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Photo by the World Bank

Delivering rural justice through community-owned courts in Bihar

In June 2017, a long-running land dispute was settled in just six days in a community-owned court in Bihar.

Returning to his village after many years, Ramashish had received a rude shock. His cousins had deprived him of the 5.90 acres of land he had inherited. Over the last 20 years, Ramashish had approached villagers, policemen, and civil court judges to resolve the dispute, but without much luck. Ultimately, Ramashish approached Pushpanjali Singh, the woman *Sarpanch* (head of the village) of the Wari Panchayat.



This was no easy case, but Pushpanjali summoned the three disputing parties — Ramashish and his cousins’ descendants — to the *Gram Katchahri* (Village Court – a judicial forum for resolving disputes locally). Pushpanjali helped the parties realize how much money they were wasting on their legal squabbles, and convinced them to withdraw their cases against each other. With the help of her husband, she measured the disputed property and allocated plots to each party. After six days, the parties agreed to her proposal.

Ensuring speedy justice

Though this case might be one of Pushpanjali’s more recognized achievements, she has settled more than 100 cases over the last two years. While ensuring speedy justice, Pushpanjali is known by the locals as a fair Sarpanch.

Unique as the Bihar Gram Katchahri might seem, it is intimately related to the Gram Panchayat, the oldest system of local government in India.

Traditionally, these Panchayats settled disputes between the villagers. But before India’s independence, a provincial government in Bihar set up five experimental Gram Katchahris to complement the existing Gram

Panchayats. Since India’s Independence in 1947, Gram Katchahris were recognized by statutes (the Bihar Panchayat Raj Act of 1947 and the Bihar Panchayat Raj Act of 1993 and 2006), solidifying their status. The common feature underlining all the legislation is to echo the villagers’ demands: *Gaonka samasya gao me hi niptaiye* (let’s village’s problems be settled in the village itself).

Functions of a Gram Katchahri

The Panchayat Raj Act of 2006 introduced innovative, unique features to the Gram Katchahri. The modern Gram Katchahri is a rural dispute resolution forum headed by a *Sarpanch* (head of the village court) and comprised of four *Panches* (members), all elected by the villagers of a Panchayat. To help the forum understand and implement its own rules and powers, it is supported by a law graduate and volunteers.

However, in practice, not all these forums function as well as Pushpanjali’s. The police have often taken over the powers of non-functional Gram Katchahris, causing the Bihar Police to issue an order in 2012 restricting all local police stations from interfering in the matters to be addressed by the Gram Katchahris. After these developments, the



Sarpanches have been enjoying full legality over their powers and developing better ways of coordinating with the police. As of today, Bihar has set up 8,386 Gram Katchahris. There are 8,386 elected Sarpanches and 114,000 elected members.

Meetings of Gram Katchahris are organized on the basis of the need of cases registered. Upon filing of a case, the Gram Katchahri sends notice to both the parties. Issues like family disputes are resolved within one hearing while other issues related to public services may require more hearings.

The vigilance committees at the village level monitor the delivery of various public services such as public distribution system, mid-day-meal for school children and report any violations to the Gram Katchahri. Such issues are initially dealt by issuing a warning letter by the Gram Katchahri to the service provider. If they continue to default, a hearing of the service provider and the beneficiary is conducted and most of the cases are resolved in-house. For some cases the involvement of other government officials (at block level) are required and hence may take longer to resolve. The officials at all levels cooperate with the Gram Katchahris to resolve issues.



Role of a Sarpanch

Sarpanchs have the power to impose fine up to Rs 1,000 and declare emergency for a period upto 15 days. A Sarpanch's job is a challenging one as there are also instances of them being threatened by aggrieved parties. Based on the severity of the cases the Sarpanch is provided with police protection and the local police force work together with Sarpanch to resolve the issues. Gram Katchahris are also empowered to take necessary action against those who lodge false complaints or attempt to embarrass another party by filing false cases.



The success of Gram Katchahris can be measured by their stability, the extent of their use by local communities, and their ability to dispense justice with sensitivity to local social conditions. This makes them worthy of consideration. That said, though they have been remarkably effective in delivering their mandate, numerous obstacles continue to exist. One of the biggest challenges so far has been to provide Gram Katchahris with an official address due to the lack of their own buildings. In some instances, the Gram Katchahris conduct their proceedings in the house of a panchayat member.

The World Bank, through its ongoing Bihar Panchayat Strengthening Project, has been supporting the construction of independent office buildings for Gram Panchayats, with exclusive blocks to be used for Gram Katchahris. This would ensure institutional strengthening of Gram Katchahris and encourage even the most vulnerable groups such as women and other weaker sections in the community to freely approach the “People’s Court,” and the inexpensive dispensing of justice at their doorsteps.

Building capacity

But there is more to the Project than just the construction of buildings. The members of Gram Katchahris need to be trained through focussed capacity building interventions to ensure justice is delivered without any errors. Realizing the need for capacity building of the members of the Gram Katchahris, the Project supports a strong partnership with the Chanakya National Law University to train all members of the Gram Katchahris (Sarpanches, law graduates, and volunteers) to empower them on their current functions, and train them on alternative dispute resolution techniques and tools. All these Project interventions are aimed at assisting the Gram Katchahris to emerge as key instruments of community-owned justice, thereby easing the burden on the state’s justice system. 🌐

Contributed by Jorge Luis Alva-Luperdi, Senior Counsel, World Bank and Farah Zahir, Senior Economist, World Bank



India, EU and the privacy challenge

India will have to update its data protection regime to safeguard services trade with EU, say Aaditya Mattoo, Research Manager at the World Bank and Joshua Meltzer, Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution



The free flow of data across borders underpins today's globalized economy. Such flows are growing exponentially and are estimated to have raised world GDP by about 10 per cent over the past decade. India is a major beneficiary. Data flows drive the country's most dynamic exports of digitally-delivered data processing and other business services.

