, the specially trained staff at the newly formed NIDW will assist selected agencies in adopting e-ID verification services and support the long-term effort to link the NID and birth registration databases through the adoption of the NID number as common identifier. In addition, private sector service providers will have reduced transaction costs due to greater reliability and efficiency in identifying clients, maintaining their own databases of customers, and fulfilling know-your-customer legal requirements. Finally, as evidenced by the success of the existing simple NID cards, the distribution of quality NID cards as a secure means of identity proof is a tangible measure of recognition of individuals by the government and contributes to increased confidence among citizens in the state.

Expected Results by 2016

90 million citizens with secure, reliable means of identification.

4 national institutions using NID as a means to provide services.

513 Upazila level offices providing NID related services.

771 staff trained on NID services.

Towards the Future

The introduction of a national identity card forms part of the World Bank's goal of helping the country fulfil its ambition of becoming a digital Bangladesh. Instant verification is the first step in providing everyday services such as opening bank accounts, accessing safety net programs or even travelling abroad. In time, the improved efficiency in the delivery of standard services will save the country and its citizens both time and money whilst protecting people from identity theft.



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LOCAL GOVERNANCE SUPPORT PROJECT II

Engaging communities in local decision making

Basic Information

Start date: 29 November 2011

End date: 30 November 2016

Total commitment: US\$ 532 million

Implementing agency: Local Government Division

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Overview

Bangladesh has had a long history of local governance stretching back over 150 years, but it's only recently that these institutions are increasingly realising their potential within the development of the country. The **Local Governance Support Project II** provides block grants to Union Parishads to spend at their own discretion as well as provide logistical and technical support. The programme now runs in all 4,504 Union Parishads (UP) throughout Bangladesh empowering citizens to decide what's best for their own communities.

Challenge

Local institutions traditionally played a lesser role in delivering services due to limited responsibilities, lack of adequate resources and staff. Government services are often delivered in a top-down manner, with little accountability to local communities. Recent initiatives have shown that empowered Union Parishads and engaged constituents can make effective decisions both transparently and accountably at the grass roots levels. Consequently, there has been a strong government-lead push towards decentralisation.



Approach

LGSP II builds on the success of the earlier project. Through LGSP, for the first time, Union Parishads were provided direct block grants with full discretion in deciding their spending priorities. \$68.78 million was disbursed to 4441 Union Parishads during 2010-11 and more than 35,000 community schemes generating employment for poor people had been implemented. These included construction or rehabilitation of roads, culverts, drainage and embankment systems, water and sanitation facilities, school and clinic repairs. 70,000 public officials, including UP Chairmen and members are now trained in basic matters of local government functioning. LGSP II continues to support Government of Bangladesh's decentralization efforts through provision of direct block grants to Union Parishads for financing local development projects. With its nation-wide coverage to all Union Parishads, LGSP II will benefit around 130 million people across the country. The project supports rigorous audits

and open budget presentations to create greater transparency and good governance. A key new feature under the LGSP II is the introduction of performance-based grants in addition to expanding the amounts and coverage under the current block grants supported by initial project. Recognizing the major contribution of women, in local level development, it earmarks about 30 percent of the grants for local schemes prioritized by women. The Block Grants under LGSP II will support all Union Parishads once they meet the minimum transparency and governance conditions including completion of local audits, conducting participatory planning and open budgeting, and submission of financial and progress reports. The new Performance Grant will reward Union Parishads who demonstrate improvements across a range of indicators including in local revenue mobilization. Further mainstreaming social audits across the country, strengthening the UP Help Line and introducing Women's Forums at the Upazila level are some of the new social accountability measures under LGSP-II.

Expected Results by 2016

130 million people across the country benefitted.

30% of funds to schemes prioritized by women.

Over **200** functional Upazila Women's Development Forums.

People in the villages are no longer helpless – we do not suffer in silence anymore. We are now able to directly influence how our community spends our own development funds –

Saleha Begun from Dhamrai.

Towards the Future

The momentum provided by LGSP II and the increasing political focus on local governance is expected to provide greater impetus to the decentralization agenda in the country.



STRENGTHENING PUBLIC EXPENDITURE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Making public money count

Basic Information

Approval date: 23 September 2009

End date: 30 June 2014

Total commitment: \$112 million Trust Fund (Jointly funded by UKaid, EU, DANIDA, CIDA and Embassy of Netherlands; administered by the World Bank)

Implementing agency: Ministry of Finance, Planning Commission, Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General and Parliament Secretariat

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Overview

Accountable and transparent management of public funds plays a critical role in strengthening country systems in Bangladesh and supporting implementation of national development policies and poverty reduction. The **Strengthening Public Expenditure Management Program (SPEMP)** aims to strengthen and modernize core institutions of budgeting and financial management in Bangladesh and acts as an umbrella programme for various aspects of Public Financial Management (PFM) reforms.

Challenge

In the wake of a global financial crisis and poorer public service and weaker public financial management, public financial reinforcing and reform became eminent. Despite a series of reform programs, public financial management remains weak in many developing economies and Bangladesh is one of them. Over the last two decades, Bangladesh's public finance policies and institutions have gone through significant transformation through the implementation of a series of first generation reforms. The upcoming agenda is more challenging as Bangladesh aspires to enter the family of the middle income countries and move into a higher growth path. A developing economy would require more fundamental institutional changes, deepening of the initiated reforms in public financial management (PFM) and significant upgrade of systems and skills in both central and line agencies, including budgeting and oversight functions.

Approach

SPEMP is supported by a multi-donor trust fund that aims to strengthen and modernize core institutions of budgeting and financial management and improve the effectiveness of formal institutions of financial transparency and accountability in Bangladesh for stronger and more capable oversight functions of the government, ensuring accountability for the use of public resources. Support is given through three government-executed projects: Deepening Medium Term Budgeting Framework (DMTBF), Strengthening the Office of Comptroller and Auditor General (SOCAG) and Strengthening Parliamentary Oversight (SPO). There is additional support under the program for analytical work.

