

Vulnerability Framework**Strategic Context**

Though India has one of the largest road networks in the world with a total of 3.3 million km (2.65 million km of it being in rural areas), connectivity and accessibility of rural areas remains low due to capacity constraints at the national and secondary level, poor condition of the overall network, and lack of all-season roads especially in hilly areas. About 30 percent of India's 855,042 villages (or 300 million people) are without all-season access to social services and economic opportunities. Consequently, "empowering" rural India through the strategic provision of all-season road access has emerged as one of the key priorities for the Government of India (GoI). In an effort to address the problem of poor rural accessibility in a more systematic way, GoI launched the Prime Minister's Rural Roads Program, named Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) in late 2000. PMGSY is implemented by National Rural Roads Development Agency (NRRDA) and funded through the Central Road Fund (CRF) borrowing from multi-lateral agencies. The overarching objective of PMGSY is to provide connectivity to all unconnected habitations, through good all-weather roads with a population of more than 500 persons and 250 persons in hilly tribal regions where social exclusion is exacerbated by limited physical access. The PMGSY targets to include new connectivity to nearly 1, 78, 000 habitations involving construction of about 3,75,000 km of roads apart from upgrading of 3,72,000 km of existing rural roads (in poor condition). This involves an expenditure of about Rs 1, 330 billion (US \$ 33 billion).

The World Bank through its Country Assistance Strategy commits to a series of loans/credits to support PMGSY. Starting from the First Rural Roads Project (RRP-I) approved in 2004 and currently under implementation, the Second Rural Roads Project (RRPII) will be the second World Bank operation to support PMGSY.

Project Background

The World Bank loaned RRPII aims to increase the efficiency of the PMGSY, through systematic capacity enhancement in the participating states to provide and maintain all season access to communities in order for residents to have enhanced access to economic opportunities and social services. RRPII will optimize the traffic conditions to link every administrative village to the highway network and thus the nearest small towns – the primary body of urbanization. In tandem the project seeks to promote comprehensive rural transport efficiency by endorsing gender sensitive and inclusive: (i) service frequency; (ii) road building and maintenance programs effectively coupled with the National Rural Employment Guarantee Program to combat the existing poverty variance from shrinking natural resource employment.

The project will be a US\$1.5 billion Specific Investment Loan (SIL) that uses a SWAp approach to support implementation of PMGSY over a five-year period in participating states. RRPII has two Components, namely: Program support to PMGSY (A) and Institutional Strengthening (B).

- Component A: Program support to PMGSY (US\$ 1,440 million), comprises of two sub – components: (i) Enhancing operations of the PMGSY; and (ii) Systematic maintenance of assets. The objectives of the component are to: (a) enhance cost effective village connectivity, (b) operationalize routine maintenance activities through a variety of methods; (c) monitor through Online Monitoring and Management System (OMMAS) by developing key management reports at the National (NRRDA), State (SRRDA) and PIU levels; and (d) contribute to state level maintenance policies for rural roads management.
- Component B: Institutional Strengthening (\$60 million) consists of four sub-components, namely: (i) Research and development; (ii) Independent means of verification; (iii) State Level Project Management Technical Assistance; (iv) Equipment; and (v) Training for Skills Development. The component will support institutional strengthening, organizational

effectiveness, and individual skills development to complement achievement of the program outcomes.

It is assumed that interim impact of RRPII in mobilizing the vulnerable population will enable policy dialogue to mainstream the project approach into PMGSY.

While any eligible state can participate in the project, the states identified for the first phase are Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Meghalaya, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh.

Defining Vulnerability in the Context of Rural Access Index

For the purpose of the project, vulnerability is defined in the context of *rural access index* which is the consistent basis to estimate proportion of rural population who has access to transport. In rural India vulnerability is characterized by social isolation and marginalization resulting from gender bias or belonging to certain groups such as scheduled caste and tribes. While these two elements are critical in ensuring social outcomes of the project, they may not be captured while computing rural access index, if cultural context is not considered in the process. Thus, given that in rural India, birth identity and gender are key determinants of social inclusion within the dominant society, the project sanctions the below framework to achieve equity in distribution of project benefits.