But the international transfer of personal data also raises concerns about the protection of privacy. Earlier this week, the European Union (EU) introduced the world's most legally comprehensive data protection regime, in keeping with its concept of privacy that stems from its own unique history and cultural trajectory.

What does the new EU regulation mean for India? In 2016-17, nearly a quarter of India's IT-enabled exports — ranging from financial accounts and analysis to health transcriptions

and diagnostics — went to the EU. Provision of these services often requires the collection of data from EU citizens. The EU regulation makes exporting harder by making data transfers more difficult.

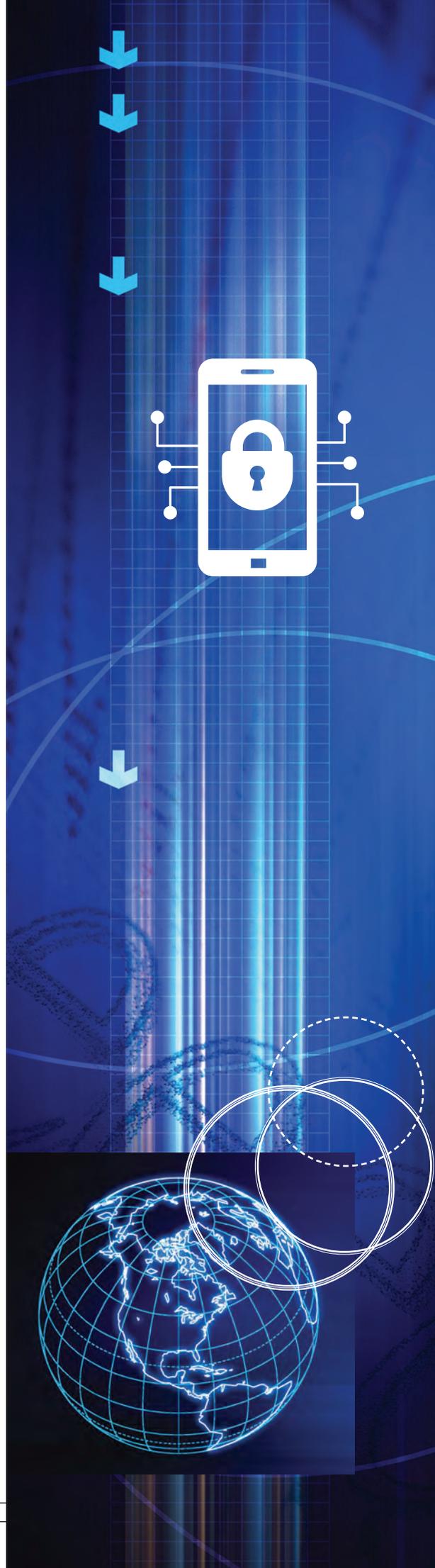
Developing countries like India face a dilemma now. Data transfers to a non-EU country will henceforth be permitted only if the latter enacts a national privacy law equivalent to the EU law. A handful of countries, including Argentina and Uruguay, have already done so. However, a national law imposes the same standard on all firms in the country, even when they sell at home.

The risk is that such prematurely stringent privacy laws could hamper the development of domestic markets. For example, by constraining the operation of credit bureaus and other information-sharing mechanisms, such laws could limit access to finance and other services.

Enacting EU-type national privacy legislation would increase the cost of doing business and lead to a loss of competitiveness in other markets. A recent survey suggested that Fortune 500 companies would need to spend \$16 million on average to avoid falling foul of the EU regulation. The increased costs would hurt not just access to services at home but also competitiveness in foreign markets where privacy is a less acute concern. When the Philippines drafted tough national privacy legislation to ensure continued access to the EU market, US firms based in that country suspended investment plans because operating costs would increase.

If a country's national law does not pass the EU adequacy test, as happened with India, then its firms are required either to accept corporate rules that bind their operations all over the world, or to use special model contracts for each EU business deal. Both options require firms to ensure levels of data protection that would be offered in the EU. Both also require a data controller or processor, who can be held liable for breach, to be established in an EU member state.

These requirements increase costs and limit the benefits of digital trade, especially for smaller firms. A survey in India of service exporters showed that the EU's earlier data protection regime had a significant impact on India's exports, even though it was less strict. The corporate rule process took over six months and 90 per cent of respondents chose to use model contracts instead, but those too proved complex and time-consuming. Two-thirds of surveyed exporters claimed a significant loss of business opportunities because of data protection concerns.





Can the EU's legitimate need to protect privacy be fulfilled without hurting a developing country like India? A recent example of cooperation offers a solution. When the EU first enacted its privacy rules, US national laws were deemed inadequate. To safeguard transatlantic data flows, the EU and the US negotiated an agreement that was updated after the Snowden revelations as the "Privacy Shield". Under this agreement, US firms promise to protect the privacy of European citizens to EU standards in return for unrestricted data flows. The firms' commitment is monitored and enforced by US institutions, notably the Federal Trade Commission and the Department of Commerce.

