



Report and Recommendation of the President to the Board of Directors

Project Number: 52328-002
July 2021

Proposed Loan for Additional Financing India: Maharashtra Rural Connectivity Improvement Project

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Asian Development Bank

CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS

(as of 1 July 2021)

Currency unit	–	Indian rupee/s (₹)
₹1.00	=	\$0.01345
\$1.00	=	₹74.36

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	–	Asian Development Bank
COVID-19	–	coronavirus disease
km	–	kilometer
MMGSY	–	Mukhya Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana
MRRDA	–	Maharashtra Rural Road Development Association
PAM	–	project administration manual
PIU	–	project implementation unit
PMGSY	–	Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana
PMU	–	project management unit
TA	–	technical assistance

NOTE

In this report, "\$" refers to United States dollars.

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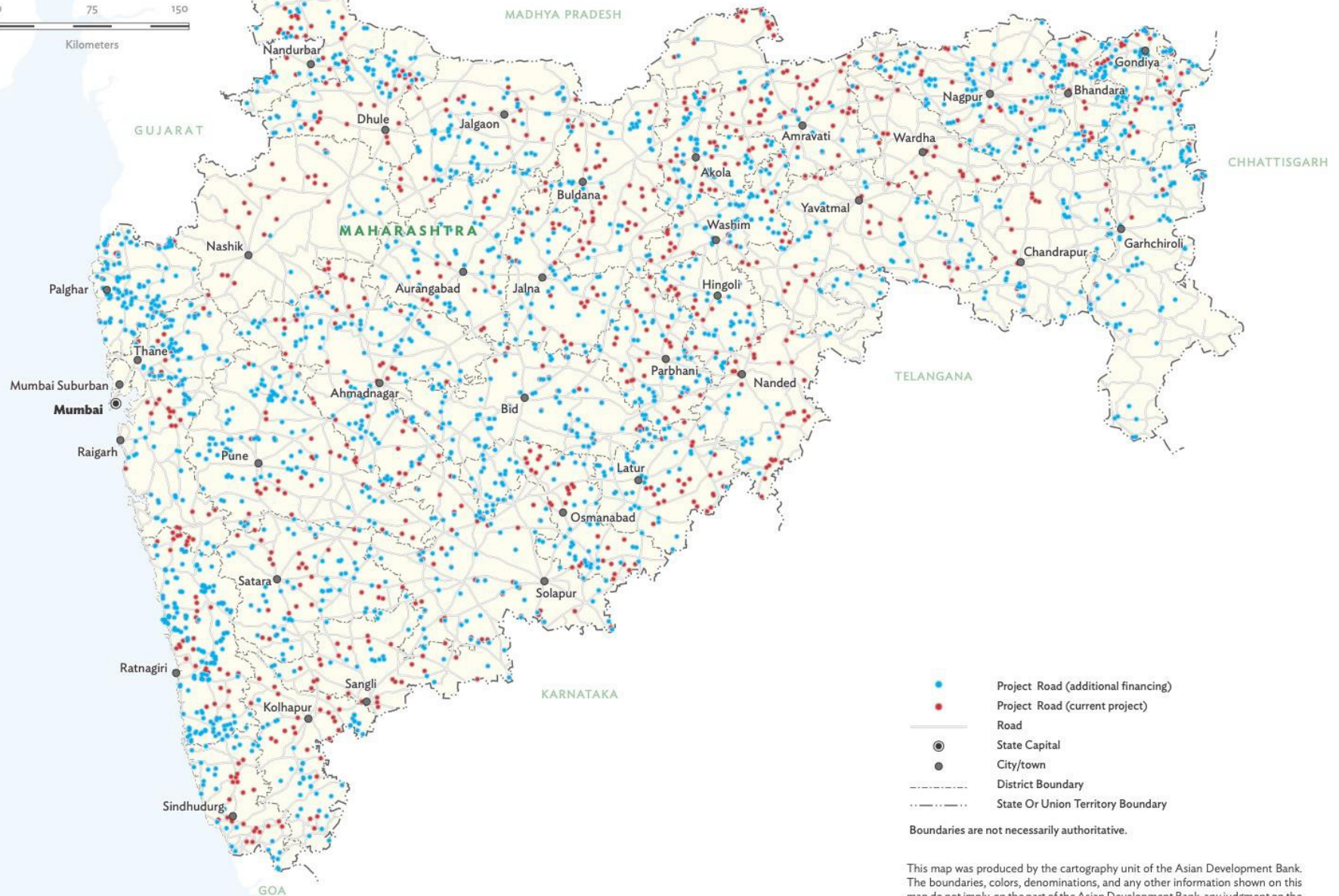
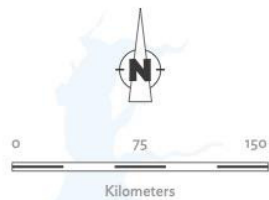
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PROJECT AT A GLANCE

1. Basic Data		Project Number: 52328-002	
Project Name	Maharashtra Rural Connectivity Improvement Project - Additional Financing	Department/Division	SARD/SAER
Country	India	Executing Agency	Maharashtra Rural Road Development Association
Borrower	India		
Country Economic Indicators	https://www.adb.org/Documents/LinkedDocs/?id=52328-002-CEI		
Portfolio at a Glance	https://www.adb.org/Documents/LinkedDocs/?id=52328-002-PortAtaGlance		
2. Sector	Subsector(s)	ADB Financing (\$ million)	
✓ Agriculture, natural resources and rural development	Rural market infrastructure	300.00	
		Total	300.00
3. Operational Priorities		Climate Change Information	
✓ Addressing remaining poverty and reducing inequalities		GHG reductions (tons per annum)	2,919.000
✓ Accelerating progress in gender equality		Climate Change impact on the Project	Medium
✓ Tackling climate change, building climate and disaster resilience, and enhancing environmental sustainability		ADB Financing	
✓ Promoting rural development and food security		Adaptation (\$ million)	78.64
✓ Strengthening governance and institutional capacity		Mitigation (\$ million)	18.01
		Cofinancing	
		Adaptation (\$ million)	0.00
		Mitigation (\$ million)	0.00
Sustainable Development Goals		Gender Equity and Mainstreaming	
SDG 1.1, 1.4, 1.5		Effective gender mainstreaming (EGM)	✓
SDG 2.3		Poverty Targeting	
SDG 5.1, 5.5		General Intervention on Poverty	✓
SDG 9.1			
SDG 10.1, 10.2			
SDG 12.5, 12.7			
SDG 13.a			
4. Risk Categorization:		Complex	
5. Safeguard Categorization		Environment: B Involuntary Resettlement: C Indigenous Peoples: C	
6. Financing			
Modality and Sources		Amount (\$ million)	
ADB		300.00	
Sovereign Project (Regular Loan): Ordinary capital resources		300.00	
Cofinancing		0.00	
None		0.00	
Counterpart		141.90	
Government		141.90	
Total		441.90	
Currency of ADB Financing: US Dollar			

INDIA MAHARASHTRA RURAL CONNECTIVITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (additional financing)



This map was produced by the cartography unit of the Asian Development Bank. The boundaries, colors, denominations, and any other information shown on this map do not imply, on the part of the Asian Development Bank, any judgment on the legal status of any territory, or any endorsement or acceptance of such boundaries, colors, denominations, or information.

