THE WORLD BANK IN BANGLADESH

2020
Bangladesh is known for its success in reducing poverty and boosting shared prosperity for all its people. It has shown the world it is possible within only four decades to rise from extreme poverty to achieve lower middle-income status. Bangladesh has cut extreme poverty in half in record time and is among the few developing countries to achieve gender parity in school enrollment. Despite being severely affected by climate change, it has been a frontrunner in adaptation and disaster preparedness. It has become the world’s second largest ready-made garments exporter after China.

The World Bank Group is proud to be a partner in this remarkable journey. The World Bank is among Bangladesh’s early development partners and since independence has provided more than $30 billion in financing. Currently, Bangladesh has the largest program under the International Development Association, the World Bank’s fund for the poorest countries. This program includes human development, infrastructure, urban development, climate change, agriculture, among others. The results of the partnership are visible: according to the World Bank’s Human Capital Index, Bangladesh performed better than the South Asian average as well as the Lower Middle-Income average in all criteria except for stunting. With more educated and skilled youth, higher incomes, better infrastructure and healthier citizens, Bangladesh has all the ingredients to make its vision of becoming an upper middle-income country by 2031 into a reality.

But there is no room for complacency; while successes are many, challenges are also formidable. The World Bank Group’s Country Partnership Framework (FY16-21)—which is aligned with national priorities—supports Bangladesh’s growth aspirations. The World Bank has identified five transformational priorities where a concerted effort will have the greatest impact on sustainable growth and job creation—energy, inland connectivity, regional and global integration, urbanization, and adaptive delta management. Further, it will build on the foundational priorities such as macroeconomic stability, human development, and institutional and business environment, where Bangladesh is doing well and would benefit from continued strong performance. Guided by these priorities and building on a strong existing partnership, the World Bank’s current engagement includes a robust program of technical and financial support to help Bangladesh achieve its vision of becoming an upper middle-income country.

Bangladesh has shown great generosity in providing shelter to the displaced Rohingya population. To help the country deal with the influx—a crisis of unprecedented scale and size—the World Bank has mobilized nearly half a billion dollars in grants, of which $240 million, including a $13 million grant from Canada, has been already approved to provide for the health, learning and basic service needs of the Rohingya in Cox’s Bazar District.

The pages of this publication provide a glimpse of the World Bank projects in Bangladesh. I hope you will enjoy reading some of the stories of the country’s development successes and feel inspired to see that with a strong commitment and sound policies, Bangladesh can provide its people a better and brighter future.

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The World Bank
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AGRICULTURE
OVERVIEW

Due to its geographical position, Bangladesh remains vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters, which often cause damage to the country’s infrastructure and agricultural sectors. The poor are most vulnerable to natural disasters and face difficulty in ensuring steady food supply in the aftermath of natural disasters. Ensuring food and nutrition security for the vast number of poor and vulnerable, particularly women and children in rural areas, remains a challenge. As nearly 70 percent of Bangladesh’s population lives in rural areas, climate shocks and stresses have particularly negative implications on their food, livelihood security, and welfare.
CHALLENGE

The Public Food Distribution System is a core element of the Government of Bangladesh’s food security strategy. Public food distribution and strategic grain reserves currently rely on 670 central and local storage depots (“godowns”) with a total effective capacity of about 1.6 million tons. Most of these godowns are old and poorly maintained, leading to physical losses in grain stored (about 17-20 percent in value terms) and in its nutritional value. In the next five to seven years, the physical condition of many conventional godowns will deteriorate, leading a 35 to 40 percent decline in its effective storage capacity by 2020. The 2007/08 world food price shock and temporary disruption of rice imports from India led to lesser reliance on international markets and more focus on increased public cereal stocks, domestic procurement and public distribution and planned investments in expanded grain storage and drying facilities to store rice for longer periods without major quality deterioration. This confirms the needs for scaling-up construction of silos within the country. If these silos would have been operationalized, the vulnerabilities of the availability of food grain during 2017 floods in Bangladesh would have been substantially reduced.

APPROACH

The Modern Food Storage Facilities Project aims to increase the grain reserve available to households to meet their post-disaster needs and improve the efficiency of grain storage management.