This arrangement has created a valuable opening. Under WTO law on services trade, the EU is required to offer other countries an opportunity to negotiate comparable arrangements. India must take advantage of this opportunity, while strengthening its case for recognition by creating credible assessment institutions.

Such an arrangement would have big advantages over existing options. First, Indian firms serving the EU market would not be required to establish a presence in the EU or accept rules and contracts that are costly and time-consuming. The assessment of conformity with EU standards would take place at home by domestic regulators.

Second, India would not need to pass a national privacy law whose stringency is determined by foreign norms. It would be free to create domestic standards to meet domestic needs, while following foreign standards for specific export markets. It would thus avoid a conflict between two vital development goals — preserving access to foreign services markets for its exporters and improving access to services for its citizens. 🌐

This article first appeared in the Indian Express on 31st May, 2018



Electrocracy in India: Power of, by, and for the people



To boost India's solar rooftop program, the World Bank has partnered with the Government of India to provide \$648 million to place solar panels on rooftops across the country.

Solar energy is not just for the elite and wealthy. Today, with growing numbers of people taking power generation into their own hands, solar energy has become the world's most democratic source of power – of the people, by the people, and for the people. However, the pathway to this goal requires a fundamental paradigm shift in the power sector – one in which more and more people take “power” generation into their own hands.

In the words of environmentalist and author Ross Gelbspan, “A common global project to rewire the world with clean energy could be the first step on a path to global peace and global democracy – even in today's deeply troubled world.”

In Germany, solar rooftops have already set off a transformation. Home to more than 1.7

million citizen-owned solar power systems, Germany now accounts for almost one-fourth of the world's PV capacity. Armed with solar rooftops and smart battery storage, German households have turned into energy producers, are paying lower utility bills, and are fast approaching energy independence.

In California too, solar rooftops have taken center stage. The state is the first in the U.S. to require solar panels on almost all new homes. And as solar rooftop installations rise, domestic storage systems are simultaneously being developed to keep pace. Tesla's Powerwall, for example, enables users to store solar power generated during the day for use at night when the sun goes down.

As the world's third-largest producer of conventional energy, India too is now rapidly expanding its capacity to generate solar power. The country has set itself an ambitious target of generating 100 GW of solar power by 2022. Today, solar power has emerged as the cheapest source of energy in India,

at prices that are a fraction of grid power. In fact, India's 100 GW solar target, of which 40 GW is to come from rooftop solar, will play a key role in providing 24 X 7 sustainable, affordable, and reliable electricity to 300 million people. Currently, however, only some 2 GW of this 40 GW target has been installed.

To boost India's solar rooftop program, the World Bank has partnered with the Government of India to provide \$648 million to place solar panels on rooftops across the country. The program has financed 600 MW in rooftop solar installations so far, of which 80 MW has already been installed.

India's solar-powered democracy

As the world transitions to renewable energy, consumers are beginning to control and own this green energy. This *electro-cracy – or electron democracy* – is, in turn, heralding a new democratic and decentralized energy landscape that is capable of benefiting India's billions.

By the people: By conservative estimates, India has approximately 250 million households. If we assume that a typical solar rooftop installation generates 4 Kw of power, India's 40 GW target for solar rooftop could electrify 10 million households. An idealistic estimate, perhaps, but one which reveals the massive potential of rooftop solar.

For the people: Once solar rooftop energy emerges from millions of homes, conventional, grid-sourced energy systems will be completely remade. As rooftop solar power doesn't rely on pipeline infrastructure or railroad connectivity, we can envisage a shift from a monopolistic situation where control rests with a utility, to one where consumers have the power to untether themselves from distribution companies (discoms). Free of the need for discom-implemented infrastructure, consumers can deal with energy as they would with any other commodity, and independently decide how much they're willing to pay for it.

Of the people: With "power" moving into the hands of the people, India's masses can become self-reliant in energy, and eventually, can profit by selling excess power to the grid using transparent data from technologies like smart meters and net metering. Their reduced reliance on discoms will also increase the reliability of power supply, as the 'single point' is replaced by supply from wherever the sun shines. Millions of households and businesses can then own a stake in their energy future and invest in better, complementary technologies, including storage and net metering. 🌐

Contributed by Amit Jain, Renewable Energy Specialist, World Bank



Empower the woman. The family and the Nation will grow



Kiran Devi struggled to provide a meagre existence for herself and her landless family in rural Bihar. “I had no proper house, or money to feed and educate my children. Life was a struggle,” remembers this 33-year old woman with only an elementary education.

About 10 years ago, a rural woman from the southern state of Andhra Pradesh visited Devi’s remote Bihar village. Although the languages they spoke were different, Devi could sense how being part of a women’s self-help group had transformed her visitor’s life.

Inspired, Devi convinced 25 women from her village to come together in a similar group. Since then, with support from ‘Jeevika’ – the Bank’s rural livelihood program in Bihar – her women’s group has set-up a flourishing business trading in corn, the staple crop of the region. In the process, Devi has been able to provide her children with better education, and a better standard of living.