Results in Numbers

ALL **57** line ministries with MTBF in place.

7500 officials have received PFM trainings.

20 high impact areas identified for pilot audits using specialized methodologies.

A framework for OCAg to better support Parliamentary Oversight Committees developed and in the process of finalization.

Formal arrangement established with internationally recognized PFM accreditation institution for delivering accreditation courses at FIMA.

72 OCAg staff enrolled for CIPFA PFM Accreditation -Certificate level Course.

92% reduction of audit backlog; **350** reports reviewed and disposed, **5,550** objections settled.

Towards the Future

An extension of the program is being considered by donors along with a follow-up PFM-program to continue support to developing PFM-systems and capacities in Bangladesh.



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DEEPENING MEDIUM TERM BUDGETING FRAMEWORK

Effective public financial management to enhance services

Basic Information

Start date: 23 September 2009

End date: 31 July 2014

Total commitment: US\$ 50 million

Implementing agency: Ministry of Finance and Planning Commission

Overview

Strong, transparent and accountable public financial institutions are essential for Bangladesh to promote better public services and improve the lives of the people. The **Deepening MTBF and Strengthening Financial Accountability Project (DMTBF)**, the largest project under the Strengthening Public Expenditure Management Program, aims to build a more strategic and performance oriented budget management process, while strengthening financial accountability across the expenditure management cycle.

Challenge

The last two decades have seen some notable improvements in Bangladesh's public financial management (PFM) system, including the consolidation and amendment of the regulatory framework, the computerization of the budget process and the development and piloting of strengthened expenditure management through a Medium Term Budgeting Framework (MTBF). Despite good progress, the overall financial management system for budget execution and oversight remains process-intensive and primarily based on manual work processes. Challenges also exist with respect to developing adequate professional capacity in PFM, especially in Line Ministries; enhancing access to information and implementing credible sanctions when transgressions occur. Bangladesh still needs to do more to consolidate reform achievements towards greater transparency and accountability in public finance.

Approach

The DMTBF project supports fundamental reforms of operational budget management functions in both central units and line ministries. Improved budget processes and financial accountability are likely to improve the allocative and operational efficiency in public expenditure management which in turn will enable better provision of key public services in support of the Government's social and economic policy objectives. The project is moving ahead with the development of a new budgeting and accounting system - iBAS++. Coordination between the Finance Division and the Planning Commission is improving. Furthermore, new and modernized budget institutions are being created in line ministries to support a medium-term outlook on the budget. The design of a new budget classification has been decided to ensure compliance with international standards. Moreover, the Government is enhancing its capacity to manage debt through an upgraded debt management system. A significant amount of

training has also been conducted to raise the level of capacity and awareness of government officials in modern public financial management.

Results in Numbers

All **57** line ministries with MTBF in place.

100 % compliance on budget calendar achieved.

7500 officials have received PFM trainings.

Towards the Future

Since it might not be possible to complete all activities within the project end date, discussions are on-going with stakeholders and the Government regarding a no-cost extension of the project.



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STRENGTHENING THE OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL

For more capable government oversight functions

Basic Information

Start date: 29 May 2011

End date: 30 June 2014

Total commitment: US\$ 16.6 million

Implementing agency: Office of the
Comptroller and Auditor General



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AUDIT BHABAN

Overview

As part of the overall Public Financial Management reform, steps have been taken to strengthen the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (OCAG) to produce and timely disseminate quality audit reports to the public, meeting international standards that earn enhanced responsiveness of the executives. The Strengthening the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (SOCAG) Project, under the broader umbrella of the Strengthening Public Expenditure Management Program, is enhancing the professional capacity of the Office of Comptroller and Auditor General (OCAG).

Challenge

The Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) function has gone through a long way of transformation and positive changes backed by extensive support from several development partners. However, a lot remains to be done to improve along several dimensions, in particular three key performance indicators where the record is still weak: scope, nature and follow-up to external audit. More specifically, C&AG audit reports are submitted to the legislature more than 1 year after the end of the period under examination, and the vast majority of audit reports are not taken up by Public Accounts Committee or followed up by the executive.

Approach

SOCAG aims to strengthen the independence and effectiveness of the OCAg through the introduction of a new audit law as well as increase the accountability and efficiency of OCAg through addressing issues relating to audit quality, coverage, timeliness, improved delivery and deciding high level training needs. An action plan has been developed for strengthening the OCAg's relations with stakeholders. Further, it has finalized the course design for Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), and also selected 72 participants for the first round of CIPFA certificate course. The project has put in place a consortium consisting of an international consulting firm - PKF (UK) LLP, the UK National Audit Office (NAO), the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), and a team of national consultants to provide the Management and Implementation Support Consultancy services, which expedited the project implementation. The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India have agreed in principle to conduct a Peer Review of the current systems and practices of the OCAg Bangladesh. CAG Bangladesh sent formal requests to NAO UK and CAG India for establishing twinning arrangements.

Results in Numbers

20 high impact areas identified for pilot audits using specialized methodologies.

A framework for OCAg to better support Parliamentary Oversight Committees has been developed and is in the process of finalization through dissemination.

Formal arrangement established with an internationally recognized PFM accreditation institution for delivering accreditation courses at FIMA.

72 OCAg staff enrolled for CIPFA PFM Accreditation -Certificate level Course.

Towards the Future

Discussions are on-going with stakeholders and the Government regarding a no-cost extension of the project and restructuring as appropriate.



