

SUMMARY POVERTY REDUCTION AND SOCIAL STRATEGY

Country:	India	Project Title:	West Bengal Drinking Water Sector Improvement Project
Lending/Financing Modality:	Sector	Department/Division:	South Asia Department Urban Development and Water Division

I. POVERTY AND SOCIAL ANALYSIS AND STRATEGY
Poverty targeting: general intervention
<p>A. Links to the National Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Growth Strategy and Country Partnership Strategy Poverty reduction is a priority of the Government of India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The government's 15-year vision, 7-year strategy, and 3-year action agenda prioritize safe drinking water provision in rural areas and provide sustainable solutions for rural drinking water, which are also aligned with ADB's country partnership strategy, 2018–2022 for India.^a The proposed West Bengal Drinking Water Sector Improvement Project is consistent with the country's policy priorities and ADB's country partnership strategy. The project aims to provide safe, sustainable and inclusive drinking water to about 1.65 million people in the arsenic-, fluoride-, and salinity-affected selected areas of Bankura, North 24 Parganas and Purba Medinipur districts of West Bengal.^b Proposed subprojects stem from district-wide comprehensive water quality and sustainability planning, adopted by the Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) of the Government of West Bengal, the executing agency.</p>
<p>B. Results from the Poverty and Social Analysis during Project Preparatory Technical Assistance or Due Diligence</p> <p>1. Key poverty and social issues. Some of the key issues that affect the target population, especially the poor, include (i) the need for access to safe water supply facilities, livelihood skills development, and improved opportunities for employment; and (ii) the high incidence of water- and sanitation-related diseases.</p> <p>2. Beneficiaries. The project seeks to provide complete coverage with continuous potable water supply within the covered areas of the project districts. It will benefit households headed by women and households living below the poverty line in terms of access to household water connections, health benefits, and employment opportunities.</p> <p>3. Impact channels. The project will contribute to poverty reduction by developing infrastructure, improving quality of life, reducing the drudgery of work among women, reducing health morbidity and related health expenditures, and stimulating economic growth. Opportunities for on-the-job training (e.g., leak detection, nonrevenue water reduction, meter reading, and calibration) and employment in the project facilities are expected to facilitate skill building and employability, especially for the poor. Entrepreneurship and skill development in the local community are expected to generate self-employment and sustainable livelihoods.</p> <p>4. Design features. Special efforts have been made to ensure that the project design is pro poor, socially inclusive, and gender responsive. Subprojects aim at safe continuous potable piped water supply through household connections to about 1.65 million people, including the poor and vulnerable. The project aims to provide 390,000 households with free connections for piped water, including for 100% of households headed by females and vulnerable households in the project area. The project also aims to create 350 additional operation and maintenance jobs for locals, of which 33% will be for women, and to provide them with certified training in technical, financial, and customer management skills. In addition, the project will (i) provide training in utility management skills to at least 200 PHED staff and 100% of female staff in the project management unit (PMU) and project implementation units (PIUs); (ii) provide leadership and livelihood training to 300 local entrepreneurs, new water supply staff, and executive members of village water and sanitation committees (33% of whom will be female) in the project <i>gram panchayats</i> (governing bodies working at the village level); and (iii) conduct community consultations and public awareness on water conservation and demand management, sanitation, and hygiene.</p>
II. PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERING THE POOR
<p>1. Participatory approaches and project activities. A community awareness and participation plan (CAPP) has been prepared to support widespread, continuous, and meaningful participation of key stakeholders, with a focus on poor and vulnerable groups. Three nongovernment organizations (NGOs) will be recruited to help the PMU and PIUs with skills and capacity building of local stakeholders and conduct consultations and public awareness activities during project implementation. Adequate resources and implementation mechanisms have been provided to support effective implementation of the CAPP.</p> <p>2. Civil society organizations. There are several active community-based organizations, self-help groups, and youth and women's groups in the project areas whose participation in project design and implementation is envisaged for information dissemination, collaboration with communities, grievance redress, and community mobilization.</p> <p>4. The following forms of civil society organization participation are envisaged during project implementation, rated as high (H), medium (M), low (L), or not applicable (NA):</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information gathering and sharing (H) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultation (H) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Collaboration (H) <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership </p>