I. THE PROPOSAL

1. I submit for your approval the following report and recommendation on a proposed loan to India for the additional financing of the Maharashtra Rural Connectivity Improvement Project.

2. The proposed additional financing will scale up improvement of rural connectivity with an additional 1,100 climate-resilient, all-weather roads and 230 bridges totaling 2,900 kilometers (km) in 34 districts of the State of Maharashtra.¹ It will also introduce climate-resilient rural infrastructure design and implementation, as well as monitoring systems based on information technology for wider replication within the state and across India.

3. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has affected Maharashtra more than any other Indian state. The additional financing is aimed to accelerate the state's COVID-19 economic recovery by generating rural employment and transforming agriculture. The roads and bridges will connect rural settlements, productive agricultural lands and markets, and economic growth centers across the state. This will enhance agricultural productivity and food security; strengthen agricultural value chains, building on the state's advanced agriculture marketing reforms; and help increase the average growth rate of agriculture and allied activities to more than 5% per year by 2030, which is a target of the state's strategic development plan, Vision 2030.²

II. THE PROJECT

A. Rationale

4. The ongoing Maharashtra Rural Connectivity Improvement Project is (i) improving and maintaining the condition and safety of 2,100 km of rural roads; and (ii) enhancing the capacity of the rural infrastructure agency and increasing awareness among road users.³ The ongoing project has performed well since it became effective on 7 November 2019, and meets the following criteria:

- (i) Its project performance is rated *on track*. All 195 civil works contracts have been awarded for \$170.8 million, with \$59.6 million disbursed as of 1 July 2021.
- (ii) All safeguard covenant items are *being complied with*.
- (iii) Delivery of expected outputs is rated *successful* as initial actions are progressing as planned; as of 31 May 2021, overall physical progress of the road construction was 80.9%, with 1,132.8 km (53.9%) completed.
- (iv) Management of risks is rated *successful*, with all risks outlined in the ongoing project's report and recommendation of the President managed successfully.⁴

5. Additional financing is the optimum modality as it scales up the ongoing project by improving the conditions and safety of an additional 1,100 rural roads and 230 bridges, totaling 2,900 km. In response to the extraordinary August 2019 floods, which severely damaged more than 5,000 km roads and 200 bridges, it will enhance resilience to extreme weather events.⁵ The project will also create employment and provide economic stimulus for the rural population affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown. In 2018, the government originally requested

¹ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) provided project preparatory technical assistance (TA) as a part of a TA facility for [India: Strengthening Capacity to Design and Implement Water and Rural Infrastructure Facility](#).

² State Government of Maharashtra, Planning Department. 2018. [Vision 2030](#). Mumbai.

³ ADB. [India: Maharashtra Rural Connectivity Improvement Project](#).

⁴ ADB. 2019. [Report and Recommendation of the President to the Board of Directors: Proposed Loan and Technical Assistance Grant to India for the Maharashtra Rural Connectivity Project](#). Manila.

⁵ State Government of Maharashtra estimates as of 23 August 2019.

a \$500 million loan but ultimately agreed to undertake a phased approach, comprising the \$200 million ongoing loan and \$300 million in additional financing.⁶ The phased approach helps augment Asian Development Bank (ADB) financing after developing the institutional capacity of the executing agency.⁷ The scope of the additional financing is strongly linked to the scope of the ongoing project and will be efficiently implemented under the same implementation arrangements. The additional financing is aligned with the state government's Vision 2030 (footnote 2), ADB's country partnership strategy for India, and ADB's Strategy 2030.⁸ It is included in ADB's country operations business plan for India, 2021–2023.⁹ The additional financing project meets all the eligibility criteria for additional financing.

6. Maharashtra's economy and the coronavirus disease. Maharashtra is India's leading state in terms of its contribution to the national economy and accounted for 13.8% of India's national gross domestic product prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁰ Economic development is centered around the major cities, and in the latest official national data in 2011, in rural Maharashtra about 24% of the population still lived below the poverty line.¹¹ Maharashtra has experienced the greatest impact from COVID-19 among India's states, with 6.05 million cases (19.9% of India's total), while the death toll accounted for 30.7% of India's total as of 29 June 2021. COVID-19 has badly impacted employment in rural and urban Maharashtra, and the unemployment rate rose to 20.9% in April 2020.¹² COVID-19 hotspots are continuously emerging in rural villages in Maharashtra as the rural poor face issues with access to health care system and a shortage of doctors. Prior to COVID-19, as much as 40% of the population lived in poverty in some remote districts, and about 34% of the additional financing benefits will impact the poor and vulnerable.¹³ The additional financing will improve market access; facilitate access by the rural poor to health care systems; and increase rural employment, in particular for returning laborers, including the poor and vulnerable. It will therefore contribute to regenerating Maharashtra's economy.

7. Farmers in Maharashtra were in distress even prior to COVID-19 as 79.5% of them had small and marginal land holdings and practiced mostly subsistence farming. Agriculture contributes 15% of Maharashtra's state gross domestic product, and 68% of the rural labor force is engaged in agriculture.¹⁴ An agricultural transformation is underway in Maharashtra as consumption patterns in urban areas move away from food grains to high-value agriculture products. Since 2000, the area under food grain cultivation has declined, and Maharashtra has

⁶ The Ministry of Finance requested \$500 million in ADB assistance in a letter dated 13 September 2018.

⁷ ADB provided attached TA to the ongoing project to improve road asset management system and enhance the sustainability of road assets. ADB. 2019. [Technical Assistance to India for Institutional Strengthening of the Maharashtra Rural Road Sector for Sustainable Development](#). Manila (\$1.0 million).