A decade later, Devi confidently narrated her story in front of a large audience at a knowledge exchange workshop in New Delhi. The workshop, held under the World Bank’s ‘Lighthouse India’ program, brought together government officials, UN agencies, the private sector, research institutes, as well as local and international NGOs, to discuss how their knowledge and expertise could be pooled on a common platform so others could learn from their experience. Together, they deliberated on existing knowledge exchange strategies, reflected on gaps and challenges and listened to some good practice models on Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE). Many high impact models of WEE were showcased at the roundtable, which included the Kudumshree, Swasti, Jeevika, and Tejaswini programs, among others.

Successful models

Given India’s enormous diversity, women’s empowerment programs have often evolved





along different lines in various states across the country. One of the earliest was Kudumbashree in Kerala that began in 1998 to promote the active participation of women in local governance institutions to articulate the needs of the poor. Since then, the women groups have taken on other endeavors, including poverty reduction activities, the provision of micro-credit, collective farming, water supply, health, and sanitation activities.

In Madhya Pradesh in central India, women have managed to circumvent the issue of land titling by leasing land in the woman's name, providing them a legal basis for cultivation. 'Tejaswini' in Jharkhand, and Jeevika in Bihar, while started more recently, have enabled women's groups to set up their own enterprises.

Given the wealth of experience that exists in women's empowerment programs across the country, documenting successful practices and models becomes significant. "An online platform and e-groups would be a useful way to document not only what worked but also how it worked," explained Nilanjana Ray, Chairperson, School of Gender Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences in Mumbai, who moderated the day's discussion.

It is vital to map organizations and skills to create a database of those who have successfully implemented these models. Importantly, any knowledge exchange



program must also facilitate regular interaction and collaboration.

The World Bank's 'Lighthouse India' program aims to do just this.

"This initiative is the first in a series of knowledge exchanges planned under the Lighthouse India program, where the emphasis will be on women sharing their experiences, their knowledge and the challenges that they face in their journey towards achieving economic empowerment," said Harjot Kaur, Senior Social Development Specialist, World Bank.

Challenges to women's empowerment

Even so, there are several stumbling blocks on the road to women's economic empowerment. India ranks 139 out of 144 in the Global Gender Gap Index, and female labour force participation is as low as 37%. Women run only 13 per cent of the total enterprises in the country and often face constraints in accessing finance. Almost 73 per cent of their demand for finance remains unmet. While almost 80 percent of rural women are engaged in agriculture, only 13 per cent have the rights to the land they farm. And girls almost never inherit family land, despite legal provisions.

Moreover, governments lack the capacity, expertise and often the political will to include women as active participants in the economic growth of the country. Added to this is the lack of credible data as women usually work in the informal sector - in cottage industries, or as domestic and construction workers.

The way forward

As for Devi, her life today is a far cry from the early years when she first set out to form the women's group. "Earlier, they would not accept a woman who had stepped out of the house and was running a business. Now, the community looks at me with awe and sees me as a role model for others."

Indeed, the wheels of the women's empowerment program in India have been set in motion. The journey is replete with inspiring stories and learning which deserve to be shared. 🌐

Recent Project Signings

India Energy Efficiency Scale-Up Program

The Government of India, the Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), and the World Bank have signed a \$220 million Loan Agreement and a \$80 million Guarantee Agreement for the India Energy Efficiency Scale-Up Program.

The Program, to be implemented by EESL, will help scale up the deployment of energy saving measures in residential and public sectors, strengthen EESL's institutional capacity, and enhance its access to commercial financing.

The investments under the Program are expected to avoid lifetime greenhouse gas emissions of 170 million tons of CO₂, and contribute to avoiding an estimated 10 GW of additional generation capacity. This would be over 50 percent of the National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency target of 19.6

GW indicated in India's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Accord.

The agreement for the Project was signed by Sameer Kumar Khare, Joint Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, on behalf of the Government of India; S Gopal, Chief General Manager (Finance) EESL, on behalf of EESL; and Hisham Abdo, Acting Country Director, World Bank India, on behalf of the World Bank.

As an integral part of the operation, the first-ever IBRD guarantee in India will help EESL access new markets for commercial financing in line with the Bank's approach of maximizing finance for development. The guarantee is expected to leverage some \$200 million in additional financing, to help EESL with its growing portfolio and future investment needs. 

Second Programmatic Electricity Distribution Reform Development Policy Loan for Rajasthan

The Government of India, the Government of Rajasthan and the World Bank have signed a \$250 million development policy loan (DPL) to support the state improve the performance of its electricity distribution sector under the state's 24x7 Power for All program.

It is the second in the series of two operations planned for a comprehensive turnaround of

Rajasthan's electricity distribution sector. The first loan closed in March 2017.

The electricity distribution utilities (DISCOMs) in Rajasthan provide electricity to about 9.5 million customers. The key areas that the program will support include: strengthening governance in the distribution sector in the state by establishing annual performance MoUs between the DISCOMs and the state government; putting in place a performance management system; providing incentives to employees for improving performance; financial restructuring and recovery in the sector by transferring considerable amounts of the DISCOMs debt to the state; bringing in more discipline in the revenue requirements of DISCOMs; taking initiatives in reducing the costs of energy procurement; and improving the operational performance of the DISCOMs through initiatives like publishing feeder level energy audits and increased usage of IT among others. 