The project is helping construct eight public modern grain storage steel silos in eight strategic locations comprising six for rice and two for wheat and also support the distribution of 500,000 smaller household silos to poorest and marginal farmers, and women-headed vulnerable households. The project will improve efficiency of grain storage management and delivery in GoB’s (food-based) social safety net programs and ensure long-term preservation of grain quality without the use of any chemical, pesticides and preservatives. It also supports development of Food Planning and Monitoring Program (FPMP) to modernize the monitoring and management system of food storage as well as to develop and implement a food policy research agenda covering grain storage and distribution.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- **8 steel silos** to be constructed with a storage capacity for 535,500 tons of rice and wheat
- **50% Reduction in grain storage and handling losses** in public storage facilities

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

With strengthened capacity for improving stock management in the modern silos, and comprehensive analyses for enhancing the overall policy framework on strategic grain reserves, GoB will be in a position to make sound and informed decisions as it reconciles the three strategic objectives that impact the domestic food market: (i) supporting the poor and vulnerable through effective Social Safety Net programs; (ii) improving the country’s disaster preparedness to meet food security needs caused by disaster-induced food shortages; and (iii) devising non-distortive market interventions for food price stabilization, mainly for coarse grain consumed by the poor and vulnerable.
OVERVIEW

Bangladesh has done remarkably well in improving agricultural productivity. Around 70 percent people in Bangladesh live in rural areas and over 47 percent of the country’s total labour force are engaged in agriculture. Agriculture occupies around three-quarters of Bangladesh’s land and supports the livelihoods of the majority of rural people. Hence, achieving economic growth and reducing poverty require policies and investments conducive to lasting transformational changes in rural areas including technological innovation in agriculture. The National Agriculture Technology Program (NATP II) aims to support the government’s strategic priorities in agriculture by increasing agriculture productivity and improving farmers’ access to markets. Small-scale farmers will benefit from stronger linkages with research, on-farm demonstrations of improved technologies, training and skills development, agricultural extension services, and co-funding productive assets.
CHALLENGE

Smallholder farmers account for over 80 percent of the country’s rural population. However, agriculture’s contribution to Bangladesh’s economy has declined overtime: the share of agriculture in total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has declined from 28 percent in 1990 to 13 percent in 2018. This, in turn, has contributed to a decline in employment growth. Further, frequent natural disasters severely affects the agriculture sector.

Besides inadequate research, recurrent natural disasters and deficiencies in technology hinder improvements in agricultural productivity. Weak integration and poor linkages with more profitable value chains stymie private investments. Small landholders, especially women, lack access to finance for basic investments required to integrate with more profitable value/supply chains and the modern retail sector. A large gap remains between the commodity value farmers get and ultimate retail value. Lengthy supply chains persist with poor linkages among chain participants, information asymmetry and post-harvest deterioration. There is a need to integrate climate smart agriculture (CSA) with agricultural sector development strategies for a coherent roadmap to deal with climate risk.

APPROACH

NATP II supports government’s strategic priorities in agriculture by helping improve productivity and food security, and adaptation to climate change. The project is implemented in 57 districts targeting small and marginal farmers, especially women.

NATP II seeks to strengthen the capacity of the National Agricultural Research System (NARS) and extension services to generate demand driven new and improved agricultural technologies. It contributes to increasing farm yields and diversifying agricultural production by improving agricultural research and extension. The project also supports modern farm practices to increase farm productivity and reduce post-harvest losses. The project targets to increase 14 to 100 percent average annual yields of select commodities.

The project is focused on market-oriented production, and on small and marginal farmers’ access to and participation in markets. This includes enhancing capacity of value chain actors, investing on value-adding activities, alliance building with private sector, etc. The project also introduced an Agriculture Innovation Fund for research and adoption of innovative technologies.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Over 1 million farmers (over 35% are female) mobilized into 40,523 Common Interest Groups

190 competitive research grants sub-projects have been implemented through which 64 possible technologies are in the process of being generated

30 commodity and marketing centers established with about 4,303 tons of product sold so far

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The project will demonstrate the opportunity for diversification of agricultural production and achieve target results in productivity growth, market access, jobs, nutrition and resilience.
OVERVIEW

