

SUMMARY POVERTY REDUCTION AND SOCIAL STRATEGY

Country:	Bangladesh	Project Title:	Coastal Climate-Resilient Infrastructure Project
Lending/Financing Modality:	Project	Department/Division:	South Asia Department/Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture Division /Bangladesh Resident Mission

I. POVERTY ANALYSIS AND STRATEGY

A. Link to the National Poverty Reduction Strategy and Country Partnership Strategy

Poverty is still extensive in Bangladesh, and it is more acute in coastal areas. The poverty situation is worse in project areas, which are characterized by lack of infrastructure and service facilities, than in other areas. In coastal districts, the high incidence of poverty and heavy reliance on agriculture and natural resources increase vulnerability to climate change impacts. The effects of climate change could reverse any progress in tackling poverty, plunging the most vulnerable in the communities—women, children, and the disabled—into deeper poverty. The poor and women are most at risk to climate change and variability; they lose assets and access to economic and social opportunities. Enhanced climate-resilience measures are essential to mitigate the adverse effects on the infrastructure, ensuring delivery of planned benefits to the community.

The Government of Bangladesh's Sixth Five-Year Plan, 2011–2015^a emphasized improvement of infrastructure, especially connectivity between lagging and better-off regions. The underpinning thrust is on removing the infrastructure constraints and vulnerabilities to climate change of the poor regions. The plan stresses initiatives to ensure better connectivity with growth centers and roads to enhance livelihoods for the poor, women, and excluded groups. The plan also underscores implementation of the Bangladesh Climate Change Action Plan, which includes actions for social protection, comprehensive disaster management, knowledge management, and adaptation and resilience to climate change.

The country partnership strategy (CPS) of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for Bangladesh^b focuses on integrating climate change and environmental considerations into sector interventions by climate-proofing infrastructure, boosting climate resilience through integrated water resource management, and rural infrastructure development. ADB's assistance will ensure adherence to good environmental standards and safeguards, reduce the country's exposure to disaster risk, and help build the government's capacity in climate change mitigation and adaptation. The proposed project, in line with the focus of the plan and the CPS, will enhance the resilience of infrastructure in the coastal areas and thus help reduce poverty by ensuring improved connectivity and creating sustainable seasonal and long-term jobs for the poor. Improved infrastructure will facilitate transport services at a lower cost, and new jobs will be created in transport and related ancillary service enterprises in the informal sector. The improved market infrastructure is expected to ensure yearlong market access for landless and marginal farmers to sell produce. The project will also support capacity building for climate resilience of local government and the community as well as knowledge management.

B. Poverty Analysis

Targeting Classification: Geographic

The impact of the project on poverty will be measured using economic and social indicators: (i) changes in household well-being; (ii) changes in work, employment, and wages; (iii) changes in production, marketing, and prices; (iv) changes in social structure, status, and behavior; and (v) vulnerability and loss of income and assets during natural calamities. The benchmark poverty situation has been assessed. A midterm review and benefit monitoring and evaluation study will be carried out for comparison with the benchmark situation.

1. Key issues. The people of the low-lying coastal zone are highly vulnerable to the tidally enhanced monsoon floods and to regular impact from tropical cyclones, which limit mobility, disrupt economic opportunities, and cause loss of shelter and assets—aggravating the poverty situation. Poverty is widespread in the country and more so in rural areas. Although declining, national poverty is still 31%. Within the project rural areas, poverty incidence (35%–39%) is higher than the national average.^c According to the updated poverty map of Bangladesh, the highest incidence of poverty (over 60%) occurred in climate vulnerable districts, including a significant portion of area under this project. The primary reasons for high incidence of poverty in these areas are increased salinity; crop failure; and loss of private and public assets during tidal surges, floods, and cyclones.