Face to Face

The World Bank's Human Capital Project targets better outcomes

A growing body of research at the World Bank describes a future world in which countries may not be able to rely on the same pathways to development that other countries followed in the past. Annette Dixon, World Bank's Vice President for Human Development spoke to Devex about this growing body of research at the Bank. Excerpts from the interview:



Forthcoming human capital index is just one part of a much broader portfolio. Could you describe what that full portfolio looks like?

Human development in the Bank traditionally has been health, education, and social protection. It's been a traditional area of competence of the Bank and actually has been pretty steady in terms of the share of the Bank's activity overall. I think what has changed — and for us now is a big moment for human development — is this whole agenda around human capital development.

That not only is there a need to invest more in human capital to get to high-income status, the future world is actually going to need healthier and better-educated people than ever before — and that's one of the most important things that policymakers can do to prepare for a much more complex, technology-driven world.

So the incentive there is only increasing.

Exactly. The human capital project is really trying to put at the center of policymakers' thinking the case for investing more in human capital development and accelerating progress

on human development outcomes. The human capital index is a way of galvanizing that commitment and giving countries an important signal on how far they have to travel in order to get to where they need to.

Does this human capital push represent a historic change?

In our work on the human capital project I loosely see three groups of countries.

One is very poor, fragile countries that actually have really bad human development outcomes, but which are inextricably linked to just how poor they are — and how much help they need to get foundational investments in things which are going to improve their human development outcomes. These are countries that have very high levels of maternal-infant mortality. They still have a big agenda in getting kids into school. They often have very high fertility rates that are contributing to the poverty. They need a lot of external assistance, both technical and financial.

There's another group of countries that are underinvesting: They are neither mobilizing enough resources for services that their population needs, nor are they giving more priority to human capital investments. And that's where the index can really help to bring home the value of making these investments at this point in a country's development. And here, a lot of the dialogue is around how much growth they are foregoing by not prioritizing investment in human capital, which I think this project positions us well to do.

Then there's a third group of countries that actually are spending high levels — reasonable levels — but are still not seeing progress on outcomes. And those are countries that are really thinking about whether they're targeting their expenditures in the right way. Are they investing in the right things? Is service delivery actually working effectively?

And then there are countries that frankly, have got this, and who are doing well at it, and who are really important for motivational purposes for others. So, the project actually speaks to countries in all these categories.

When it comes to operationalizing this body of knowledge, it sounds like a lot of it is compelling countries to take action. Government officials are going to see the amount of money they could be growing their economy by, they're going to see where they rank, and then they will want to do these things. But are there also aspects that will influence World Bank lending, that might compel this institution to operate differently given what you're learning?

I see three parts to operationalizing.

One is the development of an index. The innovative feature of this index is it's going to put together some outcomes, which have strong evidence-based linkages to productivity and growth.

The second part is helping countries understand how important it is to measure and understand their human capital challenges.

And then the third thing, is how do we accelerate progress? When countries get to, "so what does this mean, what do we need to do," that varies enormously from country to country. And this is really truly a cross-sectoral challenge. It may involve, on the public expenditure side, looking at revenue mobilization efforts and at expenditure priorities. It may be about investing more in interventions that there's strong evidence will help countries to make faster progress—and that will vary enormously from country to country, based on what their needs are. 

This interview was originally published in Devex

ICR Update

This is a short summary of the Implementation Completion Report (ICR) of a recently-closed World Bank project. The full text of the ICR is available on the Bank's website. To access this document, go to www.worldbank.org/reference/ and then opt for the Documents & Reports section.

Odisha Rural Livelihoods 'Tripti' Project



Context

The Government of Odisha (GoO) articulated a strategy to accelerate growth and poverty reduction through several measures including empowering the poor through resource-user associations and women's self-help groups (SHGs). Odisha requested World Bank assistance for implementing a project under which innovative, scalable and sustainable models for livelihoods enhancement of the rural poor could be piloted to "build institutions of the poor."

Project Development Objectives

The primary objective was to enhance the socio-economic status of the poor, especially women and disadvantaged groups, in selected districts of Odisha.

The primary beneficiaries were to be around 300,000 women from the poor and extremely poor and vulnerable and marginalized groups, such as the scheduled caste and scheduled

tribes (SC/ST) in 38 blocks of 10 project districts in the state. Another important aspect of the Project was to bring in the 'left-out'

Odisha Rural Livelihoods 'Tripti' Project

Approval Date:	31 July, 2008
Closing Date:	30 June, 2015
Total Project Cost	US\$ 77.16 million
Bank Financing:	US\$ 67.52 million
Implementing Agency:	Odisha Poverty Reduction Mission, Government of Odisha
Outcome:	Moderately Satisfactory
Risk to Development Outcome:	Moderate
Overall Bank Performance:	Moderately Satisfactory
Overall Borrower Performance:	Moderately Satisfactory

poor into the SHGs. The Project aimed to strengthen existing institutions and form new ones wherever required. The impetus was to make federations at panchayat and block levels.

Achievements

The Project benefitted around 625,000 women by supporting 79,000 SHGs and 1,000 Gram Panchayat Level Federations (GPLFs). Over 540,000 women were linked to a formal banking network and became eligible to access finance. As a result, 388,800 direct beneficiary households showed increased agriculture and enterprise incomes in poor households and shifts in expenditure patterns at the household level.

A study on Improved Paddy Production (IPP) and System of Rice Intensification (SRI) – two major agricultural interventions under the Project – showed that in addition to the production and income increases there were substantial positive changes in food security among the participating women members. For example, among the Extremely Poor and Vulnerable Groups, the proportion of households with less than eight months of food insecurity reduced from 25 percent to 3 percent.