⁸ ADB. 2017. [India: Country Partnership Strategy \(2018–2022\)](#). Manila; and ADB. 2018. [Strategy 2030: Achieving a Prosperous, Inclusive, Resilient, and Sustainable Asia and the Pacific](#). Manila. The additional financing's contribution to ADB's Strategy 2030 is described in detail in Contribution to Strategy 2030 Operational Priorities (accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 2).

⁹ ADB. 2020. [Country Operations Business Plan: India, 2021–2023](#). Manila.

¹⁰ State Government of Maharashtra, Planning Department. 2021. [Economic Survey of Maharashtra 2020–2021](#). Mumbai. Post-COVID-19 official data are not yet available.

¹¹ The poverty line was estimated at ₹967 per capita per month in rural areas of the state. Data extrapolated from the unreleased 2017 census estimates that the poverty incidence in Maharashtra increased 4.8 percentage points from 2011 across rural and urban combined (source: P. Bhattacharya and S. Devulapalli. 2019. [India's rural poverty has shot up](#). *Mint*. 3 December.).

¹² Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy. [Unemployment Rate in India](#) (accessed 24 September 2020).

¹³ Government of India, Planning Commission. 2014. Report of the Expert Group to Review the Methodology for Measurement of Poverty. Delhi. Distribution and poverty analysis is included in Economic and Financial Analysis (accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 2).

¹⁴ Government of India, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, National Statistical Office. 2020. [Annual Report on Periodic Labour Force Survey \(July 2018–June 2019\)](#). Delhi.

emerged as one of India's largest producers and exporters of high-value agriculture products such as fruits, vegetables, pulses, cotton, and soybeans. However, agricultural growth and transformation are spread unevenly across the state. Maharashtra has urban centers with large consumer markets such as Mumbai, Pune, and Thane. COVID-19 has now provided an opportunity for direct marketing of agriculture produce because the large markets were temporarily closed and traders could not visit farms because of travel restrictions. Unfortunately, rural farmers cannot take full advantage of direct marketing because they lack reliable access. Most farmers have experienced post-harvest crop losses totaling almost 40%, caused mainly by lack of connectivity to markets and climate variability; the trend worsened around the lockdown period.¹⁵ The state government considers the additional financing as an essential measure to stimulate the rural economy, employment, and incomes.

8. **Climate impacts.** Maharashtra is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. A substantial increase in monsoon rainfall is projected in 2030s and beyond based on the climate risk and vulnerability assessment.¹⁶ Poor households are extremely vulnerable to flood damages, and transport disruption is a major indirect flood impact.¹⁷ This was demonstrated by the extreme rainfall in Maharashtra and neighboring states on 1–8 August 2019 that exceeded normal average rainfall by over 400%. The additional financing will include repairs to the roads and bridges in the flood-affected areas, which have been identified through flood damage assessments. The repairs will include additional measures such as community consultation to strengthen flood resilience. The project will provide design and construction manuals for climate-resilient design and construction, and it will enhance the climate resilience of roads and bridges by building new cross drains and culverts, increasing the capacity of cross drains, building new retaining walls, and increasing the road elevation to address the potential impacts from flooding. The contractors will be responsible for the maintenance of the roads and bridges for 5 years after the completion of the civil works to ensure sustainability of the roads under various weather conditions.

B. Project Description

9. The additional financing is aligned with the following impact: quality, reliable, sustainable, safe, and affordable roads that provide equitable access for all developed (footnote 2). The additional financing will have the following outcome: road transport efficiency in 34 districts in Maharashtra increased.¹⁸ The overall aggregate impact and outcome of the project remains unchanged from the ongoing project. An outcome indicator has changed because of the expansion under the additional financing.

10. The additional financing will scale up the ongoing project's outputs by (i) expanding improvement and maintenance of rural roads under output 1 by 1,100 roads and 230 bridges for a total length of 2,900 km; (ii) adding further piloting of new technologies, such as asphalt blended with plastic waste and pre-cast concrete arch bridges under output 1; and (iii) adding the following under output 2: (a) an impact evaluation study and (b) a mobile mapping monitoring and evaluation tool. The overall project outputs are as follows.

¹⁵ L. Goedde et al. 2017. [*Harvesting Golden Opportunities in India Agriculture: From Food Security to Farmers' Income Security by 2025*](#). New York: McKinsey and Company.

¹⁶ Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 2). The projected increase in the rainfall in the 2030s ranges from 10% to 40%.

¹⁷ A. Patankar. 2019. [*Impacts of Natural Disasters on Households and Small Businesses in India*](#). ADB Economics Working Paper Series No. 603. Manila.

¹⁸ The design and monitoring framework is in Appendix 1.

11. Output 1: Conditions and safety of selected rural roads improved and maintained with climate resilience and safety features. The overall project will improve the condition of about 5,000 km of rural roads, including 230 bridges—connecting rural communities with productive agricultural areas and socioeconomic centers—to all-weather standards, with climate resilience and safety features.¹⁹ The roads were selected based on population, economic activity, and road connectivity. The designs of roads and bridges were developed and refined through intensive stakeholder consultation and incorporated climate resilience measures such as improved cross and side drainage, increased surface elevations, and stronger embankments in the designs. Environment-friendly alternative sealing options, such as asphalt blended with plastic waste, will be piloted on selected road segments. Other new technologies, such as fiber-reinforced concrete and pre-cast concrete arch bridge, will also be piloted for further practical application in similar settings. Operation and maintenance of the roads and bridges will be covered under contractual maintenance for 5 years following construction.²⁰

12. Output 2: Capacity of rural infrastructure agency and awareness among road users in the state enhanced. The overall project will deliver (i) manuals for design, construction, and maintenance of climate-resilient and gender-inclusive rural roads; (ii) an information technology-based implementation and monitoring system with a mobile mapping tool; (iii) training of the Maharashtra Rural Road Development Association (MRRDA) on road safety, road asset management, contract management, and climate-resilient design and construction; (iv) impact evaluation of the project benefits through baseline and end-line surveys; and (v) training of road users and local residents on (a) improving road users' awareness on road safety and gender-based violence (including sexual exploitation, human trafficking, and sexually transmitted infections); and (b) enhancing women workers' road construction and maintenance skills.