Agriculture (crops, livestock, forestry and fisheries) is featured prominently in the Government of Bangladesh’s 7th Five-Year Plan and is expected to play an important role in reducing poverty and accelerating growth. This will require achieving productivity gains, diversification, value addition and agro-processing, along with climate change adaptation strategies. Livestock is an important socio-economic component of agriculture and accounts for 1.7 percent of the economy’s Gross Domestic Product. But, it employs only 14 percent of the total labor force. Over 70 percent of rural households are engaged in livestock production which contributes a large share of the smallholder and landless farmers’ livelihoods. Most poor rural households raise livestock which provide power for cropping, transport, threshing and oilseed crushing; manure, as source of fertilizer and fuel; a ready source of cash, as well as dairy and meat for consumption. Livestock provides business opportunities for smallholders.

The Livestock and Dairy Development Project aims to improve livestock and dairy production in Bangladesh so that the country can meet growing demand for egg, meat and milk and thereby improve the nutritional intake of its citizens.
CHALLENGE
By 2020, the government aims to triple the production of livestock related products in order to feed the growing population. In Bangladesh, livestock productivity is low due to poor animal husbandry practices; low penetration of high-yielding breeds; and shortage of feed and fodder. Mixed livestock production systems predominate, and animals are generally stall-fed or grazed around the homestead in small family-based production units. Livestock value-chains are largely informal. Livestock supply chains depend on smallholder producers, who practice subsistence farming and do not have the capacity to gain from the opportunities that a growing market demand for animal products presents.

APPROACH
The Livestock and Dairy Development Project supports government’s plan to scale-up climate smart investments in livestock. Growth in livestock productivity potentially leads to job creation for women, youth, and other vulnerable. The project aims to improve productivity, market access, and resilience of small-holder farmers and agro-entrepreneurs operating in selected livestock value chains in target areas. For this, the project will help: (i) upgrade livestock production systems and increase productivity and efficiency; (ii) support value chain development and integration in the markets with participation of private sector; and (iii) enhance resilience of farmers and entrepreneurs to risks and shocks. Resilience will address risks related to climate, financial shocks, animal health, food safety, and zoonotic diseases. Resilience will be strengthened by mainstreaming climate smart agriculture (CSA) practices, implementing measures that improve food/feed safety, and developing livestock insurance. The project will include the following species: cattle, buffalo, goats, sheep and chicken. They are strategic for both food security and nutritional supply as well as for their comparative advantage on the regional markets and income generation potential for the farmers.

TOWARDS THE FUTURE
The project will enhance the business environment and facilitate trade in meat and dairy products through value chain development and addressing key bottlenecks. The project will also increase the availability of clean energy in rural areas. It will also improve the overall ecosystem for value chain development by financing key infrastructures including markets, and providing access to markets, insurance and financial products and services, and capacity building for both smallholder organizations and public agencies, while supporting policy reforms and contributing to research and knowledge.

EXPECTED RESULTS

| 500,000 farmers to adopt improved agricultural technology | 35% increase in productivity of targeted species by direct beneficiaries | 50% increase in market access through increased sales in meat and dairy products and live animals | 150,000 farmers and value chain actors to adopt practices to improve resilience |
A NEW LIFE FOR THE RURAL POOR

OVERVIEW

While Bangladesh had successfully reduced extreme poverty in rural areas from 37.9 percent in 2000 to 21.1 percent in 2010, – still rural poverty is almost three times that of urban areas. Extreme poverty continues to be a rural phenomenon with majority of the poor residing in rural areas, where agriculture remains the primary source of livelihood for the rural economy. The Nuton Jibon Livelihood Improvement Project aims to improve the livelihoods of the poor and extreme poor in selected rural areas.

BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL DATE: February 25 2015
END DATE: June 30 2021
TOTAL COMMITMENT: $220 million
IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES: Social Development Foundation
CHALLENGE

Poverty rates in Bangladesh have declined at an impressive rate over the past decade with improved health outcomes, living conditions for the poor, lowered child mortality, and overall improved safety net coverage. In spite of these achievements, a number of challenges remain. Poverty assessment reveals, increases in the share of the working population and rising labor incomes mainly contributed to the decline in poverty over the past decade. Almost half of the poverty decline was due to growth in farm incomes. The assessment also found that poor households living in the poorest regions are less able to cope with shocks. Addressing rural poverty and food security issues thus remain as the critical policy priorities to ensure inclusive and pro-poor growth.