There was a 12 percent growth in real total incomes and two percent in real total expenditures among poor households. Gains were recorded for education and food expenditures as well as in entrepreneurial and agricultural incomes. There was significant debt reduction – more than 250,000 households had reduced household debts. The results of the impact evaluation on the project villages showed that while there was no significant change in overall consumption, there were statistically significant relative increases in spending on healthcare, as well as on women and children's goods.

The Project contributed considerably to the improvement in the social status for women at the individual and group level. According to the impact evaluation, women in project areas were 13 percent more willing to address community problems through their own community institutions, and more likely to address issues of violence and alcoholism. The community-based leaders and members were active in pursuing external public support for their communities and were also more active in local elections. The most significant change was in the attitude of the disadvantaged and poor women as they no longer hesitated in speaking, being seen in public, and in voicing their opinions.

Lessons Learnt

- The participatory and inclusive process followed helped in identifying and mobilizing the poorest of the poor.
- The Project deliberately worked with the entire village, with older and new SHGs, with the poor and vulnerable and with the better-off population. This helped the poor and the vulnerable to be a part of the wider community. To reduce elite capture, special focus was placed on the capacity building and leadership of the Extremely Poor and Vulnerable Group (EPVG).
- Systems of accountability and transparency were developed at all levels. The Project reaffirmed that building solid community institutions is critical for sustained interventions and for further scaling up.
- Above all, it is important that the state support system has dedicated staff, champions, political traction, systematic partnerships and convergence for continued scaling up. 

This is a select listing of recent World Bank publications, working papers, operational documents and other information resources that are now available at the New Delhi Office Public Information Center. Policy Research Working Papers, Project Appraisal Documents, Project Information Documents and other reports can be downloaded in pdf format from 'Documents and Reports' at www.worldbank.org

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India Publications

Forest and Fire: Strengthening Prevention and Management in India

By Pyush Dogra, Andrew Michael Mitchell, Urvashi Narain, Christopher Sall, Ross Smith and Shraddha Suresh

Available On-Line

Published: June 2018, 243 pages

English Version, Paperback

Report No.: 127284



Forests and Fire: Strengthening Prevention and Management in India

Assessment by
The World Bank
for
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change,
Government of India
March 2018

Fire has been a part of India's landscape since time immemorial and can play a vital role in healthy forests, recycling nutrients, helping tree species regenerate, removing invasive weeds and pathogens, and maintaining

habitat for some wildlife. Occasional fires can also keep down fuel loads that feed larger, more destructive conflagrations, but as populations and demands on forest resources have grown, the cycle of fire has spun out of balance. Large areas of degraded forest are now subject to burning on an annual or semi-annual basis. As these fires are no longer beneficial to forest health, India is increasingly wrestling with how to improve the prevention and management of unwanted forest fires. India is not alone in facing this challenge. Forest fires have become an issue of global concern.

The objective of this assessment is to strengthen knowledge on forest fires by documenting current management systems, identifying gaps in implementation, and making recommendations how these systems can be improved.

Soth Asia Publications

South Asia's Hotspots: Impacts of Temperature and Precipitation Changes on Living Standards



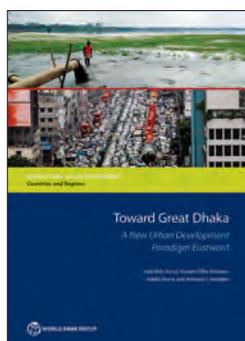
By Muthukumara Mani, Sushenjit Bandyopadhyay, Shun Chonabayashi, Anil Markandya, and Thomas Mosier

Available On-Line
Published: July 2018,
120 pages
English Version, Paperback
ISBN: 978-1-4648-1155-5

South Asia is particularly vulnerable to climate change. Most previous studies have focused on the projected impacts of sea-level rise or extreme weather – droughts, floods, heatwaves and storm surges. This study adds to that knowledge by identifying the impacts of long-term changes in the climate – rising temperatures and changes in precipitation patterns – on living standards. It does so by first building an understanding of the relationship between current climate conditions and living standards across South Asia.

The study also identifies the set of climate models that are best suited for projecting long-term changes in climate across South Asia. This understanding of living standards and climate change is then combined to project impacts of long-term changes in climate on living standards in South Asia.

Toward Great Dhaka: A New Urban Development Paradigm Eastward



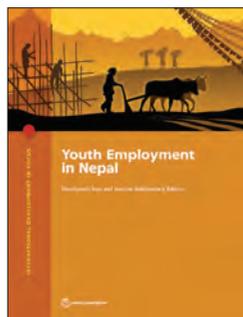
By Julia Bird, Yue Li, Zillur Hessian Rahman, Martin Rama, and Anthony J. Venables

Available On-Line
Published: July 2018,
180 pages
English Version, Paperback
ISBN: 978-1-4648-1238-5

This report seeks to analyze how the opportunity of East Dhaka could be realized. Using state-of-the-art modeling techniques, the study simulates population, housing, economic activity, and commuting times across the 266 unions that constitute Greater Dhaka. It does so under various scenarios for the development of East Dhaka, but always assessing the implications for the entire city. The simulations suggest that pursuing a strategic approach to the development of East Dhaka would make Greater Dhaka a much more productive

and livable city than continuing with business as usual. Based on current trends, Greater Dhaka would have a population of 25 million in 2035 and an income per capita of USD 8,000 at 2015 prices. However, embracing a strategic approach would add 5 million people to the city. And, it would be a more productive city, with nearly 1.8 million more jobs and an income per capita of more than USD 9,200 at 2015 prices, enough to put Dhaka on the map of global cities.

