Local Government Engineering Department,
Ministry of Local Government Rural
Development & Co-operatives, Bangladesh

Rural Transport Improvement
Project (RTIP) of LGED,
Dhaka, Bangladesh:
Revised Social Assessment
Report: Executive Summary

March 2003
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For and on behalf of
ERM

Approved by:  Dr T K Moulik

Signed:  T K Moulik

Position:  Vice Chairman & CEO

Date:  18 March 2003

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ERM India has been retained by the Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh represented by the Project Director, Rural Development Project -II (RRMNP), Local Government Engineering Division (LGED), Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives (MLGRD & C) Dhaka, Bangladesh for Independent Review of process outputs of Environment and Social Assessments under the Proposed Rural Transport Improvement Project (RTIP) of LGED.

ERM reviewed the following documents that the client provided in February 2003.

1) Report on Stakeholder Analysis (December 2002)
2) Methodology for Socio-Economic Baseline Survey (December 2002)
3) Report on Social Screening (December 2002)
4) Draft Resettlement Framework (December 2002)
7) Social Development and Gender Action Plan (SDGAP) (December 2002)
8) Linkage of Social Screening with Design (December 2002)
9) Implementation Mechanisms and Capacity Building (December 2002)

On the basis of the review comments submitted by ERM and on receiving feedback from the client, ERM India has revised and finalised the SA report.

1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Rural Transport Improvement Project (RTIP), which includes construction/improvement of roads, structures (bridges/culverts), markets and jetties (pier), is designed to create rural transportation improvements. These improvements will create opportunities for safer, faster and cheaper movement and transportation of people. In particular RTIP will benefit children, the aged, workers, and unemployed. The overall objective of the RTIP is the alleviation of poverty.

The Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) under the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives (MOLGRDC), Government of Bangladesh, will implement this multi-component project (RTIP) with financial support of the World Bank. More specifically, the project will improve 1,200 km of Feeder-B and 500 km of Rural Roads-1; 150 growth centre markets, 45 river jetties and 34 Bridges. The proposed improvements will be implemented in 21 districts in five phases over a period of five years. The LGED has, using a participatory approach, completed identifying the first-year program, which will be implemented in 15 districts.

It is expected that improvements of such physical infrastructures will help reduce rural poverty by providing people and communities with opportunities
to enhance productivity and access to innovations and more gainful marketing facilities. To this end, the locations of the project's physical components, such as the roads, markets and river jetties will be selected to create transportation and socio-economic networks to maximise intra-rural as well as rural-urban interactions. The participatory approach in selection, operation and maintenance of these facilities is expected to bring together various stakeholder groups, especially those who are socio-economically vulnerable, into the decision-making process and be benefited by the development.

1.1.1 Contents of the Social Assessment report

The social assessment report covers the social dimension of the RTIP project from profiling the socio-economic conditions in the region, identifying stakeholder groups and analysing their interests and concerns, conducting a social screening to assess potential impacts and linking the findings therefrom to project design. All these exercises have been understood as important 'process' components of the project design and are documented and discussed in this report.

The next section of the report contains the specific, targeted strategies for mitigating the adverse impacts of the project (like persons affected because of land acquisition) and support social development. These strategies and action plans are based on the findings from the studies and consultation exercises and the project designs for the First Year FRBs and a 'project framework' for the project period (five years) as applying to all project sub-components.

The second part of the report contains the Resettlement Framework that has been developed as a set of measures for providing compensation and mitigation measures against the envisaged adverse impacts from land acquisition for the project. This framework takes into account the degree of loss in terms of land and livelihood and aims to provide commensurate compensation as provided for by the laws of the land and also incorporates some aspects from the policy guidelines provided by the World Bank.

1.2 APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

The approach for undertaking social impact studies with exercises relating to mitigation of adverse social impacts and maximising benefits draws upon the existing laws of the land, the project objectives and safeguard policies set forth by the lending agency, the World Bank.

The approach for undertaking the social assessment and social development strategy formulation includes the above and strongly underlines the principles of local participation and consultation on all aspects of the project from the initial design stages to the implementation. Special attention is paid to the incorporation and inclusion of the viewpoints and concerns of women and other more 'vulnerable' stakeholders like indigenous people.
1.3 **SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE**

A socio-economic profile for the region has been drawn up based on secondary sources and provides the socio-economic context of the project in Bangladesh and the project area and reflects the levels of socio-economic development. It summarises the demographic features, economic and social indicators and traces their trends.