Objective of the Framework

The objective of the framework is to ensure that the development process generated by the RRPII fully addresses the needs of the vulnerable population and enables measures to promote distributional equity among the project affected populations (PAPs). The framework endorses information sharing, consultation and collaboration as participatory techniques to develop the abilities and reinforce the capacities of the vulnerable while preserving their historical identity.

While all population below poverty line are vulnerable, for the purpose of the project, framework endorses the below as “vulnerable” given their birth identity and gender, which exacerbates the already existing poverty related vulnerability. The three categories of vulnerable are identified as:

- Women;
- Scheduled caste population; and
- Scheduled tribes.

In particular, the guidelines stated in the framework will ensure that the above populations do not suffer any negative effects during the project that they receive gender sensitive benefits compatible with their traditions and they participate as stakeholders in planning, implementing and evaluating the Project

Vulnerable Population

According to the Census 2001, and as stated in the below matrix, the participating states have strong representation of the three categories of vulnerable population. While all three categories are vulnerable, each group would require targeted assistance to fully realize the benefit potential.

State	Total Population in Millions	% of Tribal population	% of Women	% of Scheduled Caste
Jharkhand	26.93	28%	48.57%	11.84%
Uttar Pradesh	166.20	0.1%	42.97%	21.1%
Rajasthan	56.51	12.6%	47.94%	17.15%
Meghalaya	2.32	85.9%	31.27%	0.5%
Uttaranchal	8.49	3%	44.19%	17.9%
Himachal Pradesh	6.08	4.02%	49.18%	24.7%

Framework Approach

Framework proposes the following approach to address gender, scheduled caste and scheduled tribe populations.

Gender

The framework awards priority to women over men to overcome the cultural isolation and marginalization which are characteristic of rural India. It states that starting with feasibility study, the project will follow an engendered road map to ensure women's issues are continuously considered throughout the project cycle. Specific steps to be followed include:

1. engendering prefeasibility study process, and reports to establish a gender base line;
2. disseminating project brochures at the household level to enable effectiveness in information access among women;
3. molding project planning and implementation approach to suit women's cultural identity;
4. including women representatives to participate in the transect walk;
5. endorsing inclusion of women in road works as a criteria for awarding contracts and collaborating with NREGA to increase women's employment;
6. designing service frequency to suit women's travel needs;
7. sensitizing and training transport staff on gender sensitive road safety techniques;
8. hiring an external third party NGO to support women grievant;
9. undertaking random dialogue with women to ensure their voices continue to be heard; and
10. engendering MIS and road score card process and reports.

Scheduled Caste

Scheduled caste or *dalits/harijan*¹ as they are often known in India, though, assume a critical position in the Indian development agenda, are often not fully included in the program planning or implementation, given their low level of literacy. The framework warrants inclusion of these groups of population in design, implementation and monitoring, thus empowering them from beneficiary to a primary stakeholder in the process.

The project will greatly optimize connectivity of all-season feeder road networks that link areas dominated by dalits in every administrative village to the highway network. The framework warrants that in order to achieve habitation connectivity, ten percent of the total connected roads should link dalit dominant locations which are described as 'areas where 80% or more of the population belong to the dalit community'. The project will in tandem promote transport efficiency of the road network by enhancing service frequency in these locations and employment opportunity by including them in road works. The project will also collaborate with National Rural Employment Guarantee Program to combat any gaps in promoting their employment.

Scheduled tribe

The scheduled tribes also called as *adivasis* in rural India, are distinguished by their distinct language, script or living pattern. They have a clearly defined national legal framework and Bank policy OP 4.10 to promote their well being. Among the participating states, Meghalaya followed by Jharkhand has the largest percentage of adivasi population (85.9% and 28% of the total population).