Youth Employment in Nepal



Edited by Dhushyanth Raju and Jasmine Rajbhandary

Available On-Line
Published: July 2018,
178 pages
English Version, Paperback
ISBN: 978-1-4648-1276-7

The book Youth Employment in Nepal aims to improve understanding

of the labor conditions, behaviors, and outcomes of Nepalese youth, which it examines in relation to both Nepal's domestic labor market and labor migration by Nepalese youth to India and other countries. Such migration includes the temporary "foreign employment" of Nepalese workers under bilateral labor agreements between Nepal and destination countries.

The findings in the book point to three directions for orienting public policies and programs. First, is raising rural labor productivity, urban labor demand, and urban worker-job matching efficiency. Second, is supporting the labor market integration of rural youth migrating to urban parts of Nepal and of youth labor migrants returning from India and other countries. Third, is improving the orientation and efficacy of labor skill training.

India: Policy Research Working Papers

WPS 8557

The cost of nutritious food in South Asia

By Felipe Jr Fadullon Dizon and Anna Whitson Herforth

The high cost of nutritious foods can worsen poor diets and nutrition outcomes especially among low-income households. Yet little is known about the spatial and temporal patterns of the cost of nutritious diets in South Asia, where malnutrition in multiple forms remains high. Using existing food price data from Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and India, two methods are applied to assess the affordability of nutritious foods: Cost of a Recommended Diet (CoRD) and Nutritious Food Price Index (NFI).

The analysis finds that the cost of a nutritious diet is

38 percent higher in Sri Lanka using CoRD compared to the cost of a (calorie-based) diet that meets basic food needs, and 15 percent higher in Afghanistan. In addition, CoRD varies across cities due to variability in the price of dairy and vegetables. Comparison of the NPI and the food Consumer Price Index (CPI) indicates that, for some countries, the price of a nutritious food basket varies more by season and has been increasing at a faster rate than the price of a typical food basket. This phenomenon is largely due to the variable cost of vegetables.

WPS 8546

Mobility and congestion in urban India

By Prottoy Aman Akbar, Victor Couture, Gilles Duranton, Ejaz Ghani and Adam Storeygard

This paper uses a popular web mapping and transportation service to generate information for more than 22 million counterfactual trip instances in 154 large Indian cities. It then develops a methodology to estimate robust indices of mobility for these cities. The estimation allows for an exact decomposition of overall mobility into uncongested mobility and the congestion delays caused by traffic.

The paper first documents wide variation in mobility across Indian cities. It then shows that this variation is driven primarily by uncongested mobility. Finally, the paper investigates correlates of mobility and congestion. Denser and more populated cities are slower, in part because of congestion, especially close to their centers. Urban economic development is generally correlated with better uncongested mobility, worse congestion, and overall with better mobility.

WPS 8532

Aquatic salinization and mangrove species in a changing climate: Impact in the Indian Sundarbans

By Anirban Mukhopadhyay, David J. Wheeler, Susmita Dasgupta and et.al.

This paper contributes to understanding the physical and economic effects of salinity diffusion and planning for appropriate adaptation for managing the Sundarbans in a changing climate, with a focus on the West Bengal portion of the tidal-wetland forest delta.

A five-step analysis, using high-resolution spatial assessments, was conducted to get a broader picture of the migration of mangrove species with progressive aquatic salinization in a changing climate. A current (2015) base map, with overlays of salinity tolerance for various mangrove species, and projected location-specific aquatic salinity for 2050 were used to predict the impacts of salinization on mangrove species by 2050.

The results indicate patterns of gains and losses, with dominance of salt-tolerant species at the expense

of freshwater species. Overall, the impact of salinity-induced mangrove migration will have an adverse effect on the flow of ecosystem services, ultimately impacting the livelihood options of poor households. Resources should be directed to developing alternative livelihoods for mangrove-dependent households. In addition, efforts are needed to develop sustainable policies that incorporate rising salinity, changes in mangrove dynamics, and the welfare impacts on poor communities.

WPS 8523

Measuring districts' monthly economic activity from outer space

By Robert Carl Michael Beyer, Esha Chhabra, Virgilio Galdo and Martin G. Rama

Evening-hour luminosity observed using satellites is a good proxy for economic activity. The strengths of measuring economic activity using nightlight measurements include that the data capture informal activity, are available in near real-time, are cheap to obtain, and can be used to conduct very spatially granular analysis.

This paper presents a measure of monthly economic activity at the district level based on cleaned Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite nightlight and rural population. The paper demonstrates that this new method can shed light on recent episodes in South Asia: first, the 2015 earthquake in Nepal; second, demonetization in India; and, third, violent conflict outbreaks in Afghanistan.

WPS 8512

Jati inequality in rural Bihar

By Shareen Joshi, Nishtha Kochhar and Vijayendra Rao

Caste is a persistent driver of inequality in India, and it is generally analyzed with government-defined broad categories, such as Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe. In everyday life, however, caste is lived and experienced as jati, which is a local system of stratification. Little is known about economic inequality at the jati level.