<p>5. Participation plan. The CAPP prepared for the project targets participation of the poor and women as well as their inclusion in project benefits. Participatory processes are anticipated to enhance sustainability. Consultations will be documented and reported in the periodic monitoring reports. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>The CAPP allocates responsibilities to the PMU, PIUs, and project NGOs—supported by project management consultants (PMCs) and design supervision and implementation support consultants (DSISCs)—for various envisaged activities, with the key responsibility resting with the project NGOs. A budget of \$1.8 million has been allocated for various activities to be carried out by the NGOs.</p>	
<p>III. GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT</p>	
<p>Gender mainstreaming category: gender equity</p>	
<p>A. Key Issues. The project is classified as gender equity. Key issues identified in the gender analysis during project preparation include (i) the low workforce participation rate of rural women (19.4%) compared to males (57.2%); (ii) the gap between male and female wages, with women's wages at 54% those of men in rural areas; (iii) exacerbation of women's work burdens because of deficiencies in basic water and sanitation (only 11.4% of rural households have access to tap water, through public stand-posts, and 46.7% of rural households have access to sanitation); (iv) the slightly higher proportion of households headed by females (11.2%) in West Bengal compared to nationally (10.9%), and (v) lower access to banking services by rural households headed by females in West Bengal (35%) compared to urban households headed by females (65.7%) in the state.</p> <p>B. Key Actions. The project will provide household potable water connections to around 390,000 households, thus reducing women's time poverty in fetching water. Extensive capacity building, including trade-certified training on technical and financial skills will provide skills building to local women, and help them obtain employment. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender action plan <input type="checkbox"/> Other actions or measures <input type="checkbox"/> No action or measure</p> <p>The gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) action plan (contained in the project administration manual for the project) has clear targets, responsibilities, and resource allocation.^c New employment will be generated for over 350 locals in the project <i>gram panchayats</i>, of which 33% will be women. Awareness-raising campaigns on water conservation; climate resilience; and water, sanitation, and hygiene will also target a participation rate among women and girls of at least 33%. Women, comprising at least 33% of the village water and sanitation committees in the <i>gram panchayats</i>, will also receive leadership training. The PHED will conduct a gender audit and develop and adopt a gender strategy. The Government of West Bengal has issued an order to cement inclusive service delivery through the agreed asset management and service delivery framework in the project <i>gram panchayats</i>.</p>	
<p>IV. ADDRESSING SOCIAL SAFEGUARD ISSUES</p>	
<p>A. Involuntary Resettlement Safeguard Category: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> FI</p> <p>1. Key impacts. Due diligence indicates that the project will involve involuntary resettlement impacts and risks that are not significant. The PHED has prepared a resettlement framework, three draft resettlement plans, and a due diligence report for sample subproject components, in accordance with ADB's Safeguard Policy Statement (2009) and national and state government laws. The assessments in these documents indicate that one encroacher (with three dependents) will be affected by permanent partial, with less than 10% of total household income loss. Meanwhile, 48 shop owners will be affected by temporary economic impacts during construction. Three uninhabited temporary structures on government right-of-way and one government primary health center building also will be potentially affected. The PHED and design and build contractors will finalize the draft resettlement plans during detailed engineering design. Resettlement plans for components that will be identified or designed in detail after Board approval of the sector loan will be prepared in accordance with the resettlement framework.</p> <p>2. Strategy to address the impacts. Based on preliminary design studies of sample bulk water supply and distribution systems, most of the proposed sites (10.582 acres of the estimated 17.642 acres of total land required) belong to the government of West Bengal. The remaining land required (7.06 acres) will be acquired from 42 private owners through a negotiated settlement. In line with Government of West Bengal and Safeguard Policy Statement requirements, livelihood impacts on non-titleholders, tenants, leaseholders, and sharecroppers will be compensated. For limited temporary impacts during civil works, the project will ensure that affected households or businesses will be minimized and/or compensated. The project will screen subproject components to avoid or minimize impacts and exclude those that entail significant involuntary resettlement. The resettlement framework and draft resettlement plans and due diligence report include provisions for meaningful consultation, grievance redress, compensation at replacement cost, monitoring, budget, and capacity building in accordance with the ADB's Safeguard Policy Statement (2009).</p> <p>3. Plan or other actions. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resettlement plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resettlement framework</p>	
<p>B. Indigenous Peoples Safeguard Category: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> FI</p> <p>1. Key impacts. The 2011 Census of India indicates that scheduled tribes comprise 6.0% of the rural population of West Bengal, and 11.0% in Bankura, 5.3% in North 24 Parganas (0.6% in South 24 Parganas) districts. Transect walks and surveys confirm the presence of the Munda tribe in the sample subproject in Bankura district. The Munda community speaks both Mundani and the mainstream languages and is not considered to be made vulnerable by</p>	

the project. The community will benefit from improved access to safe drinking water. No adverse impacts on scheduled tribes (such as physical displacement) are anticipated, as the project will exclude land acquisition or use of ancestral lands.