A detailed baseline survey has been proposed as a follow-up and as the initial task at the time of implementation. The purpose of the baseline survey would be to evaluate the socio-economic conditions of project affected persons (PAPs) prior to project intervention, to be used as baseline to compare the same after the work has been completed.

1.4 **STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS**

The Stakeholder Analysis identifies all potential direct and indirect stakeholders in the Rural Transport Improvement Project. Stakeholders refer to persons or groups who have stake in a proposed program or project and who may play a key role in influencing the project policy, planning and implementation. Stakeholders’ analysis was a precondition for social assessment and for setting the framework of participatory planning and implementation. It helped generate information critical to planning, implementation and monitoring of the RTIP. The stakeholder analysis will also help avoid or minimise the adverse impacts of the project and simultaneously support the realisation of positive effects of the RTIP.

The key stakeholders from each project component were identified in the FGDs. Stakeholders were categorised as Primary Stakeholders, who have direct interests on the project through positive and negative impacts the project may have on them, and Secondary Stakeholders who have an indirect interests in the project, but may have significant influence on it.

1.4.1 Direct Stakeholders

i. Beneficiary/User groups (traders association, Business persons and shopkeepers, farmers, transport operators and owners, traders, buyers, community people, Road users, market and Ghat committee, poor and vulnerable groups, indigenous people)

ii. Adversely impacted people (people losing land, homesteads, shops, assets or livelihood to various degrees, poor and vulnerable groups, indigenous people)

iii. The implementing agency (LGED officials at Head quarter, Project Implementation Unit (PIU), District and Upazila levels and any other government body directly involved)
1.4.2 *Indirect Stakeholders include:*

iv. Other interest groups (NGOs (national and local levels, CBOs, academic institutions, local government bodies, community representatives, religious organisations, professional and occupational groups, media etc.)

v. The Government of Bangladesh, which is keen to provided better infrastructure to the rural areas, and will be seeking more funds from internal and external agencies in the future

vi. Donor Agencies (World Bank which is funding this project, and other donors who would be following the project and its impacts with interest for lessons to learn)

FGDs were conducted to identify the potential key stakeholders for the RTIP, determine their interests and their expected or perceived benefits of the RTIP, and determine their power and influence. The analysis helped develop a strategy for participation of different stakeholders in the project and also identify the levels at which participation takes place as well as phases in the implementation schedule when this participation would be most effective and useful.

1.5 **SOCIAL SCREENING**

Social criteria was developed to conduct social screening on the various project components under RTIP. Social screening identified roads and other transport structures to be improved in the RTIP programme that may require further social assessment.

1.5.1 *Key Findings*

Overall, the screening exercise indicated that most of the FRBs (except three) require detailed social assessment while only very few GCM, gluts, bridges and SRRs require assessment (based on screening results of a sample of subprojects)

Findings further indicated that in the case of FRBs, most of the roads have large numbers of structures including cultural properties. Therefore, detailed assessments of those roads are needed. To minimize problems and find some solutions to be incorporated in project designs, hot spot discussions were carried out.

The extent of land acquisition has a direct bearing on the extent of impact. Where there is no requirement of land acquisition, a detailed social assessment is not usually required and where land acquisition is required, a detailed social assessment is usually required. The present exercise further suggested that local people are aware of the developments proposed and accordingly have constructed their structures with these proposals in mind.
1.6 RESETTLEMENT FRAMEWORK

Given that the magnitude of the acquisitions and the impact details of the entire project, which are required to prepare a standard Resettlement Action Plan (RAP), it has been decided that LGED would instead prepare a Resettlement Framework (RF) for the entire project. The RAPs would be prepared separately for each phase after land acquisition needs and their locations are determined.

The RF contains

a. A detailed *policy matrix* defining the entitlements, entitled persons, application guidelines and implementation issues, and the institutional/organizational responsibility to implement them;

b. An *organizational framework* to plan and implement the resettlement activities in general, and in particular to identify the location-specific impact details, and the tasks concerning policy revisions, budgeting, work planning and the like;

c. A *grievance redress procedure* to deal with disputes and complaints related to planning and implementation of the resettlement activities;

d. A *monitoring and evaluation framework* to be used for land acquisition, and the preparation and implementation of the phase-wise RAPs, and

e. A *planning process* defining the tasks leading to preparation of the location-specific land acquisition proposals, identification of the impact details, policy review, budgeting, task scheduling, etc.