This paper uses data from poor rural districts in Bihar to explore expenditure inequality at the jati level. Inequality decompositions show much more variation between jatis than between broad caste categories.

The analysis finds that even within generally disadvantaged Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, some jatis are significantly worse off than others. Consistent with previous work, the paper also finds that inequality is largely driven by inequality within jatis. This finding has implications for the implementation of large-scale poverty alleviation programs.

WPS 8507

The ecological impact of transportation infrastructure

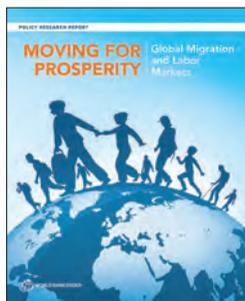
By Samuel Edward Asher, Teevrat Garg and Paul Michael Novosad

There is a long-standing debate over whether new roads unavoidably lead to environmental damage, especially forest loss, but causal identification has been elusive. Using multiple causal identification strategies, this paper studies the construction of new rural roads to over 100,000 villages and the upgrading of 10,000 kilometers of national highways in India.

The new rural roads had precise zero effects on local deforestation. In contrast, the highway upgrades caused substantial forest loss, which appears to be driven by increased timber demand along the transportation corridors. In terms of forests, last mile connectivity had a negligible environmental cost, while expansion of major corridors had important environmental impacts.

Other Publications

Moving for Prosperity: Global Migration and Labor Markets



By the World Bank

Available On-Line

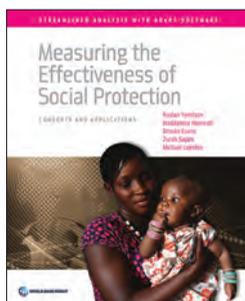
Published: June 2018,
308 pages

English Version, Paperback
ISBN: 978-1-4648-1281-1

Migration presents a stark policy dilemma. Research repeatedly confirms that

migrants, their families back home, and the countries that welcome them experience large economic and social gains. Easing immigration restrictions is one of the most effective tools for ending poverty and sharing prosperity across the globe. Yet, we see widespread opposition in destination countries, where migrants are depicted as the primary cause of many of their economic problems, from high unemployment to declining social services.

Measuring the Effectiveness of Social Protection: Concepts and Applications



By Ruslan Yemtsov,
Maddalena Honorati,
Brooks Evans, Zurab
Sajaia, and Michael Lokshin

Available On-Line

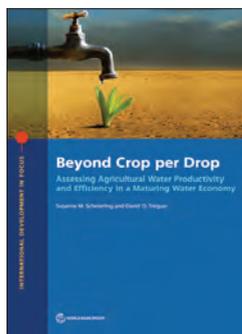
Published: June 2018,
264 pages

English Version, Paperback
ISBN: 978-1-4648-1090-9

The paper provides the conceptual and analytical framework for assessing social protection (SP) programs, as well as provides a practical guide for users seeking to conduct analysis, particularly using the World Bank's Software Platform for Automated Economic Analysis (ADePT).

The manual provides a comprehensive unique resource to tie together social policy theory, concepts and practical analytical techniques.

Beyond Crop per Drop: Assessing Agricultural Water Productivity and Efficiency in a Maturing Water Economy



By Susanne M. Scheierling
and David O. Tréguer

Available On-Line

Published: June 2018,
96 pages

English Version, Paperback
ISBN: 978-1-4648-1298-9

The report highlights the central role of water use in irrigated agriculture and its

link with increasing water scarcity. This is discussed in the context of the transition from an expansionary water economy to a mature water economy.

The report further develops this framework to reflect water management issues in irrigated agriculture. The expansionary phase is characterized by readily available water supplies to meet the growing demand for irrigation water as agricultural production increases. In the mature phase, the intensifying competition for water tends to be perceived as an increasing scarcity of water. In the transition from the expansionary phase to the mature phase, the interdependencies among water users increase, and the hydrologic setting and the rising externalities need to be considered.

India Project Documents

Andhra Pradesh and Telangana Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project

Date 30 July 2018
 Project ID P101650
 Report No. ICRR0021262 (Implementation Completion Report Review)

Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project

Date 27 July 2018
 Project ID P166977
 Report No. SFG4542, SFG4560, SFG4551, SFG4562, SFG4563 (Environmental Assessment, Vol. 2)
 SFG4514 (Resettlement Plan)
 SFG4561 (Indigenous Peoples Plan)

First Programmatic Water Supply and Sewerage Service Delivery Reform Development Policy Loan for Shimla

Date 26 June 2018
 Project ID P167246
 Report No. (Concept Program Information Document)

Haryana Power System Improvement Project

Date 25 June 2018
 Project ID P110051
 Report No. ICR4426 (Implementation Completion and Results Report)

Bihar Integrated Social Protection Strengthening Project

Date 20 June 2018
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 Report No. RES32429 (Project Paper)

Secondary Education Project

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 Report No. ICRR0021262 (Implementation Completion Report Review)

Technical Engineering Educational Quality Improvement Project II

Date 05 June 2018
 Project ID P101650

Report No. ICRR0020955 (Implementation Completion Report Review)

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Date 18 June 2018
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 Report No. SFG4192 (Environmental Assessment, Vol. 13-18)

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Kerala Local Government and Service Delivery Project

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Date 14 June 2018
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Tamil Nadu Empowerment and Poverty Reduction Project

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