C. Value Added by ADB

13. ADB's approach. ADB is helping to demonstrate exemplary rural and agricultural transformation through several mutually complementary projects in Maharashtra; once demonstrated, this transformation will be replicated in other states. The holistic support for rural transformation includes road improvements that provide essential economic and social access, irrigation efficiency improvements through rural electrification, and agribusiness enhancements. The rural connectivity projects in combination with a state road improvement project support essential and reliable logistics infrastructure that connects agricultural production areas with domestic markets and export hubs.²¹ The ADB-financed Maharashtra Rural High Voltage Distribution System Expansion Program will enhance power supply for water pumps and other uses by farmers with small and marginal holdings in rural Maharashtra.²² The Sustainable Coastal Protection and Management Investment Program has provided sustainable shoreline management and land use plans along the state's coastline, which is experiencing salinity intrusion and erosion.²³ ADB is currently preparing an agriculture value chain project that will support farmer producer organizations and small agribusiness companies (with a special focus on women) in transitioning to high-value agriculture and food processing; integrated subproject

¹⁹ Roads were selected from a priority list in the district road development plans. Safety measures include cautionary and information signs, guard posts, and speed breakers.

²⁰ The same contractors that build the roads will perform routine maintenance for 5 years. The government will finance all maintenance costs from its counterpart funds.

²¹ ADB. [India: Maharashtra State Road Improvement Project](#).

²² ADB. [India: Maharashtra Rural High Voltage Distribution System Expansion Program](#).

²³ ADB. [India: Sustainable Coastal Protection and Management Investment Program](#).

planning under this value chain project will take advantage of the above infrastructure improved through ADB's comprehensive projects.²⁴

14. ADB's past and current interventions in transport and rural infrastructure contribute to the Government of India's development objectives. ADB closely collaborates with development partners such as the Japan International Cooperation Agency and the World Bank to explore development synergies. Financial assistance to rural road development in India is critical to enhancing connectivity and improving rural communities' access to socioeconomic growth centers. An evaluation of ADB's assistance program in India for transport operations found that ADB's support resulted in evident improvements in connectivity and mobility.²⁵

15. **Replication strategy.** ADB has provided support to the Government of India's Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), a nationwide program that seeks to improve rural connectivity across all states.²⁶ Following PMGSY's successful implementation, several states, including Maharashtra, have launched state-level programs called Mukhya Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (MMGSY). Subsequently, the Government of India requested that ADB support preparation and implementation of Maharashtra's MMGSY with the objective of establishing a model that can be implemented in other states.²⁷ Under the ongoing and additional financing projects, ADB's value addition to Maharashtra's MMGSY comprises (i) designing rural roads to all-weather standards with climate-resilient and safety features, (ii) introducing road asset management systems to enhance sustainability of rural road assets already improved through PMGSY and MMGSY, and (iii) introducing civil works contracts with post-completion maintenance for 5 years.²⁸ To further enhance ADB's value addition, the additional financing includes use of mobile mapping technology to regularly monitor the project roads and evaluate changes in roadside development. The mobile mapping images will be linked to a web-based real-time project monitoring system being developed in the ongoing project. ADB will actively replicate and disseminate the experience and knowledge gained from the value addition in and outside India through the Capacity Development Resource Center in ADB's India Resident Mission, project workshops, and regional forums, including ADB's Rural Development and Food Security Forum.

16. **Value for money in procurement.** The ongoing project has completed 192 procurement transactions using the single-stage, two-envelope process. An assessment of the transactions note that all were completed—from issuance of bid documents to contract award—within 4 months. This rapid transaction time demonstrates that using repeat procurement processes and similar packaging provides value for money. The additional financing will continue the same approach and ensure there is sufficient competitive tension and community involvement in the works shared across 414 small value works packages. Value for money is also enhanced by quickly awarding contracts to the lowest-evaluated substantially responsive bid and including 5-year contractual maintenance in the works packages.

²⁴ ADB. [India: Maharashtra Agribusiness Network Project](#) proposed as 2021 firm, with a \$100 million loan in the ADB Country Operations Business Plan (footnote 9).

²⁵ ADB. 2017. [Country Assistance Program Evaluation: India, 2007–2015](#). Manila.

²⁶ Government of India, Ministry of Rural Development. 2019. [Prime Minister's Rural Roads Scheme](#). Delhi.

²⁷ Such model features include transect walks with local stakeholders and participatory road safety design and audit for the preparation stage.

²⁸ The lessons from other developing member countries are, for example, ADB. [Bangladesh: Rural Connectivity Improvement Project](#). ADB. [Nepal: Rural Connectivity Improvement Project](#). and ADB. [Sri Lanka: Integrated Road Investment Program](#).

D. Summary Cost Estimates and Financing Plan

17. The overall project is estimated to cost \$737.9 million (Table 1). Detailed cost estimates by expenditure category and detailed cost estimates by financier are included in the project administration manual (PAM).²⁹

Table 1: Summary Cost Estimates
(\$ million)

Item	Current Amount ^a	Additional Financing ^b	Total
A. Base Cost^c			
1. Conditions and safety of selected rural roads improved and maintained with climate resilience and safety features	248.0	388.4	636.4
2. Capacity of rural infrastructure agency and awareness among road users in the state enhanced ^d	7.1	9.2	16.3
Subtotal (A)	255.1	397.5	652.6
B. Contingencies^d	18.3	34.9	53.2
C. Financing Charges During Implementation^e	22.6	9.5	32.1
Total (A+B+C)	296.0	441.9	737.9

Note: Numbers may not sum precisely because of rounding.

^a Refers to the original amount.

^b Refers to the additional financing amount. Includes taxes and duties of \$42.6 million. Such amount does not represent an excessive share of the project cost. The Asian Development Bank will finance taxes and duties of \$34.6 million. The government will finance taxes and duties of \$8.0 million through cash contribution.

^c In mid-2020 prices as of 4 August 2020.

^d Physical and price contingencies, and a provision for exchange rate fluctuation are included.

^e Includes interest, commitment, and other charges on all sources of financing.

Source: Government of India and Asian Development Bank estimates.

18. The government has requested a regular loan of \$300.0 million from ADB's ordinary capital resources to help finance the project. The loan will have a 25-year term, including a grace period of 5 years; an annual interest rate determined in accordance with ADB's London interbank offered rate (LIBOR)-based lending facility; a commitment charge of 0.15% per year; and such other terms and conditions set forth in the draft loan and project agreements. Based on the straight-line method, the average maturity is 15.25 years, and the maturity premium payable to ADB is 0.10% per year. The summary financing plan is in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary Financing Plan

Source	Current ^a		Additional Financing		Total	
	Amount (\$ million)	Share of Total (%)	Amount (\$ million)	Share of Total (%)	Amount (\$ million)	Share of Total (%)
Asian Development Bank						
OCR (regular loan)	200.0	67.6	300.0	67.9	500.0	67.8
Government	96.0	32.4	141.9	32.1	237.9	32.2
Total	296.0	100.0	441.9	100.0	737.9	100.0

OCR = ordinary capital resources.