1.6.1 Mitigation Principles

To the extent feasible, the project will consider alternative engineering designs to avoid or minimize land acquisition in order to minimize its adverse socio-economic impacts on the people and communities. Under unavoidable circumstances, considerations will be made to:

(i) avoid or minimize displacement from homesteads;

(ii) avoid or minimize displacement from buildings/structures used for permanent business/commercial activities;

(iii) use least productive lands; and (iv) avoid acquisition of community facilities like educational institutions, places of worship, cemeteries, buildings/structures that are historically/culturally significant, and the like.

Where displacement is unavoidable, resettlement of the project affected persons (PAPs) will be planned and developed as an integral part of the project, and will be implemented as a development program. In addition, the RF has used the following principles to determine the nature of impacts that would require mitigation and the PAPs who would be entitled to assistance under the project:

(i) absence of legal title will not be considered a bar to assistance, especially for the socially and economically vulnerable persons and groups,

(ii) homestead-losers, including the households/persons squatting on public lands, will be given the options of physical relocation in
designated sites or any locations they choose, and will be assisted with relocation;

(iii) the project will rebuild or provide access to alternatives, where community facilities are affected;

(iv) economically well-off persons who use their social and political influence to use public lands will not qualify for assistance; and

(v) the project will not be used to collect arrear land development or any other taxes.

The RF is presented as a separate stand-alone document to facilitate its use and distribution during project implementation.

1.7 **INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

This Framework and Implementation Plan lays the background for many of the issues that will specifically impact Indigenous PAPs. Most Indigenous PAPs will experience indirect positive and negative impacts from the RTIP while seven indigenous HH will experience resettlement issues. Through the development of participatory measures, a mitigation strategy and monitoring and evaluation plan, this Framework and Implementation Plan seeks to mitigate, minimize or avoid any negative impacts from the project.

In the context of the project, the term indigenous people describe social groups with a social and cultural identity distinct from the dominant society that makes them vulnerable to being disadvantaged in the developmental process. Broadly this refers to the different tribal people in the country.

1.7.1 **Key principles and components of the proposed strategy**

The strategy will have the following key components.

- Identifying potentially impacted IP in the census and subsequent field verification.

- Identifying mitigation measures in participation with IP in the planning process.

- Preparing micro-level IPDPs during implementation at project sites with IP population, through extensive PRA exercises such as resource planning, settlement mapping, stakeholder analysis, poverty assessment and wealth ranking. This will help develop more locally relevant action plans for participation and mitigation as well as ensure that the strategy takes into consideration and address the issues concerning the larger IP community in the project area.

- Including local organizations of IP in the participation process. Representatives of these organizations will be identified through discussions with local community leaders.

- Entrusting the Sociologist at the district level and the Community Organizer at the Thana level the job of ascertaining IP’s needs from their respective
levels and assist them in negotiations about losses and compensation of their own property and property culturally important to that group.

- Setting up a Social Development sub unit at the Project Management or Head Quarter level in the LGED within the Environment Cell. This unit will be under the overall supervision of a Senior Engineer and will be responsible for implementation and M&E of both the Gender Action Plan and the IPDP. The Resettlement Specialist and the Sociologist at the PMU should be the core members of this team and may be supported by short term professionals if required.

- Involving some representatives from indigenous communities in the Baseline Socio-economic Survey of indigenous HHs and identification of potential impacts to enable adequate and accurate information to be obtained.

- Encouraging women from IP communities to participate through separate meetings, PRA exercises and the process of skill mapping. Plans thus generated will be forwarded to the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) representative to assist with its implementation. Employing women in a tree plantation programme is one way women could benefit from the project.

1.8 THE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND GENDER ACTION PLAN

The Social development and Gender Action Plan provides the basis on which equitable distribution of project benefits is to occur to all the impacted sections irrespective of gender and social strata. It highlights the status of women in Bangladesh and reviews the national programmes and some of the ongoing programmes and interventions aimed at women in the country.

The action plan recommends the basic approach to be followed in the project design targeting social development through poverty alleviation that will take into account the specific needs and aspirations of women as a stakeholder group in the project. The recommendations provide an outline for the kind of efforts and activities needed to address the gender issues in the project.

1.8.1 Framework of the Action Plan

The action plan has been prepared based on a certain framework and the appropriate activities are suggested in each. The participation and consultations that have been held provide the basis on which recommendations have been provided. The framework is as follows:

- Increase involvement of women in income generating activities through RTIP works
- Enhance the participation of women in the planning and implementation process.
• Improve the working environment of women engaged in RTIP works (wage, abuse, childcare, safety). Activities to ensure child care facilities at the work site e.g. shed, toilet facilities, water supply.