2. Design features. The project will improve livelihoods in 12 rural coastal districts vulnerable to climate variability and change. It will facilitate uninterrupted economic activities by ensuring continued mobility to markets and service facilities during climate-induced natural calamities through improved infrastructure. An estimated 3.5 million people will directly benefit from the project. The analysis indicates that the proportion of poor benefiting is 46%–55%. In addition to the direct and indirect benefits from subprojects, jobs will be created through subproject construction—estimated at 10,200 person-years, of which at least 2,040 will be for women. The project will also generate long-term and regular jobs for poor women belonging to labor contracting societies. Cyclone shelters will contribute to save human lives and livestock in periods of extreme climatic events. Jobs for the poor and women will be created for maintenance of roads, plantation and caring of trees, and in markets. Road networks will create jobs for the transport sector (operators, drivers, and helpers); service providers; and small traders. Transportation of goods will be easier and travel times for motorized and other vehicles are expected to decline and mobility to increase. Vulnerability to waterlogging and asset loss is expected to reduce.

II. SOCIAL ANALYSIS AND STRATEGY

A. Findings of Social Analysis

Climate change and variability have already impacted the lives and livelihoods of people in the coastal region. Climate-induced natural disasters, including shoreline and riverbank erosion, caused loss of shelter and household properties, and forced a large number of people to migrate to cities. Food insecurity; lack of economic opportunities and basic services; and conflicts over limited resources are some of the effects of such climatic-induced events. Some 85% of people in the coastal region are employed in agriculture and landless farmers make up 66% of the population. The land and environmental degradation caused by salinity and other factors create serious problems for agriculture, significantly reducing jobs in the region. Climate-resilient infrastructure is a priority for recovery and long-term protection and can facilitate mobility for employment, income, and livelihoods. Although the people in coastal areas face disaster frequently and have their own coping mechanism, the capacity and resources of the local government and community are limited to tackle the immediate effects of climatic events and recovery in the long run. Lack of information hampers adaptation to climate change, and awareness building and dissemination play an important role on many different levels—including the public, local farmers, local governments, nongovernment organizations (NGOs), women, and the poor. The project intends to take adaptation measures to reduce vulnerability by improving infrastructure and community capacity. People, particularly women and children, will have better access to social service facilities, institutions, and markets. With improved all-weather transport facilities, farm-gate prices for agricultural commodities will rise and farmers will be able to obtain agricultural inputs at reasonable prices. Environmental conditions in project impact zone areas will significantly improve. Microfinance agencies, including NGOs, will be encouraged to expand their credit and other services in the project areas. The lessons from the project experience will be shared through the knowledge products.

B. Consultation and Participation

1. A stakeholder analysis was conducted, which helped identify both the supply-side (service providers) and demand-side (beneficiaries) stakeholders. The former group includes funding agencies; Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) staff; administrative staff; government workers in different departments at the district, sub-district, and union levels; NGOs and community-based organizations; and contractors and local government officials. The demand group includes farmers, retail traders and businessmen, small entrepreneurs, wholesale traders, woman traders, poor and vulnerable women including indigenous people, rickshaw pullers and van drivers, transport owners and operators, local leaders, teachers, and students.

2. What level of C&P is envisaged during the project implementation and monitoring?

Information sharing Consultation Collaborative decision making Empowerment

3. Was a C&P plan prepared? Yes No

The participation strategy includes mobilizing community groups—including women, market committees, traders, and local government representatives—in planning, management, and maintenance of project-supported infrastructure; and strengthening their roles and responsibilities toward project activities and benefits. The other features are (i) improvement of the capacity of the community and members of local government units in climate resilience to enable stakeholders contributing in effectively in taking adaptation measures; (ii) women's and indigenous communities' representation and access in all project management and benefits; (iii) employment in infrastructure and labor contracting societies to involve the local poor and women; and (iv) instituting and strengthening the participatory skills and capabilities of staff members of the LGED, to promote and guide participatory practices effectively under the project. Resources have been allocated for participatory consultation and for recruiting consultants to implement the strategy.