STRENGTHENING PARLIAMENT OVERSIGHT PROJECT

Parliamentary fiscal oversight to ensure accountability and transparency

Basic Information

Start date: 30 August 2010

End date: 30 June 2014

Total commitment: US\$ 5 million

Implementing agency: Parliament Secretariat

Overview

Parliamentary Fiscal Oversight refers to monitoring and scrutinizing of government expenditure and making public officials accountable for use of public funds. The Committee on Estimates (EC) examines budget estimates, while the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) and Public Undertakings Committee (PUC) scrutinizes the audit reports and audited accounts of the central government and public undertakings respectively. The **Strengthening Parliament Oversight (SPO)** Project aims to strengthen and modernize of the actual workings of the three financial oversight committees, enable the Secretariat to strategically and effectively deliver the services required by the committees and enhance public access to information.

Challenge

Despite a strong mandate, the legislative financial oversight committees have had limited impact. This has been due to outdated Rules of Procedure; the executive's apathy towards committee work, audit observations and timely disposal of audit and committee recommendations; a culture of defiance of legislative directives; limited operational facilities and inadequate skills of Secretariat staff. Since 1997, no PAC reports have ever been placed before and discussed in the Parliament. In addition, traditional practice of focusing on past transactions, rather than advising executive and CAG to address on systemic weaknesses and improving quality of the audit reports, has further constrained PAC from taking a forward looking approach. Despite focus on past observations, successive PACs were not able to bring down the accumulated back log largely due to rudimentary approach to audit disposal. This indicates ineffective function of key pillars in the accountability chain,

particularly relating to oversight of the executive through independent audits and through legislative scrutiny of external audit reports.

Approach

The SPO project has made significant progress in building consensus for amending the Rules of Procedure (ROP) of Parliament. Study tours and visits to well performing democratic institutions have helped to form strong consensus among the members that amendment to ROP is critical for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the financial oversight committees in Bangladesh. The recommended changes in the ROP are awaiting the formal approval of the Speaker before being presented to the Standing Committee on Rules of Procedure for its consideration and recommendation to Parliament. The project has been providing hands-on technical support to enable the financial oversight committee Chairs to report to Parliament on the most recent audited Finance Accounts and Appropriation Accounts before the dissolution of the current Parliament. The audit reports on the Finance Accounts and Appropriation Accounts of the Government had not been scrutinized

by Parliamentary Accounts Committee (PAC) since 1995. To improve transparency and information sharing, the project is also supporting a new website for the parliamentary financial oversight committees. The website, now under construction would post all recent PAC, PUC and EC reports for public.

Results in Numbers

92% reduction of audit backlog.

350 reports reviewed and disposed.

5,550 objections settled.

Towards the Future

A tripartite dialogue involving the Speaker, Members and Secretariat has been initiated to move forward the ROP amendment. Active follow-up regarding the unified Parliament has been initiated in order to provide greater assurance of sustainability of project results after the closing of the project.



CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION





STRENGTHENING REGIONAL COOPERATION FOR WILDLIFE PROTECTION IN ASIA

Regional cooperation for tackling illegal wildlife trade

Basic Information

Start date: 7 April 2011

End date: 31 December 2016

Total commitment: US\$ 36 million

Implementing agency: Ministry of Environment and Forests, Bangladesh

Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation, Nepal



Overview

South Asia is home to a diverse network of natural ecosystems and accounts for 13-15 percent of the world's biodiversity. The region hosts the most charismatic and endangered species, the Royal Bengal Tiger. Because of its rich biodiversity, the region has become a very lucrative target of the illegal wildlife trade. To tackle illegal wildlife poaching and trade, **Strengthening Regional Cooperation for Wildlife Protection in Asia (SRCWP)** is helping participating countries support capacity building in wildlife protection and mitigate the burgeoning threat to South Asia's biodiversity.

Challenge

South Asia is home to over 65 percent of the 3,000 or so remaining wild tigers. According to The Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network (TRAFFIC) report, seizure of parts of more than 1,400 tigers across Asia in the past 13 years reveals illegal trade of tiger persists. Illegal wildlife trade is controlled by criminal gangs where flagship species such as rhinos, elephants and tigers are being poached in one country, stockpiled in another, and then traded beyond the South Asia region. Thus, no single country can manage or eliminate the illegal wildlife trade or threats of poaching on its own. Since wild animals cannot be confined to national boundaries, a single country can neither manage contiguous cross-border wildlife habitat effectively. Thus, focusing on regional approach to conservation of Asia's flagship species would lead to improved natural habitats for all species and, ultimately, increase productivity of natural capital and healthy ecosystems for South Asia. Since many of the poor rely on these natural habitats for their livelihoods, increasing natural capital productivity would also have positive development outcomes in the region.

Approach

The first World Bank regional project in South Asia, the SRCWP follows a two-pronged approach: capacity building to address the illegal wildlife trade through regional cooperation; and habitat protection and management to generate regional conservation benefits and address the human-wildlife conflict. The first component builds capacity to address the illegal trans-boundary wildlife trade and aims to bring about regional harmonization and collaboration in combating wildlife crime through strengthened legislative and regulatory frameworks, well equipped specialized agencies and systems, as well as relevant training and awareness programs for staff across the range of agencies that contribute to the enforcement of wildlife laws and regulations. The second component is designed to promote wildlife conservation in Asia through a virtual regional centre of excellence, support control of invasive species; improve existing park infrastructure; species monitoring and recovery programs; preparation and implementation of endangered species recovery plans; protection of inviolate areas for species conservation; implementation of real-time field based monitoring systems; development of landscape scale imaging platforms and strengthening enforcement of laws and regulations and innovative research projects in wildlife conservation. It will also fill crucial knowledge gaps in addressing the regional threats to conservation. Two countries – Bangladesh and Nepal – are participating in the first phase.

Results in Numbers

The **Wildlife Conservation and Security Act 2012** approved by Bangladesh Parliament.