APPROACH

As a third phase of an ongoing program initiated over 10 years ago, the project continues to provide support to 3,200 villages supported under the Social Investment Program Project II through second generation institutions and producer group support. The Nuton Jibon Livelihood Improvement Project targets around 2,500 new villages covering 12 districts and is expected to benefit 500,000 poor and extreme poor households, comprising of about 2.25 million people.

The project provides livelihood support and enables access to market through business partnerships to empower the rural communities. It helps mobilize the poor and extreme poor people, who often remain left out from micro credit schemes, by building and strengthening community institutions including Nuton Jibon Community Societies. In addition, the project shares nutrition and agricultural knowledge and focuses on enhancing youth skills. The project also funds small scale rural infrastructure.

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The project substantiated that increased income leads to change in overall food consumption and dietary diversification as measured by increased diversity in diets. Average household consumption increased by 39 percent for milk and dairy products, and by 49 percent for meat and egg. This evidence was fully conceptualized in the next operation, “Nuton Jibon Livelihood Improvement Project 3” by linking livelihood angle with quality food consumption.

RESULTS

41,849 jobs were created

30% – 50% increase in income of 432,919 members who took loans from village revolving loan fund

90,527 producers mobilized into 5,561 producer groups accessing input and output markets

92% of village institutions met the criteria of transparency, inclusiveness, and accountability

Of the 3.4 million direct beneficiaries, 94% were women

99% of male and 98% of female unemployed youth were gainfully self-employed after receiving skills training

92% of targeted households benefitted from improved community infrastructure or social services sub-projects

89% of completed community infrastructure subprojects were operated and maintained by communities

10 major business partnerships were established through public/private partnerships with communities
EDUCATION
OVERVIEW

Bangladesh has achieved near universal access to primary education and gender equity at the primary and secondary school enrolments. Yet, many school-aged children, from the poorest families, either do not enrol in or discontinue school, due to poverty. Following the Government’s vision of ‘education for all’, the Reaching Out-of-School Children (ROSC) II project provides a second-chance education to out-of-school children in targeted rural upazilas (sub-districts) and urban slums. The project builds upon the experiences of both public schools and NGO education, blending formal education with non-formal means of delivery for young learners. It gives them an opportunity to complete grade five and transition to secondary school and provides pre-vocational skills training to youth who have dropped out.

VOICES

My daughter now goes to the Ananda School. I am happy, we the women, have a say in our children’s education.

Nazma
a proud mother
**CHALLENGE**

In 2010, nearly 5.6 million children aged 6 to 13 were out of school in Bangladesh. These children missed out schooling at the “right age” or were forced to drop out, mainly for poverty. Many of them could not afford uniforms, books, or transportation to go to school, or had to earn a living for the family. These children were deprived of education, which reduces their chances of finding higher-paid jobs that could lift them and their families out of poverty.

**APPROACH**

ROSC II allows the poorest children, who otherwise may miss education, to study in learning centres, called Ananda Schools (‘schools of joy’). These schools provide stipends to eligible children to ease the burden on their families, and provides free books, stationeries and uniforms. The Ananda schools are established in upazilas with high poverty and low enrolment and completion rates.

Ananda Schools are different from normal primary schools: here, the students are older (between 8- to 14-year olds); school timing is flexible; and a single class teacher teaches the students until they are ready for the Grade 5 examination, allowing the poor children to join the secondary schools. The local communities establish, own and manage Ananda Schools with support from the government and the local NGOs. The Centre Management Committees (CMC) are accountable to parents and students and the ROSC Unit (ROSCU), the Directorate of Primary Education. Since January 2017, ROSC-II has been expanded to cover the poorest children in slums in 11 City Corporations. It pilots a Pre-Vocational Skills Training program, for adolescents who have completed at least grade 3 but are aged 15 and above and not enrolled in regular schools. They receive allowance and tuition vouchers to participate in market-responsive skills training programs. With technical assistance from Save the Children, ROSC II deploys service providers (NGOs) to provide training—in selected trades and enterprise development—who establish industry linkage with potential employers.