C. Gender and Development

1. **Key issues.** The impact of climate change in coastal regions is widespread on all communities. During extreme climatic events, the poor lose their assets as well as livelihood options. Men often tend to migrate after extreme climate events conditions, leaving their families behind. A large number of families live from fishing. In the coastal areas, poverty is high among the fishing communities. Many families are headed by widows and women, who eventually become the breadwinners in the absence of their husbands. Women are more vulnerable because of poorer access to education and health services and economic opportunities, limited mobility, and various social restraints.

2. **Key actions.** Measures included in the design to promote gender equality and women's empowerment—access to and use of relevant services, resources, assets, or opportunities and participation in the decision-making process:

Gender plan Other actions or measures No action or measure

The project components have been designed with provision to ensure the involvement of and benefits for women as well as a reduction in gender inequality. Constructing climate-resilient rural roads and markets will improve the mobility of women and create productive jobs for poor women. A gender action plan has been prepared, integrating action areas, targets, and indicators for gender equality and women's benefits in the various components of the project. A focal point on gender and development will be established within the project management office, which will ensure the establishment of a management information system with sex-disaggregated data collection, gender-based analysis, and review and report on implementation of the gender action plan in all reports.

III. SOCIAL SAFEGUARD ISSUES AND OTHER SOCIAL RISKS			
Issue	Nature of Social Issue	Significant/ Limited/ No Impact/Not Known	Plan or Other Action Required
Involuntary Resettlement	The project is category A for involuntary resettlement. Some land acquisition and physical displacement is expected to be required on some road subprojects as they will be raised and widened to provide climate resilience. As there will be over 100 road subprojects, significant impact on over 200 people is likely. Land acquisition and resettlement will be negligible under the market and cyclone shelter components, as construction is expected to remain within existing boundaries or on government lands. The government expects much of the land acquisition to be through voluntary donation, which will still require preparation of resettlement plans. As the project is sector-like, and most of the subprojects have not yet been selected, a resettlement framework has been prepared. Resettlement plans have been prepared for two sample subprojects, which can be used as an example for future planning.	Significant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resettlement plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resettlement framework <input type="checkbox"/> No action <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain
Indigenous Peoples	The project is category B for indigenous people. The project preparation indicated that no indigenous peoples' communities would be impacted by any of the three sample subprojects analyzed. Given that many more subprojects will be designed and undertaken during the project, and the project area contains small numbers of distinct and vulnerable indigenous peoples' communities, an indigenous peoples planning framework has been developed to guide the screening and planning process during implementation.	Not known	<input type="checkbox"/> Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Other Action <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Indigenous Peoples Framework <input type="checkbox"/> No Action <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain
Labor <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employment Opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Labor Retrenchment <input type="checkbox"/> Core Labor Standards	No adverse impact is anticipated. Jobs for poor men and women will be created for constructing and maintaining roads and other infrastructure.	Significantly positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Other Action <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Action <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain
Affordability	The project will improve economic opportunities and all-weather access to goods and services for the poor or otherwise vulnerable groups. Improved infrastructure will lower transportation costs and increase mobility.	Not Known	<input type="checkbox"/> Action <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Action <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain
Other Risks and/or Vulnerabilities <input type="checkbox"/> HIV/AIDS <input type="checkbox"/> Human Trafficking <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Others (conflict, political instability, etc.), please specify	Improved road connectivity may encourage migration of men, women, and children.	Not Known	<input type="checkbox"/> Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Other Action <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Action <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain

IV. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Are social indicators included in the design and monitoring framework to facilitate monitoring of social development activities and/or social impacts during project implementation? Yes No
 Social indicators are included in design and monitoring framework.

^a Government of Bangladesh, Planning Commission, Ministry of Planning. 2011. *Sixth Five-Year Plan: FY2011–FY2015*. Dhaka.

^b ADB. 2011. *Country Partnership Strategy: Bangladesh, 2011–2015*. Manila.

^c Government of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Statistics Division, Ministry of Planning. 2010. *Report of the Household, Income and Expenditure Survey 2010*. Dhaka.