735 officials of BFD received training to respond to wildlife crimes through **26** national training programs.

Established Wildlife Crime Control Unit that has been able to detect and file **28** cases on wildlife offenses and rescued nearly **2,118** wild animals from October 2012 to June 2013.

Undertaken sea turtle monitoring program that successfully released approximately **2,000 hatchlings** to offshore waters.

A National Tiger Recovery Plan has been prepared.

4 projects for management of human-wildlife conflict, elephant conservation, and carrying capacity assessment for ecotourism in the Sundarbans are under implementation.

Towards the Future

India has demonstrated its commitment to cooperate in regional wildlife conservation through its bilateral Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) relating to wildlife and ecosystems with Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal and is expected to collaborate on furthering the project's goals.



EMERGENCY CYCLONE RECOVERY AND RESTORATION PROJECT

Shelter from the Storm

Basic Information

Start date: 6 November 2008

End date: 31 December 2015

Total commitment: US\$ 184 million

Implementing agency: Ministry of Food; Ministry of Agriculture; Ministry of Local Government and Ministry of Water

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Overview

Bangladesh, due to its geographical location, is in the frontline of the battle against climate change. The country has faced over 200 natural disasters in the last 40 years with increasing frequency and intensity. Cyclone Sidr in 2007 was amongst the most devastating, affecting nine million people across 30 districts in southern Bangladesh. The **Emergency Cyclone Recovery and Restoration Project (ECRRP)** is helping the affected community recover from the damage caused by the Cyclone Sidr by providing support for infrastructure and agricultural livelihoods. The project is also working for better long-term disaster preparedness through building and reconstructing of cyclone shelters and embankments that will protect coastal population from future natural calamities.

Challenge

In the 20 years leading up to the turn of the century, 60 percent of the 250,000 deaths worldwide arising from cyclones occurred in Bangladesh. Over time, Bangladeshis have learned to deal with this threat, so before Cyclone Sidr made land, an estimated 3 million people were evacuated to safety. Nevertheless, the category-4 storm and the accompanying tidal surge caused US\$ 1.7 billion of physical damage leaving thousands without means of survival or a roof over their head. An estimated 1.5 million houses were destroyed, 1.3 million tonnes of crops were damaged and 100,000 livestock drowned. Furthermore, the increased salinity in the coastal plains, as a result of flooding, rendered it useless for growing traditional crops. Despite considerable progress by the Disaster Management Bureau (DMB), future disaster risk investments still remain low.

Approach

The role that stronger embankments and cyclone shelters played in reducing fatalities in 2007 cannot be underestimated when Sidr is directly compared to similar natural disasters in the past. Consequently, through ECRRP, over 240 cyclone shelters have already been rehabilitated and another 230 new cyclone shelters are being built. Embankments that were damaged are also being repaired to provide extra protection in the event of another tidal surge. ECRRP has helped restore livelihoods by providing farmers with substantial assistance such as tillers, livestock and saline tolerant rice seeds, improved rice seeds during the Boro and Aus crop season. Crop diversification alongside the introduction of saline tolerant agriculture that can grow in the new environment has also encouraged farmers to take what seemed like an unworkable situation and turn it to their advantage. Grain silos for the safe storage of harvested crops as well as better protection for livestock has further increased confidence in those who live in vulnerable areas. A recently concluded Household (HH) survey depicts that majority of the households have reported increase in their income in the past season due to ECRRP interventions. Also,

While the last cyclone washed away everything I built up for my family, I am hoping that the BRR1 47 [salt-tolerant rice] will help us get back on our feet. The green saplings you see in front of you will double our harvest and our income. And hopefully the green will double our happiness as well — Md. Harun Ur Rashid, Chairman of the Village Farming Society, Barguna.



there has been 8% reduction in poverty incidence (42% of HHs now below poverty threshold vis-à-vis 50%). Meanwhile, the program is strengthening the capacity of DMB to improve risk assessment, better cyclone preparedness with a special focus on community level interventions as well as help in preparation of future projects on building embankments, shelters and rural roads in disaster-prone areas.

Results in Numbers

230 new cyclone shelters under construction, 240 being repaired.

Above **75%** of the **158 km** of embankment repaired.

198,050 households provided field crops, irrigation and farm machinery.

22,045 households provided with livestock.

45,825 number of farmers trained.