**TOWARDS THE FUTURE**

Built on the predecessor project, ROSC II covers additional 100 more upazilas and aims to bring 720,000 out-of-school children to school in 148 most disadvantaged remote upazilas. The project has rolled out four pilot programs—scaling up of second chance education for children from urban slums and pre-vocational skills training for older students, while evaluating pilot interventions targeting child domestic workers, and developing early reading habits for ROSC students. ROSC II will strengthen the internal monitoring capacity of the ROSCU through a revised field level management structure. Through an additional financing grant, ROSC II aims to help Bangladesh provide learning opportunities to Rohingya children and provide pre-vocational training to affected youth and adolescents.

**RESULTS**

- **690,000** out-of-school children—half of them are girls—enrolled in 20,400 Ananda Schools in 148 most disadvantaged upazilas, covering about one-third of the country
- **48,000** children enrolled in 1,600 Learning Centres in urban slum areas
- **16,500** ROSC graduates received skills training for self-employment
- **86%** of the classes attended by students
- **80%** of all ROSC schoolteachers are women and nearly 90% of all school management committee heads are women
- **12,277** teachers received foundation training
- **4,000** CMC members trained for the operation and management of LCs
OVERVIEW
Improving skills and productivity are crucial to Bangladesh’s quest to accelerate economic growth and become an upper middle-income country. However, the current skill levels of the labor force are unlikely to support future market demands. While there is an abundance of low-skilled workers, there is a strong demand for graduates with higher cognitive and non-cognitive skills and job-specific technical skills. This requires improvements in the quality and relevance of tertiary education. For this, the education institutions must be equipped to produce competent graduates. In this backdrop, the College Education Development Project (CEDP) aims to improve the education and management in the National University-affiliated colleges in Bangladesh.
CHALLENGE
Around 1.6 million students or nearly two-thirds of all tertiary students are currently enrolled in graduate and masters level in the 1,731 government and non-government colleges affiliated with the National University (NU). Given their size and extensive network, it is critical to bring about the quantitative and qualitative improvements in these colleges to ensure better employability of the students. However, the college sub-sector suffers from a myriad of deeply rooted challenges, including (a) weak planning, governance, and management practices; (b) poor quality and relevance of teaching and learning; (c) inadequate resources and inefficient financial management; and (d) limited access. This limits the scope and quality of the learning environment in order to produce globally competitive college graduates.

APPROACH
As the first World Bank project in the subsector, CEDP focuses on building the NU college system’s capacity to plan, manage, implement, and monitor their institutional programs. It also aims to strengthen the strategic planning and management capacity of the colleges. CEDP also helps develop the first-ever Strategic Plan for the College subsector to provide guidance to policymakers, academia, and college administrators in achieving the country’s goals in higher education.

The project will also provide competitive Institutional Development Grants (IDGs) to participating colleges to improve the teaching and learning environment by improving internet connectivity; developing market-relevant soft skills of the students and linking them with employers; introducing quality assurance; and strengthening management capacity and upgrading the fiduciary systems in colleges.

CEDP will also facilitate teacher trainings through establishing a Training Consortium, which will comprise of national training agencies and the University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus as an international partner to ensure global best practices in teachers training. The project will also fill teacher vacancies in government colleges and improve recruitment process in non-government colleges.

EXPECTED RESULTS BY 2022
The first Strategic Plan for the College Subsector prepared
Over 100 competitive institutional development grants will be awarded to government and non-government colleges
Around 8,000 teachers and managers will receive professional development trainings
Around 2,700 vacant teacher posts will be filled in government colleges

TOWARDS THE FUTURE
The Project is expected to develop a pool of Master Trainers as a core driver of professional development programs for all college teachers in Bangladesh. Award of Institutional Development Grant is expected to start by July 2019.
OVERVIEW
Education develops children’s latent capabilities, contributes to a skilled workforce and acts as a powerful tool for reducing poverty, increasing shared prosperity and boosting economic growth. Accordingly, enhancing the coverage and quality of basic education is a high priority for the Government of Bangladesh. The Quality Learning for All Program (QLEAP) is supporting the government’s Fourth Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP4: 2018-23), which is a sector-wide program covering grades 1 through 5 and one year of pre-primary education. QLEAP aims to help improve the education quality and ensure equitable access to primary education.
CHALLENGE

Bangladesh has a net enrolment rate of around 98 percent and achieved gender parity in enrolment in primary education. It has also improved system efficiency. For example, the primary education cycle completion rate increased to 81.2 percent in 2017 from 60.2 percent in 2010. But, quality of education still remains an issue.