In an effort to fully address the distinctiveness of adivasis, the project will follow a legal framework that endorses the stipulations as per the Indian legal policies and regulations relating to adivasi nationalities as

¹ People dear God

well as the World Bank Operational Policy 4.10. According to the classification issued by Indian Constitution, there are numerous legal documents to address the subject ranging from comprehensive laws to documents dealing with specific subjects such as economic development, education, health, religion etc. The Constitution, coming into force on 19th February 2004, following its 89th Amendment, set up National Commission for adivasis under Article 338 A, to oversee the implementation of various safeguards provided to them under the Constitution.

Among the numerous duties and functions endowed by the Constitution of India on the Commission under Article 338A, the below are particularly relevant to RRPII.

1. safeguard distinct language, script or culture under Article 29(i);
2. prevent alienation of tribal people from land and improve the efficacy of relief and rehabilitation measures for tribal groups displaced by development projects;
3. inquire into specific complaints with respect to the deprivation of rights and safeguards of the Scheduled Tribes; and
4. ensure full implementation of the Provisions of Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (40 of 1996);

The primary objectives of World Bank Operational Policy 4.10 are to ensure that:

1. opportunities are provided to participate in planning those that affect them;
2. opportunities consider culturally appropriate benefits; and
3. any project impacts that cause adverse impacts are avoided or otherwise minimized and mitigated.

The framework warrants that any participating village where over ten percent of the total population is adivasis, the project will underscore the following to enable connectivity of adivasi dominant locations:

1. dissemination of project information in local language in a culturally appropriate manner;
2. representation of adivasi as a stakeholder in transect walk;
3. inclusion of adivasis in road construction and maintenance works;
4. collaboration with NREGA to enable participation of adivasis in its employment programs;
5. participation of adivasis as a stakeholder to monitor social outcomes through road user score cards; and
6. promotion of transport efficiency in adivasi dominant locations through increased safe transport services;

In situations where project affected adivasi communities are over ten percent of the total population of the village, adivasi development plan is an eligibility requirement for financing under the proposed World Bank Project.

Possible Negative Implication

While the above holds good in every administrative village covered by the project, the only possible negative impact that could arise from the project on these populations is from land requirement for road alignments, which involves purchase of land in some states, while in others it is donation of land. Though construction is generally proposed along the existing tracks, there may be instances where additional land may be required. In order to mitigate any negative impact arising from land donation and acquisition, however negligible, project has developed a social management framework (SMF). The SMF, which consists of land donation procedures, resettlement planning and entitlement provisions, has been worked out to meet the project related land requirements in the participating states. In the event that land donation or purchase is necessitated from the vulnerable, the resettlement and development plan will be drawn to let the affected vulnerable optimize the socioeconomic benefits that accord with their cultural

characteristic. And, in the case of adivasis, the project will also ensure that the development plan underscores national laws and regulations on adivasi population and the World Bank Policy OP 4.10

Program Planning and Implementation Arrangements

Where vulnerable communities are identified to be impacted by any roads under the project, the framework envisages that program implementation unit (PIU) will identify zilla level community organizations that represent women, scheduled caste and tribes through stakeholder consultation. The organization thus selected, will work on a voluntary basis with village heads to lead their participation in every stage of project cycle. The program implementation units in coordination with Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) at the village, block and district levels will join forces with these organizations to effectively disseminate program information, carry out the consultation work, plan and implement necessary measures in a culturally appropriate manner. The selected organization will be accountable to not only ensure continuity in inclusive participation throughout the project cycle, but also to facilitate these populations assume their critical role as stakeholders in supporting the continuity of the program benefits.

In an effort to promote sustainability of the program benefits, project proposes to get the buy in from the minority groups through the involvement of the community organizations and build the capacity of the government officials on the ways and means to effectively collaborate with the vulnerable population to meet the rural roads agenda. The modus operand for capacity enhancement is community driven ‘on the job training’ for the government officials. The efforts of these organizations will be recognized upon completion of the road works through posters informing their role in the process.