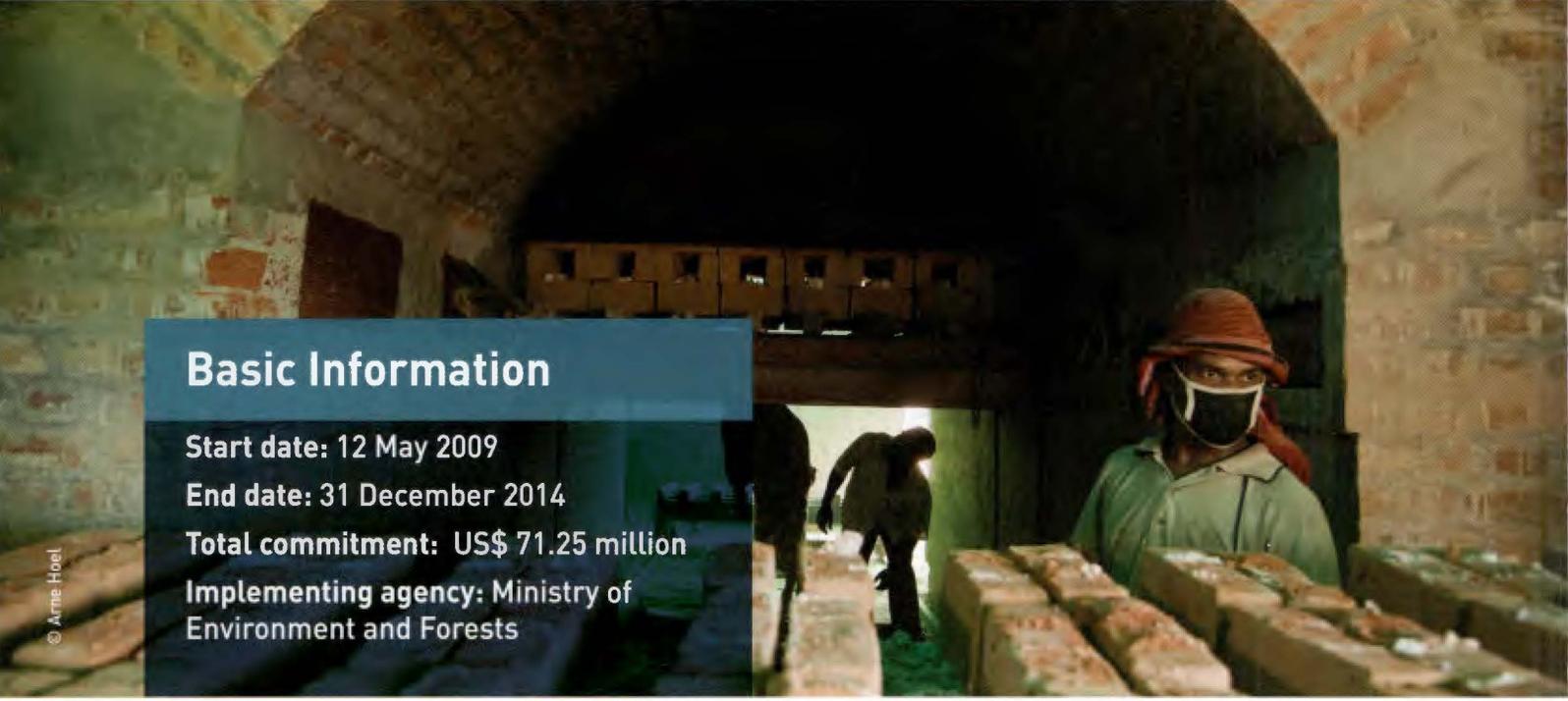
38 new technologies introduced in crops, livestock and fisheries areas.

Towards the Future

Bangladesh has made impressive progress in disaster management, in particular saving lives, since the tragic 1991 cyclone that killed over 140,000 people. However, a lot remains to be done in terms of protecting property and livelihoods. Additional financing is under preparation to help build and rehabilitate a large number of multipurpose shelters, meeting both primary school and emergency needs.

CLEAN AIR AND SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT PROJECT

A breath of clean air



Basic Information

Start date: 12 May 2009

End date: 31 December 2014

Total commitment: US\$ 71.25 million

Implementing agency: Ministry of Environment and Forests

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Overview

Dhaka ranks highly amongst the world's major cities in terms of poor urban air quality. Substantially reducing air pollution could save up to 3,500 lives and avoid up to 230 million cases of respiratory diseases annually in Bangladesh. In economic terms, this is equivalent to around US\$ 500 million in savings due to reduced health care costs and increased productivity per annum. The **Clean Air and Sustainable Environment project (CASE)** is the first program of its kind to tackle pollution from two of the country's biggest polluters, brickfields and transport, as well as ensure safe mobility for people in the capital.

Challenge

Brickfields in Bangladesh expel over 9.8 million tons of greenhouse gases into the air annually due to a combination of old technology, weak environmental legislation and enforcement and lack of corporate responsibility. Meanwhile, growing numbers of motorised vehicles, are clogging up roads and contributing further to poor air quality. Besides the large number of cars, the ever-present conflict between motorised and non-motorised transport such as rickshaws means urban traffic is often brought to a standstill for long periods of times resulting in not only health and environmental damage but huge economical losses dues to lost time. What's more, very few alternatives exist for pedestrians to walk from one place to another, exacerbating the situation further. Brick kilns and motor vehicles contribute to 60% of fine particulate pollution in Dhaka during dry season.

Approach

CASE directly tackles pollution by encouraging the adoption of cleaner brick manufacturing technologies that require less energy such as Hybrid Hoffman Kilns, Zig Zag Kilns, Vertical Shaft Brick Kiln and Tunnel Kiln. The program is launching 20 demonstration projects that will be a catalyst in the widespread adoption of cleaner and efficient technology by entrepreneurs motivated by both the economic and environmental benefits. The project also encourages research into technology alternatives to bricks such as micro-concrete, and help the Government in strengthening environmental laws that introduce stricter standards and stronger "polluter pays" principles for industrial pollution. CASE also provides support to the newly established Air Quality Cell (AQC) that is responsible for air quality monitoring, data analysis and reporting and public information and administration. In urban transport, CASE is promoting safe pedestrian mobility in Dhaka by actively rehabilitating and improving sidewalk and constructing foot over bridges. It is also improving traffic management by improving intersections, installing traffic signals and training the police in the enforcement of traffic signalization. Under the CASE project the feasibility of a 20 km Bus Rapid Transit (or BRT) line from the airport to Buriganga Bridge is being studied. BRT offers a low cost high efficient solution to public transport in the congested city of Dhaka.

Results in Numbers

11 Continuous Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAMS) installed in 8 cities to monitor major air pollutants and to generate real time air quality data.

For the first time in Bangladesh, **1** clean technology (VSBK) successfully introduced which emit around 60%-70% less particulate matter than the traditional fixed kilns.

Construction of conversion of Fixed Chimney Kiln to Zig-Zag Kiln completed.

20km of sidewalk and road improvement completed in Mohammadpur, **14.5 km** on-going in Tejgaon and **21** intersections being improved.

5 foot over bridges constructed and 8 under construction.