• Improve road safety for women, elderly and children. Activities to ensure Road safety campaigns to cover the issues of women, children and elderly. Provision of improved infrastructure facilities to enhance road safety such as traffic calming measures/bus stops/ interchange etc. at required places.

• Mitigation of any likely adverse impact of the project particularly on women.

1.8.2 Recommendations of the action plan

The action plan outlines and identifies certain activities as well as policies and processes to be adopted while implementation. The recommendations are suggestive of the kind of steps to be taken to ensure equitable distribution of project benefits to all categories especially women and vulnerable groups. Some of these are:

• Capacity building exercise within the project is required to enhance level of participation of all stakeholders especially women. The women staff within the LGED should be encouraged to build capacity and participate in the project.

• A skill mapping exercise should be carried out for women in the project area. This will serve to identify the most appropriate activities for income generation and capacity building.

• The implementation of the action plan requires a dedicated agency/body to co-ordinate its various aspects. While the LGED will do this at a broad level more specific and targeted arrangements need to be made. A social development unit within the Environment Division at the Project Management level is suggested for the purpose.

• Monitoring indicators need to include gender specific parameters for pre and post project monitoring. Certain indicators and processes that can be monitored for this purpose could be to review how many women attend meetings and how many are vocal in them, how many training programmes have been held for women, documentation and record of women’s opinion of project impacts, adherence to the specific demands of the women in the project before and during implementation etc.

1.9 PARTICIPATION AND CONSULTATION STRATEGY

The people’s participation, i.e., the participation of the users and beneficiaries, for whom the development initiatives are determined, are crucial to ensure achievement of the targeted results/benefits which the people need, on the one hand, and sustainability of development on the other hand.

The development of a participation and consultation strategy involved

i. preparation of stakeholders analysis and participation framework,

ii. development of methodologies and issues of consultation and participation;
iii. Designing Guidelines for participatory Consultations,
iv. holding discussions in different forms such as FGDs, key informants interviews, hot spot consultations and workshops to ensure representation of all important stakeholders at different levels;
v. documentation of consultation and participation process and
vi. disclosure of consultation documents

The strategy has three key elements;
i. Mechanisms to share primary information gathered and institutional analysis with broader groups of stakeholders.

ii. Mechanisms to ensure the participation of key stakeholders, where feasible; and

iii. Feedback mechanism that facilitate stakeholder response to the information provided.

The strategy outlines the institutional arrangements, roles and responsibilities and the reporting and feedback mechanisms to ensure participation and consultation at all levels.

1.10 INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

This section of the report presents the proposed institutional structure to support the implementation of the resettlement action plan, the gender strategy and the indigenous peoples development plan, incorporating the participation and consultation strategy. Roles and responsibilities have been identified for project staff and in that context, the envisaged capacity building requirements, at various levels have also been included.

LGED has offices down to Upazilla level and comprises of 10,494 staff. Under the Chief Engineer, there are two Additional Chief Engineers, of whom one is in charge of implementation and administration. RTIP R & R activities will be performed under the supervision of one Project Co-ordinator. Furthermore for the effective implementation of the resettlement Action Plan, an additional seven persons are required

1.10.1 Capacity Building

The process of project implementation would be initiated as soon as the project preparation reaches the final stage. In view of the new roles and functions identified for them, it becomes imperative to identify and train the LGED in-house staff, who will be associated with the resettlement program of the RTIP both at the central and district levels. This will ensure sustainability of the program in future projects. A group-training program is proposed in this regard. The training contents will be repeated to include the Supervision Consultants when they are in place.
Monitoring and Evaluation

The Land Acquisition officer, in the office of the DC will be responsible for monitoring the progress of land acquisition. The Executive Engineer, as District level R & R Co-ordinator, will be responsible for the progress of the R & R activities. These officials will undertake this internal monitoring monthly and annually for the first two years. It is suggested that at the time of implementation, if need arises, the Project could take up quarterly monitoring in addition to the above. The team of officials carrying out the monitoring will also include a representative from the Environmental Cell (at HQ level, under the SE, that will also look after issues relating to social development), to monitor aspects relating to gender and indigenous people development.

An external monitoring and evaluation agency will be commissioned for mid-term and end-term monitoring and evaluation of the Resettlement activities and the progress of the development plans relating to women and indigenous people.

The monitoring process would look at procedural issues, progress in land acquisition and resettlement as well as at critical factors that have long term impacts on the project and have bearing on the project objectives. These indicators include transparency, participation of PAPs specially women and vulnerable groups, effectiveness of grievance redressal mechanisms, capacity building and income restoration initiatives etc.