^a Refers to the original amount.

Source: Asian Development Bank estimates.

19. **Food security financing.** Food security investments to be financed by the additional financing are estimated to cost \$300 million, comprising a \$300 million ordinary capital resources loan. All the project roads and bridges will enhance first-mile connectivity for transport of agriculture crops from farms to aggregation, processing, and other food value chain hubs.

²⁹ Project Administration Manual (accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 2).

20. **Climate change financing.** The project establishes a design manual for climate-resilient rural infrastructure for wider replication within and outside the state. For the additional financing, climate adaptation is estimated to cost \$78.6 million, and climate mitigation is estimated to cost \$18.0 million. ADB will finance 100% of mitigation and adaptation costs. Details are in the climate change assessment.³⁰ The mitigation amount was derived as lower fuel consumption from the improved road surface using ADB's Transport Emissions Evaluation Model for Projects. The adaptation costs are additional climate-proofing costs for installing new cross-drains, increasing the sizes of culverts, constructing additional retaining walls and side drains, and increasing the road surface elevation above flood levels.

21. **Coronavirus disease response financing.** The additional financing is an important part of Maharashtra's economic recovery package to stimulate rural employment and incomes. It will address the labor market impacts of the crisis by providing income-generating opportunities to the rural Maharashtra population. The additional financing is designed to be implemented quickly by local contractors with local labor, material, and equipment, and without involuntary resettlement. With an average contract value of \$0.9 million and contract period of 2 years, the project is expected to generate 3.1 million person-days of local semiskilled and unskilled labor. The project will also address employment among women, who have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, by providing at least 25% of the job opportunities to women. COVID-19 response financing is estimated at \$34.3 million.

E. Implementation Arrangements

22. The State of Maharashtra, acting through MRRDA, will continue as the executing agency.³¹ Under the ongoing project, the MRRDA has established (i) a project management unit (PMU), with the MRRDA secretary-cum-chief executive officer appointed as the project director, and assisted by two deputy project directors; (ii) six regional superintending engineers; and (iii) 34 project implementation units (PIUs) in the districts, each headed by an executive engineer and supported by three deputy engineers. The PIUs are responsible for the day-to-day implementation and supervision of project activities. The PIUs fall under six regional offices, each headed by a superintending engineer.³² The regional offices are responsible for authorizing procurement and payments on contracts and for monitoring and reporting to the PMUs. A team of project implementation support consultants, engaged under the ongoing project, will continue to support the additional financing project.

23. The implementation arrangements are summarized in Table 3 and described in detail in the PAM.

Table 3: Implementation Arrangements

Aspects	Arrangements
Implementation period	September 2021–August 2026 ^a
Estimated completion date	31 August 2026
Estimated loan closing date	28 February 2027
Management	
(i) Executing agency	The State of Maharashtra acting through the MRRDA

³⁰ Climate Change Assessment (accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 2).

³¹ The State Government of Maharashtra established the MRRDA as a special purpose vehicle to implement the PMGSY and the MMGSY. It was established on 8 May 2003 through a government resolution under the Society Registration Act, 1860.

³² The six regions in Maharashtra are Amaravati, Aurangabad, Konkan, Nagpur, Nashik, and Pune.

Aspects	Arrangements		
(ii) Implementation unit	1 project management unit, 34 project implementation units in the districts under the six regional offices (1,395 full-time staff)		
Procurement	Open competitive bidding	414 contracts (civil works)	\$382.9 million
Consulting services	Individual consultant selection	15 person-months	\$200,000
Retroactive financing and/or advance contracting	Retroactive financing and advance contracting will be used for civil works contracts. Retroactive financing will be provided to finance expenditures incurred before the loan becomes effective, but not earlier than 12 months before the date of signing of the loan agreement and not exceeding 20% of the respective loan amount. The borrower and the executing and implementing agencies have been advised that approval of advance contracting and retroactive financing does not commit ADB to finance the additional financing project.		
Disbursement	The loan proceeds will be disbursed in accordance with ADB's <i>Loan Disbursement Handbook</i> (2017, as amended from time to time) and detailed arrangements agreed between the government and ADB.		

ADB = Asian Development Bank, MRRDA = Maharashtra Rural Road Development Association.

^a Civil works contracts will include 5-year routine maintenance, which will extend beyond the project implementation period. The government will finance all maintenance costs.

Source: Asian Development Bank.

24. Project readiness and the impact of the coronavirus disease. The MRRDA will continue to use the same master bid documents that were prepared for the ongoing project and will initiate advance contracting actions by issuing the invitation to bid for civil works. The COVID-19 pandemic has not affected the implementation arrangements, and cost estimates have been updated to reflect the latest indicators. The contractors for the ongoing project have mostly resumed their works with appropriate safety measures based on government orders and guidelines. The detailed project readiness activities are in the PAM.

III. DUE DILIGENCE

A. Technical

25. The MRRDA prepared the detailed designs for improving about 2,900 km of single-carriage roads and 230 bridges, the condition of which varies. The designs complied with the government's standards and specifications for improved design and construction of rural roads. The MRRDA incorporated road safety measures (such as carrying out road safety audits and precautionary interventions along high-risk road segments) and climate-resilient rural road construction measures, with due consideration given to the observed impacts of the 2019 floods in the designs (e.g., through slope stabilization, drainage, and cross-drainage measures). The MRRDA also adopted a context-sensitive design approach to incorporate community concerns. Construction will use (i) proven technology while piloting the use of some materials (e.g., polymer-modified asphalt, asphalt blended with plastic waste, fiber-reinforced concrete, and precast concrete arch bridges) to inform research and development; and (ii) materials compatible with local conditions.