Towards the Future

As more and more people come to Dhaka in search for jobs, there is a growing urgency to tackle air quality and transport related problems. Going forward, a public transport network is being planned with the possibility of a pilot corridor in the future.



BANGLADESH CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCE FUND

Building Bangladesh's resilience to climate change

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Basic Information

Start date: 30 August 2011

End date: 31 December 2014

Total commitment: Seven donors have committed US\$ 188 million to the BCCRF. DFID (US\$ 97 million), European Union (US\$ 38 million), Sweden (US\$ 19 million), Switzerland, USAID, AusAID and Denmark (US\$ 35 million).

Implementing agency: Ministry of Environment and Forestry

Overview

Bangladesh is one of the most vulnerable countries to the potential impacts of climate change. To address this challenge, Bangladesh launched its first Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) in 2009 to build a program for enhancing resilience to climate shocks and facilitating low carbon and sustainable growth. Subsequently, the **Bangladesh Climate Change Resilience Fund (BCCRF)** was set up by seven development partners to help Bangladesh build the country's resilience to climate change.

Challenge

Rising global temperatures are likely to increase the frequency and intensity of cyclones in the Bay of Bengal as well as monsoon rainfall, resulting in catastrophic floods in the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna Basin. Sea level rise and the consequent coastal flooding and saline intrusion into aquifers constitute serious threats. The challenge of climate change, aggravated by the country's high population density, is significant in view of the likely impact on people's livelihoods. It also impacts on Bangladesh's capacity to improve its medium-term growth performance and thereby lift some 55 million people out of poverty. With a view to building a long-term program for enhancing resilience to climate shocks, Bangladesh launched the BCCSAP at the UK-Bangladesh Climate Change Conference in London. BCCSAP identified six main pillars: (i) food security, social safety and health; (ii) comprehensive disaster management; (iii) infrastructure; (iv) research and knowledge management; (v) mitigation and low carbon development; and (vi) capacity building to address climate change impacts on various sectors of development.

Approach

In the wake of the London conference, a multi-donor trust fund for climate change was proposed as a modality for the development partners to support Bangladesh in implementing the BCCSAP. The BCCRF with contribution from bilateral donors was set up in May 2010. The World Bank is currently performing three functions for BCCRF: trustee, task team, and secretariat. Under this setting, seven investment projects, totaling US\$ 148 million, are under implementation or preparation by sectoral ministries. These include cyclone shelters, agriculture, solar irrigation, afforestation, food storage, community climate change, and capacity-building initiatives. Six research products are also underway. In the longer term, the intention of the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) and the funding development partners is to build GoB capacity so that the GoB will manage the BCCRF directly. The fiduciary functions will remain with the World Bank. To achieve its objectives, a BCCRF secretariat was established at the Ministry of Environment and Forests. The first phase of the capacity-building project is under implementation, and a second phase



is in the pipeline. The Bangladeshi institution(s) that will perform the task team function under BCCRF, and also operate as National Implementing Entities under the global climate change structures, will be chosen during the capacity-building project.

Expected Results by 2014

61 new cyclone multipurpose cyclone shelters built in climate-vulnerable areas.

45,000 farmers provided with access to clean energy services.

17,000 ha of land reforested or afforested.

Towards the Future

Grant agreements for the solar irrigation and food storage projects will be signed in FY14, and agriculture adaptation and capacity building projects are under preparation.

CLIMATE RESILIENT PARTICIPATORY AFFORESTATION AND REFORESTATION PROJECT

Unveiling climate resilience: forests and people

Basic Information

Start date: 8 February 2013

End date: 31 December 2016

Total commitment: US\$ 33.8 million

Implementing agency: Bangladesh Forest Department and Arannayk Foundation under Ministry of Environment and Forests

Overview

Bangladesh, in particular the coastal zone, is most vulnerable to adverse climate change impacts. Increasing tropical storms, cyclones and surges in coastal zones has prompted the Government of Bangladesh to mobilize multi – donors through an innovative institutional arrangement called Bangladesh Climate Resilience Fund (BCCRF). Under BCCRF, **Climate Resilient Participatory Afforestation and Reforestation** is a pilot initiative to mainstream climate change mitigation and adaptation challenges into forestry in the country.

Challenge

Absence of proper land use policy, planning and financial resource crunch has given rise to many challenges for the forestry sector. The objective is to build the capacity of a resource poor forest department to take a lead in mainstreaming climate resilience in afforestation, reforestation and forest management through active participatory planning with communities. One of the challenges is how to mainstream climate resilience in the large afforestation program through appropriate species choice and forest management practices, in the context of uncertain climate projections through community participation.



Approach

The project has multi-pronged approach. The project aims to expand climate resilient afforestation and reforestation; build livelihood resilience among the vulnerable communities; and enhance the capacity of the Forest Department. Using various climate vulnerability indices, 10 vulnerable forest divisions are identified and the communities and forest resources in those divisions are mapped. In addition, the project aims at creating local employment through plantation and catchment treatment activities. This will increase household income of beneficiaries participating in alternative income-generating activities. The project aims to harness scientific and community knowledge to develop climate resilient afforestation strategy and also develop vulnerability profiles to identify the most vulnerable villages and communities for implementing socio-economic or livelihood resilience measures. An updated long term forestry master plan with action plan will be developed. Improving the capacity of government

institutions will lead to better forest resources monitoring, assessment and climate resilience.

Expected Results by 2016

Afforestation and reforestation of **17,000 ha** and **1,062 km** of strip plantings.

Training of **15,000** forest users.

Reach **46,000** direct project beneficiaries, of which at least **30%** female.

Generate **3.5 million** man days of employment.

Towards the Future

The project became effective on July 02, 2013 and future initiatives will depend on the implementation progress.