National student assessments show low learning outcomes in grades 3 and 5. School readiness of children at primary school entry remains a challenge. Many schools are overcrowded and operate double-shifts resulting in inadequate contact hours. Teacher qualifications and motivation remain low and classroom teaching have much room for improvement. Despite the progress bringing almost all children to primary schools, around 2.5 million children aged 6-14 years remain out-of-school. Apart from service delivery challenges at the school level, the sector also faces system issues such as inadequate financing, constraints to management decentralization and weak local capacity.

APPROACH

Building on the success of predecessor PEDP3 in using results-based financing within the investment project financing framework, QLEAP uses the Program for Results (PforR) financing instrument, which means 100 percent of World Bank financing under QLEAP is linked with results achieved on the ground and disbursed after program targets associated with a set of key indicators have been met. The indicators cover three broad results areas: quality; equitable access and participation; and management, governance and financing.

The Project will help improve learning by developing a stronger curriculum, improvements in textbooks and exam system, creating a well-trained teacher pool, using ICT in education and regular systematic assessment. In all government schools, the project will help improving recently introduced one-year pre-primary education to better prepare the young children. The project will bring out-of-school children in learning centers to ensure that disadvantaged children are not left out. It will also build quality school infrastructures. Other donor agencies involved in PEDP4 are: ADB, EU, JICA, UNICEF, Canada, DFID, UNESCO, and USAID.

EXPECTED RESULTS

74% and 45%, respectively students of grade 3 with grade-level competencies in Bangla and math

90% Primary cycle completion rate

1 million out-of-school children enrolled in learning centers

In 25% schools double shift schools converted to single shift

100% Primary education completion exam items are competency-based

55,000 Schools annually receive School Level Improvement Plan funds

80% Schools display key school data in public area

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

QLEAP will contribute to Bangladesh’s long-term objective of human capital development for poverty reduction and economic growth. The objectives of QLEAP align with the SDG goals of providing free, equitable and quality primary education for all and ensuring universal access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education.

The Bangladesh government has recently indicated that it will extend pre-primary education to 2 years—a reform that is likely to have a significant positive impact on the school readiness of young children.

The Bangladesh government has recently indicated that it will extend pre-primary education to 2 years—a reform that is likely to have a significant positive impact on the school readiness of young children.
OVERVIEW

Bangladesh has made remarkable gains in education over the past few decades. It is nearing universal access to primary education and socioeconomic disparities in enrolment rates are falling. Despite significant achievements, more needs to be done.

Every year, 2.1 million youth join the labour market. An overwhelming majority of this demographic is under-educated: less than 25 percent of the 57 million workers in the domestic labour market have only secondary education while 89 percent workers are employed in the informal market. Considering these challenges, the Government of Bangladesh is implementing a five-year Secondary Education Development Program (2018 – 2022) covering Grades 6-12 and a subset of this program will be supported by the Transforming Secondary Education for Results Operation (TSERO). Built on success of predecessor projects, TSERO aims to enhance the quality and effectiveness of secondary education system in the country.
CHALLENGE

Despite remarkable progress in completion and enrolment rates and achievement in gender parity in secondary education, quality education remains a critical gap. The sector faces low and unequal learning levels, with large gaps between socioeconomic groups. While 67 percent of grade 8 students from the richest decile have grade 8 level competency in Bangla, only 45.3 percent of students in the lowest decile achieved this competency standard (LASI 2013). The sector faces low transition rates from primary to secondary school (below 70 percent) and low retention at higher grades (grade 10 completion rates lie below 60 percent). The sector also faces systematic constraints: Secondary education is fragmented across programs/projects, Education Management Information System data and monitoring and evaluation systems needs modernized and Bangladesh’s investments in education are low compared to regional and international standards.