Is broad community support triggered? Yes No

2. **Strategy to address the impacts.** The PHED has prepared an indigenous peoples planning framework to guide the design and implementation of subprojects to be designed fully after Board approval of the project. The indigenous peoples planning framework includes measures to ensure that subprojects with impacts on scheduled tribes will include culturally appropriate benefits, consultation, grievance redress, and monitoring. Screening of subproject components and designing carefully will ensure that those with adverse impacts on scheduled tribes will not be eligible for financing under the project.

3. Plan or other actions.

Indigenous peoples planning framework

V. ADDRESSING OTHER SOCIAL RISKS

A. Risks in the Labor Market

1. Relevance of the project for the country's, region's, or sector's labor market, indicated as high (H), medium (M), and low or not significant (L).

Unemployment (M) Underemployment (M) Retrenchment (L) Core labor standards (H)

2. **Labor market impact.** Contractors' agreements will have clauses on adherence to core labor standards and a preference for hiring from within the local community for project-related construction work (skilled and unskilled), and project operation and maintenance work. Poor and vulnerable persons, including women, will be given preference for project-related construction work by contractors, and for operations and maintenance-related work.

B. Affordability

The project's strategy for water charges for operation and maintenance cost recovery has been developed with consideration to affordability for the poor and vulnerable. Water charges will not exceed 5% of mean monthly household income for the lowest consumption slab.

C. Communicable Diseases and Other Social Risks

1. The impact of the following risks are rated as high (H), medium (M), low (L), or not applicable (NA):

Communicable diseases (L) Human trafficking (L) Others (please specify) Child labor

2. **Risks to people in the project area.** Contractors and construction workers will be made aware of communicable diseases, including HIV/AIDS risks. In collaboration with DSISCs, the PMU will raise awareness among contractors and workers. Employment of child labor by contractors will not be permitted, and contractors' agreements will include a clause to this effect.

VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

1. **Targets and indicators.** The design and monitoring framework and GESI action plan (footnote c) contain the key targets and indicators.

2. **Required human resources.** The safeguards and gender cell in the PMU will be headed by the safeguards and gender officer, reporting to the project director. The safeguards and gender officer will have overall responsibility in the implementation of the resettlement framework, resettlement plans, indigenous peoples planning framework, and GESI action plan. The social safeguards and gender specialist of the PMC and social safeguards and gender experts in the three DSISCs will support the PMU and PIUs in implementing these plans and frameworks; training; capacity building; database management, and periodic monitoring and report preparation. Three NGOs will also be engaged (one for each of the project districts) to support implementation of the GESI action plan, the CAPP, and activities under the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction.^d

3. **Information in the project administration manual.** The project administration manual describes in detail the monitoring and evaluation arrangement for the project, including social and gender inclusion aspects.^e The PMU will be responsible for submitting consolidated semiannual monitoring reports, including for all activities under the project on safeguards, the GESI action plan, CAPP, and the grant component under the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction.

4. **Monitoring tools.** The PMU will be assisted by the PMC, DSISCs, and NGOs in preparing compliance and social safeguards monitoring reports on a semiannual basis. ADB will undertake a midterm review of the project 18 months after loan approval and will cover social development and safeguard issues and midcourse corrections, if required. An evaluation will be undertaken 1 year after project close, and lessons learned will be documented.

^a ADB. 2017. *Country Partnership Strategy: India, 2018–2022*. Manila.

^b One neighboring block in South 24 Parganas district was included in North 24 Parganas' drinking water scheme based on need and economy of scale.

^c Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Action Plan (accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 2 of the report and recommendation of the President).

^d Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction Grant (accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 2 of the report and recommendation of the President).

^e Project Administration Manual (accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 2 of the report and recommendation of the President).