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COMMUNITY CLIMATE CHANGE PROJECT

Community-driven attempts to build climate change resiliency



Overview

The Government has set up a multi-donor trust fund Bangladesh Climate Change Resilience Fund (BCCRF), a 'one-stop' mechanism for large-scale climate change financing in Bangladesh. One of the two windows of BCCRF, the **Community Climate Change Project (CCCP)** is allocating funds on a competitive basis to non-governmental organizations (NGO) to implement community-driven interventions that build resilience to climate change impacts.

Challenge

The frequency and intensity of extreme climatic events are expected to increase in Bangladesh because of climate change, with devastating economic, social and ecological consequences. The risks from climate variability and change are geographically concentrated in six specific regions of the country, which also have higher concentrations of the poor—the subsistence farmers, the rural landless, fishing communities, and urban poor. The areas are largely defined by their physiology and ecology and have varying climate change risks. The South, Southwest, and Southeast coastal region is at risk from increasingly frequent and severe tropical cyclones, sea level rise causing drainage congestion, and saline intrusion in surface and ground water and soil. The Northwest Barind Tract is prone to drought while the Northeast haor or freshwater wetland area is alternately impacted by delayed rainfall or early flooding, and sedimentation from erosion of the surrounding hill areas. On the other hand the Central char and floodplains are prone to flooding, flash floods, and river bank erosion; the Hill Tracts are prone to landslides; and the urban areas are impacted by drainage congestion.

Approach

The BCCRF has two windows: one for funding large-scale public sector projects and the other window for allocating 10% of the funds to non-governmental organizations (NGO) for implementing community projects through CCCP. The Governing Council of BCCRF designated Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) as the implementing agency for funding and overseeing NGO sub-projects. The US\$ 12.5 million project will focus on the three most vulnerable climate zones in Bangladesh. Of this amount, US\$ 10.4 million will fund projects in saline affected coastal zones, flood-affected areas and charlands, and drought-affected or rain-scarce areas in north-western Bangladesh. The remaining funds will be allocated to monitoring, learning and sub-project refinement, through knowledge sharing and dissemination of lessons learned. The target Upazillas have been identified based upon the degree of exposure to climate risk; and level of poverty. The first call for proposals from NGOs was on 17 November 2012 and PKSP received nearly 500 project concept notes. After meticulous review 30 concept notes were short-listed for submission of detailed project proposal. PKSF awarded sub-grants to 11 NGOs by August 31, 2013. The proposals - 4 proposals are targeting salinity, 4 are targeting flood and 3 are targeting drought - were reviewed by both internal and external technical

experts. Transparency was maintained at every step of the project selection process. All relevant documents for awarded full proposals are and will be posted at the CCCP website. PKSF provided unsuccessful NGOs clear indications as to which selection criteria they had not fulfilled. The rejection criteria for the concept note will be posted on the website. The selected projects will be implemented by NGOs with active participation of the local communities to implement adaptation activities at the grass-root level. Some of the proposed activities on the concept note are introduction of climate smart agriculture to suit local hydro-climatic regimes, protection and renovation of water and sanitation facilities in the flood prone areas, promotion of early warning system, climate adaptive infrastructural development like raising plinth level of house, community level maintenance and reconstruction of small scale embankment, rural road and adaptation in health sector - coping with diseases caused by disasters.

Results in Numbers

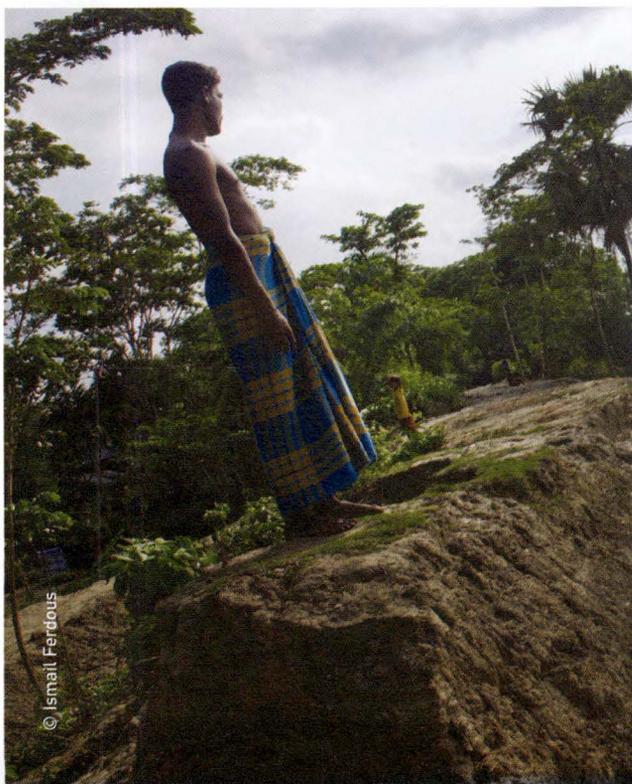
Nearly **500** project concept notes received following first call for proposals.

30 concept notes addressing three climatic risk zones shortlisted.

To date **11** sub-grants awarded.

Towards the Future

19 more detail proposals are under review by external technical experts.



WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

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NUTON JIBON PROJECT

New life for the rural poor

Basic Information

Start date: 23 June 2010

End date: 30 June 2016

Total commitment: US\$ 115 million

Implementing agency: Social Development Foundation

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Overview

Bangladesh has steadily improved its social and economic indicators. Still more than half of the country's population lives below the poverty line. Floods and cyclones frequently cause severe damage to lives and livelihoods, especially the poor women who remain particularly vulnerable. The Empowerment and Livelihood Improvement Project, now known as **Nuton Jibon** aims to improve the livelihoods, quality of life and resilience to climate variability, natural hazards and other shocks of the rural poor, especially the poorest and vulnerable households.