B. Economic and Financial Viability

26. ADB carried out the economic analysis in accordance with ADB guidelines.³³ The principal benefits considered in the analysis are transport cost savings in terms of vehicle operating costs, travel time savings of existing and incremental traffic on these roads over the analysis period, and lower greenhouse gas emissions. Other unquantified benefits include improved road safety,

³³ ADB. 2017. [Guidelines for the Economic Analysis of Projects](#). Manila.

higher climate resilience, and improved quality of life for rural communities. The economic analysis indicated that the project is economically viable, with an economic internal rate of return of 17.0% for the additional financing project and 16.0% for the overall project. Road and bridge packages in all districts have an economic internal rate of return above the acceptable rate of return of 9%. Sensitivity analysis indicated that, with a 10% increase in capital costs or a 10% decrease in benefits, the overall investment remains economically viable. The analysis assumes that 50% of vehicle operating cost savings will accrue to vehicle owners and 50% will be passed on to the road users by the operators in the case of public transport and freight vehicles.³⁴ The additional financing is non-revenue generating, and financial management and sustainability were assessed to ensure financial viability.

C. Sustainability

27. The additional financing will not generate revenue. Instead, the MRRDA will be responsible for maintaining the roads improved under the project for the first 10 years, after which the roads and their maintenance will be turned over to local governments. The state government will finance road maintenance in accordance with the PMGSY guidelines. However, past practice suggests that it is unlikely that sufficient funds will be provided to fully cover maintenance costs. To better safeguard its rural road asset base, the state government adopted a rural road maintenance policy in August 2019; the policy's objectives include removal of the existing rural road network maintenance backlog. Further, routine maintenance for the first 5 years will be included in all road works contracts financed by the project. In addition, the following activities being implemented under the ongoing project to operationalize the maintenance policy and establish sound rural road asset management systems will equally impact the sustainability of the roads improved under the additional financing: (i) development of performance-based maintenance manuals for the MRRDA; (ii) development of training programs for the MRRDA and the local governments to improve their capacity to (a) maintain roads, (b) estimate the required resources accurately, and (c) prepare sufficient budget requests with improved prioritization of maintenance over construction; and (iii) provision of capacity building to the MRRDA to improve its road asset management system under the technical assistance (TA) grant attached to the ongoing project. As a part of the legal agreements, the state government assured ADB that adequate maintenance funds would be provided to the MRRDA and local governments throughout the estimated economic life of the roads improved under the additional financing.

D. Governance

28. **Financial management.** A financial management assessment was conducted, in accordance with ADB's guidelines.³⁵ The financial management assessment found that MRRDA has adequate financial management capacity to (i) record the required financial transactions; (ii) provide reliable annual financial statements and audit reports in a timely manner; (iii) safeguard the financial assets; and (iv) use the statement of expenditures procedure under ADB's disbursement procedures up to a threshold of \$200,000 for each expenditure item. However, the assessment also identified the following risks: (i) MRRDA's limited experience in ADB's procedures and reporting requirements and there is scope for improving the financial reporting practices, and (ii) decentralized flow of funds to the PIUs. As a result, the overall financial management risk is assessed *moderate*. The identified risks will be mitigated by: (i) providing continuous training in ADB's systems and procedures, (ii) including comprehensive financial reporting as part of the quarterly financial reports, (iii) ensuring internal audits are undertaken on

³⁴ Economic and Financial Analysis (accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 2).

³⁵ ADB. 2015. [Financial Due Diligence: A Methodology Note](#). Manila.

a quarterly basis, and (iv) adopting project-specific financial management procedures. Moreover, MRRDA will maintain separate books of accounts for the additional financing project, and the project financial statements will be audited annually by an auditor acceptable to ADB, following auditing standards acceptable to ADB.

29. **Procurement and anticorruption.** Procurement of works will be in accordance with the ADB Procurement Policy (2017 as amended from time to time) and the Procurement Regulations for ADB Borrowers (2017, as amended from time to time) in the same manner as the ongoing project. The MRRDA procurement capacity assessment concluded that MRRDA has the capacity to undertake procurement under the project. The government will continue to follow open competitive bidding (national advertisement) procedures and will use the standard bidding document that was used for the ongoing project. Procurement will continue to use the government's electronic procurement system, which has been improved in agreement with ADB.³⁶ The procurement procedures are detailed in the procurement plan in the PAM. India's Prevention of Corruption Act (1988 and amended in 2018) combats corruption in government agencies and public sector business. Maharashtra's Anti-Corruption Bureau is responsible for investigating corruption allegations in the state. ADB's Anticorruption Policy (1998, as amended to date) was explained to and discussed with the national government and the state government. The specific policy requirements and supplementary measures are described in the PAM.

E. Poverty, Social, and Gender

30. **Poverty reduction and social impact.** During project preparation, extensive consultations were held with 42,000 people living in the project districts. The MRRDA carried out transect walks with male and female community members along all the road and bridge locations. The community members, including elected village representatives, were overwhelmingly supportive of the project and expressed the need to improve mobility from their villages to commercial and industrial centers, agricultural markets, social services, and other locations to increase economic and social opportunities. Local communities expressed that provision of all-weather roads and bridges in rural areas would help reduce poverty. It is expected that the project will generate about 3.1 million person-days of employment for local communities, of which at least 25% will be for women, over the construction and maintenance periods. The project will improve farmers' access to markets and service centers, which will contribute towards improved agricultural productivity and farmers' incomes. All-weather roads and construction of missing bridges will also promote investment in agribusiness and enhance agriculture value chain.

31. **Gender mainstreaming.** The additional financing is categorized effective gender mainstreaming. The additional financing will scale up the ongoing project's outputs and ensure that the transport and rural connectivity improvements will benefit men and women equally. In August 2020, the MRRDA appointed the seven senior officials who were nominated as gender focal points for the PMU and six regional offices. The MRRDA prepared a gender action plan that specifies activities, targets, responsible agencies, and timeframes for implementing, monitoring, and reporting on gender actions.³⁷ The gender action plan focuses on capacity development of women workers so that they can benefit from the semiskilled and unskilled labor opportunities generated in road construction and maintenance. The ongoing project will develop manuals for construction and maintenance of rural roads with climate-resilient and gender-inclusive designs through a participatory approach. It will also develop capacity to ensure the active involvement of women in the design, construction, and maintenance of rural roads. The manuals will be endorsed

³⁶ ADB approved e-procurement for national competitive bidding in all investment program states during 2009–2011.

³⁷ Gender Action Plan (accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 2).

by the MRRDA and used for future MRRDA road projects. Women will gain increased awareness on road safety and other issues, such as gender-based violence, sexual exploitation, human trafficking, and sexually transmitted infection prevention.

F. Safeguards

32. In compliance with ADB's Safeguard Policy Statement (2009), the project's safeguard categories are as follows.³⁸

33. **Environment (category B).** Environmental checklists and transect walks were used to identify key environmental impacts and risks from improving the rural roads and bridges. Further, an Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool and government reports were used for the assessments and to prepare the initial environmental examination.³⁹ The results show that project sites are not located in any of the state's protected and key biodiversity areas. Potential impacts are site-specific, temporal, and reversible such as increased noise and exhaust levels from vehicles, waste generation, and occupational health and safety hazards. Consultations were organized with the relevant government agencies and local people to understand the level of project acceptability, concerns, and overall opinions. Feedback has been integrated in the project design and mitigation measures of the environmental management plan. To ensure the effective implementation of safeguards requirements, the MRRDA will be supported by environmental experts at the regional level. A functioning grievance redress mechanism has been established under the ongoing project, and it will be used for the additional financing. Environment safeguard monitoring reports will be produced on an annual basis during the project period.

34. The state's indicative climate projections indicate rainfall and temperature will gradually increase over 50 years. More frequent and intense flooding is anticipated within the project locations. Through consultations with local communities, the MRRDA has identified vulnerable sections and adopted climate-resilient designs to address climate risks. Adaptation measures will include increased cross-drainage capacities, construction of new cross drains, elevated road surfaces, strengthened road embankments, and construction of side drains.

35. **Involuntary resettlement (category C).** ADB screened all the project roads and bridges for impacts on involuntary resettlement. The screening found no physical or economic displacement resulting from involuntary land acquisition or involuntary restrictions on land use. Most of the improvement works will be carried out within existing road corridors and rights-of-way. In the same manner as the ongoing project, voluntary land donation may be used when additional land will be required. The community participation framework establishes guidelines for community consultation and voluntary donation. Details of the social safeguard screening along all roads are documented in the social safeguards due diligence report.

36. **Indigenous peoples (category C).** The screening confirms that indigenous peoples (scheduled tribes) are present in the state as individual households living among broader communities rather than as distinct communities. The additional financing will not directly or indirectly affect the dignity, human rights, livelihood systems, or culture of indigenous peoples because the project works will not impact territories or natural or cultural resources that indigenous peoples own, use, occupy, or claim as an ancestral domain or asset. Details of the social safeguard screening are documented in the social safeguards due diligence report.

³⁸ ADB. [Safeguard Categories](#).

³⁹ IBAT Alliance. [Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool](#). Initial Environmental Examination (accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 2).

G. Summary of Risk Assessment and Risk Management Plan

37. Significant risks and mitigating measures are summarized in Table 4 and described in detail in the risk assessment and risk management plan.⁴⁰

Table 4: Summary of Risks and Mitigating Measures

Risks	Mitigation Measures
Extreme weather conditions could cause significant damage to the road network	To address climate and disaster risks, the design of roads and bridges will use climate resilience parameters for slope protection where slopes are subject to water level fluctuations, rigid reinforced concrete pavement at submersible road sections, and additional cross drainage. Road and bridge designs also incorporated observed impacts of the 2019 floods.
Inadequate funds for road maintenance may cause roads to deteriorate prematurely	To improve sustainability, the state government and the MRRDA adopted a road maintenance policy in 2019, which the project will support to operationalize. In addition, the project will use 5-year maintenance contracts, provide capacity building to establish road maintenance and asset management systems (under the ongoing project), and obtain additional assurances from the state government that adequate funds will be provided for maintenance throughout the estimated economic life of the improved roads.
Low response by contractors during procurement, possibly because of COVID-19	The MRRDA will advertise contract packages via the government's electronic procurement system to increase coverage and attract interest from a diverse group of contractors. Responses during the ongoing project were sufficient. Risks because of COVID-19 will be assessed and mitigated as necessary.

COVID-19 = coronavirus disease, MRRDA = Maharashtra Rural Road Development Association.

Source: Asian Development Bank.

IV. ASSURANCES

38. The national government and the state government have assured ADB that project implementation shall conform to all applicable ADB requirements, including those concerning anticorruption measures, safeguards, gender, procurement, consulting services, financial management, and disbursement, as described in detail in the PAM and loan documents. The national government and the state government have agreed with ADB on certain covenants for the project, which are set forth in the draft loan agreement and project agreement.

V. RECOMMENDATION

39. I am satisfied that the proposed loan would comply with the Articles of Agreement of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and recommend that the Board approve the loan of \$300,000,000 to India for the additional financing of the Maharashtra Rural Connectivity Improvement Project, from ADB's ordinary capital resources, in regular terms, with interest to be determined in accordance with ADB's London interbank offered rate (LIBOR)-based lending facility; for a term of 25 years, including a grace period of 5 years; and such other terms and conditions as are substantially in accordance with those set forth in the draft loan and project agreements presented to the Board.

Masatsugu Asakawa
President

14 July 2021

⁴⁰ Risk Assessment and Risk Management Plan (accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 2).

REVISED DESIGN AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK

The revised design and monitoring framework strikes out content for deletion and underlines content to be added.

Impact the Project is Aligned with Quality, reliable, sustainable, safe, and affordable roads that provide equitable access for all developed (Vision 2030) ^a			
Results Chain	Performance Indicators	Data Sources and Reporting Mechanisms	Risks and Critical Assumptions
Outcome Road transport efficiency in 34 districts in Maharashtra increased	By 2025 <u>2027</u> : a. Average travel time along project roads reduced by 50% (2018 baseline: 4 minutes/km) b. Average daily vehicle-km increased to 499,200 <u>1,269,800</u> (2018 baseline: 311,250 <u>837,750</u> vehicle-km)	a.–b. Post-implementation measurement and traffic survey by the MRRDA and verified by State Quality Monitor ^b	R: Extreme weather conditions could cause significant damage to the road network
Outputs 1. Conditions and safety of selected rural roads improved and maintained with climate resilience and safety features ^c	By 2024 <u>2026</u> : 1a. At least 2,100 <u>5,000</u> km of rural roads improved to all-weather standards with climate resilience and safety features (2018 baseline: 0) ^d 1b. 5-year maintenance contracts awarded and commenced (2018 baseline: NA) ^e 1c. 2.0 <u>5.1</u> million person-days of employment generated for semiskilled and unskilled labor in road construction and maintenance (at least 25% of employed are women) (2018 baseline: 0) ^f (OP 1.2)	1a.–c. Quarterly monitoring reports by the MRRDA	R: Delayed release of counterpart funds could hamper the completion of works <u>R: Low response by contractors during procurement, possibly because of COVID-19</u>
2. Capacity of rural infrastructure agency and awareness among road users in the state enhanced	2a. By 2024 <u>2026</u> : At least 75% of the MRRDA project staff reported increased awareness and/or knowledge related to road safety, road asset management, contract management, and climate-resilient design and construction (2018 baseline: 0) 2b. By 2024: Manuals for construction and maintenance of climate-resilient, gender-inclusive rural road designs developed and endorsed by the MRRDA (2018 baseline: Not applicable)	2a and 2c. Post-implementation survey by the MRRDA 2b. Government endorsement memo	