Challenge

About 47 million people still lives in poverty and 26 million people in extreme poverty in Bangladesh. 80 per cent of these people live in rural areas where employment opportunities and adequate basic services are constrained. In recent years, several major natural disasters like Cyclone Sidr (2007) and Cyclone Aila (2009) as well as seasonal floods and drought have had a significant accumulated impact and have likely further exacerbated the poverty, especially in the vulnerable northern and southern districts where 60 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line. The vicious circle of disaster and poverty, whereby each new calamitous event deepens poor people's vulnerability and slows development, is a major constraint to poverty reduction in Bangladesh.

Approach

The Nuton Jibon Project consolidates and scales up the activities of the predecessor pilot Social Investment Program Project (SIPP). SIPP gave more than 3.5 million people in the poorest and most disaster prone districts of Bangladesh, the chance to dream of a new life through better community infrastructure and productive investments, such as drinking water; access roads and bridges; sustainable livelihood investment and direct job created for youth through skill development training and project facilitation. The project demonstrated that the poorest villagers have the capacity to prioritize needs, manage resources, and implement subprojects — particularly women who occupied 80% of decision-making positions. Nuton Jibon Project has scaled up the pilot initiative from 07 to 16 districts and from 1407 to 3262 villages. As such it benefited from the solid momentum on participatory targeting methodology and community driven approach which were already in place. It also benefited from the inclusive, transparent and accountable planning tools and governance structure developed under that project. Nuton Jibon carries on where SIPP left off by empowering the poor and strengthening local governance. The project focuses on reducing vulnerability of the poor to risks, in particular those associated with natural hazards and climate variability, by enhancing skills to increase employment opportunities as well as support

small-scale demand-driven community investment sub-projects that are prioritized, implemented and managed directly by the rural poor. For long-term sustainability of livelihood activities, Nuton Jibon is also creating links with local Government and local services providers, including the financial sector and markets.

Results in Numbers

Around **654,411** households benefited.

75,500 beneficiaries mobilized into Nuton Jibon Groups (NJG).

223,000 NJG members accessed the Shabolombi Fund and started income generating activities.

17,500 youth received skill development training, of which 14,835 employed.

2,302 community infrastructure sub-projects completed.

Towards the Future

The project is being restructured to address the mismatch in funds allocation between the current cost and actual project needs. It is expected that project funds will be exhausted a year before the closure of the project on June 30, 2016. Hence the preparation of the follow up operation may have to be initiated on due course for smooth continued implementation of project activities.



We used to eat only once a day. Now we can eat three times a day, and I can afford to educate my daughter

— Musammat Ruma Begum of Pakula North village in Jamalpur district has improved her family's fortunes by participating in a local community development scheme.

NORTHERN AREAS REDUCTION OF POVERTY INITIATIVE

Empowering and employing women



Basic Information

Start date: 27 October 2011

End date: 31 December 2015

Total commitment: US\$ 29.29 million

Implementing agency: BEPZA, Coordinating
Ministry: Ministry of Labour and Employment

Overview

The northern areas of Bangladesh are amongst the poorest in the country. Women in particular have difficulty finding alternative employment, as they are isolated from the major industrial centres. The **Northern Areas Reduction of Poverty Initiative (NARI)** project aims to economically empower poor and vulnerable women from the north western districts by facilitating their access to jobs in the ready-made garment sector in Dhaka and Chittagong. The project helps the vulnerable women to overcome the difficulties of migration and to get a chance to successfully adapt to city life.

Challenge

The garments industry in Bangladesh has played a significant role in providing economic benefits to poor and vulnerable women. Control over income also provides women with a viable alternative to early marriage that in turn contributes to reductions in fertility. Today, around 80 percent of the garments workers are women. Yet, the number of poor women from impoverished northwestern districts joining the garments sector is much lower than the number of poor women from other parts of the country. Female garment workers constitute a highly vulnerable group: young, poor, unskilled, sometimes illiterate, and often single women in a society dominated by strong gender hierarchies. With few support systems in place, the first few months in the city and at the factory are the most hazardous, deterring many women in desperate need of work.

Approach

The NARI project (nari means women in Bangla) aims to provide training, transitional housing, counselling and job placement services in garment factories to migrating poor and vulnerable women. About 10,800 women will be recruited on a self-selection basis from five munga-prone districts in northern Bangladesh, namely Gaibandha, Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari, and Rangpur. After screening the selected women will be given an orientation course so they can make an informed decision about beginning a new life in one of three Export Processing Zones (EPZs) in Dhaka, Karnaphuli or Ishwardi. The women will be settled into newly built complexes, with transitional housing facilities at dormitories and training centres, giving them time to develop social networks and support systems. The training centres will accommodate cohorts of 300 trainees; the trainings will be for three months period and technical curriculum would include training in cutting, sewing, and quality control. This training will allow women to enter factories as semi-skilled workers rather than unskilled workers. The trainees will also receive life skill training covering topics such as adjustment to city life, savings and remittances, safety and security, rights and responsibilities at the work-place, finding appropriate housing, contract negotiation, health and

fertility. The dormitories attached to the training centre will accommodate 600 women for a transitional period of six months at a time. Finally, the women will be recruited into garments factories at the EPZ through an employment bureau at each training centre that continually assesses the needs of the labour market at the EPZs and links the beneficiaries to prospective employers.

Expected Results by 2015

Around **10,800** women will gain formal employment.

3 months trainings to be provided.

6 months transitional housing facilities.

Towards the Future

NARI is a pilot project which aims to train and place women in factories inside three export processing zones that have better conditions and safeguards for workers. If the pilot project is successful, based on a rigorous impact assessment, the plan is to expand it to other parts of Bangladesh and other sectors.

Accommodation and safety are the main issues stopping more girls from coming. The project will have a very good impact in encouraging women to come forward and work. I would definitely recommend my sister to come if she gets these benefits that we never got — Tania, 19-year old, working at a garment factory.





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