Results Chain	Performance Indicators	Data Sources and Reporting Mechanisms	Risks and Critical Assumptions
	<p>2c. By 2024 <u>2026</u>: At least 50% of school students, teachers, and parents (at least 30% women) and Anganwadi workers⁹ along project roads reported increased awareness on road safety and gender-based violence (including sexual exploitation, human trafficking, and sexually-transmitted infection prevention) (2018 baseline: 0)</p> <p>2d. By 2024 <u>2026</u>: At least 80% of trained workers (of which 50% are women) demonstrated skills in road construction and maintenance (2018 baseline: Not applicable)</p> <p>2e. By 2024 <u>2026</u>: Annual road safety audits of at least 25% of the project roads completed (2018 baseline: 0)</p> <p>2f. <u>By 2026: Impact evaluation of the project benefits completed with sufficient baseline and end-line surveys (2020 baseline: Not applicable)</u></p>	<p>2d. Post-training test</p> <p>2e. Road safety audit reports by the MRRDA</p> <p><u>2f. Impact evaluation reports</u></p>	
<p>Key Activities with Milestones</p> <p>1. Conditions and safety of selected rural roads improved and maintained with climate resilience and safety features</p> <p>1.1 Award contracts for improving about 2,100 km of roads to all-weather standards by Q1 2020 (<u>completed</u>); complete construction of these roads by Q1 2022 <u>2024</u>; and maintain these roads for 5 years.</p> <p>1.2 Award contracts for improving about 2,900 km of roads to all-weather standards by Q4 2021; complete construction of these roads by Q1 2026; and maintain these roads for 5 years.</p> <p>2. Capacity of rural infrastructure agency and awareness among road users in the State enhanced</p> <p>2.1 Mobilize project implementation support consultant by Q4 2019 <u>Q3 2021</u>.</p> <p>2.2 Create capacity-development training programs for the MRRDA and project communities by Q4 2020 <u>Q4 2021</u>.</p> <p>2.3 Conduct the training programs by Q1 2022.</p> <p>2.4 Develop manuals for road safety, performance-based maintenance, and climate-resilient and gender-inclusive design and construction by Q2 2020 <u>Q4 2021</u>.</p> <p>2.5 Conduct annual road safety audits (2020–2024 <u>2025</u>).</p> <p>2.6 Conduct baseline survey for impact evaluation by Q3 2021.</p> <p>2.7 Conduct and participate in workshops and forums to replicate the project's value addition in and outside India by Q4 2025.</p> <p>2.8 Conduct end-line survey by Q1 2026.</p>			

Results Chain	Performance Indicators	Data Sources and Reporting Mechanisms	Risks and Critical Assumptions
Project Management Activities Recruit project implementation support consultant (completed). Recruit TA consultant (<u>completed</u>). Conduct environment management plan activities. Develop and implement web-based real-time project monitoring system. Organize gender action plan activities. Conduct annual and midterm review missions. Prepare project completion report.			
Inputs Asian Development Bank: \$200.0 500.0 million (<u>\$300 million additional</u>) Government: \$96.0 237.9 million (<u>\$141.9 million additional</u>)			

COVID-19 = coronavirus disease, km = kilometer, MRRDA = Maharashtra Rural Road Development Association, OP = operational priority, Q = quarter, R = risk, TA = technical assistance.

Note: The expected values and methodological details for all OP indicators to which this operation will contribute results are detailed in Contribution to Strategy 2030 Operational Priorities (accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 2 of report and recommendation of the President).

- ^a State Government of Maharashtra, Planning Department. 2018. *Vision 2030*. Mumbai.
- ^b An independent monitoring system established under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana.
- ^c Roads were selected from the priority list of the district road development plans in 34 districts in Maharashtra.
- ^d Climate resilience measures such as improved cross and side drainage, increased surface elevations, and strengthening of embankments will be incorporated into the designs. Safety measures include cautionary and information signs, guard posts, and speed breakers.
- ^e The same contractors that built the roads will perform routine maintenance for 5 years. The government will finance all maintenance costs.
- ^f The state government considers the additional financing as an important part of the economic recovery package in response to COVID-19. The overall project is expected to generate an estimated 5.1 million person-days of employment for local communities (of which 25% will be for women) over the construction and maintenance periods.
- ^g Anganwadi workers are people employed under the Integrated Child Development Service Scheme of India to provide nutrition, immunization, and health care services to pregnant women and adolescent girls.

Contribution to Strategy 2030 Operations Priorities

In addition to the OP indicators tagged in the design and monitoring framework, this operation will contribute results for:

- OP 1.3.1: Infrastructure assets established or improved (number)
- OP 2.1.4: Women and girls benefiting from new or improved infrastructure (number)
- OP 2.3: Women represented in decision-making structures and processes (number)
- OP 2.4.1: Time-saving or gender-responsive infrastructure assets and/or services established or improved (number)
- OP 2.5: Women and girls with increased resilience to climate change, disasters, and other external shocks (number)
- OP 2.5.2: Climate- and disaster-resilient infrastructure assets and/or services for women and girls established or improved (number)
- OP 3.1.1: Additional climate finance mobilized (\$)
- OP 3.2.1: Area with reduced flood risk (hectares)
- OP 3.2.5: New and existing infrastructure assets made climate- and disaster-resilient (number)

Source: Asian Development Bank.

LIST OF LINKED DOCUMENTS

<http://www.adb.org/Documents/RRPs/?id=52328-002-3>

1. Loan Agreement
2. Project Agreement
3. Sector Assessment (Summary): Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Rural Development
4. Project Administration Manual
5. Summary of Project Performance
6. Economic and Financial Analysis
7. Summary Poverty Reduction and Social Strategy
8. Risk Assessment and Risk Management Plan
9. Climate Change Assessment
10. Gender Action Plan
11. Initial Environmental Examination
12. Contribution to Strategy 2030 Operational Priorities

Supplementary Documents

13. Financial Management Assessment
14. Community Participation Framework
15. Social Safeguards Due Diligence Report
16. Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment
17. Strategic Procurement Planning