APPROACH

TSERO focus on improving education quality and access, and that students — especially girls and children from low-income households — complete secondary education by addressing existing challenges, including systems strengthening. The program uses a Program for Results (PforR) financing instrument to provide a strong focus on accountability for results. The program will improve education quality by supporting curriculum and assessment reform, improving teaching and learning in Bangla, English, Mathematics and Science and improving teacher/school management and accountability. The project will also address problems of grade retention and cycle completion for disadvantaged students and strengthen governance, fiduciary management and the capacity of the implementing agencies.

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The Government of Bangladesh plans to use the Secondary Education Development Program (SEDP) as the main platform to implement national development policies for secondary education. The long-term sustainability considerations are built in the SEDP design through (a) use of country systems for budgeting, accounting, reporting, and auditing; (b) strengthening institutions in secondary education which will sustain the sector improvements; (c) use of a results-based approach; and (d) strengthening governance and management.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- **5%** increase in students achieving competency in Grade 8 and 10 in Bangla, English and Math
- **60%** percent of schools have Time Spent on Teaching (TST) monitoring systems
- **30,000** teachers in disadvantaged areas benefit from the teacher incentive program
- **60%** of secondary students benefit from a harmonized poverty targeted stipend scheme
- **15,000** institutions benefit from an adolescent health program through which retention rates for all students are expected to improve from 69% to 75%
INCREASING POWER GENERATION  
IMPROVING EFFICIENCY

OVERVIEW

In the context of natural gas supply shortages, improving the efficiency of the existing gas-based power plants is a priority of the government. The **Ghorashal Unit 4 Repowering Project** aims to increase the efficiency of an existing power plant and add new generation capacity at Ghorashal Power Station. This will help alleviate the country’s power shortages and improve the effectiveness of gas utilization in the power sector.

**BASIC INFORMATION**

**APPROVAL DATE:** December 21, 2015  
**END DATE:** March 31, 2022  
**TOTAL COMMITMENT:** $217 million  
**IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:** Bangladesh Power Development Board
**CHALLENGE**

In the last few years, the power sector has grown rapidly with about 92 percent of the population having access to electricity. Current installed generation capacity is about 21,000 MW, while available capacity is about 12,000 MW. Considerable challenges, however, remain to ensure uninterrupted supply of electricity. Supply still lags peak demand resulting in demand curtailment particularly in rural areas. Bangladesh’s economy could grow faster, if energy infrastructure develops in line with economic demands.

The country’s reserves of natural gas are estimated to deplete from 2020 if no new gas reserves are discovered. Consequently, the share of coal-based generation is expected to grow. Shortage of gas and the growing electricity demand have also resulted in expensive, imported fuel oil-based generation. This has impacted the power sector’s financial position due to the huge subsidy for payments to these private generators.

**APPROACH**

With the shortages in natural gas production, improving the efficiency of gas-based power plants and prioritizing gas supply for higher efficient plants are critical to the power sector. The Ghorashal Unit 4 Repowering Project will improve the efficiency of the Unit 4, one of the four 210 MW gas-fired steam units at Ghorashal power station, by converting it into a combined cycle unit for an upgraded total capacity of 409 MW. A new gas turbine and generator and a new heat recovery steam generator will be added to the current steam turbine unit, dismantling the existing boiler.

The unit 4 was identified for repowering through a feasibility study. A residual Life Assessment was also carried out to understand the technical viability of the project. The results were positive both from the technical and economic return perspectives. The project will increase the generation output will be more than doubled with only 30 percent increase in gas requirement. Consequently, specific fuel consumption (per GWh) will be reduced by 44 Percent. This will reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The project will provide operational flexibility to the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) as the new gas turbine and existing steam plant will be designed to operate independently.

**EXPECTED RESULTS**

| 210 MW gas-fired steam unit converted into a 409 MW combined cycle unit |
| Overall efficiency increased to 54% from current efficiency level of 30% |
| 303 PJ fuel savings in projected lifetime |
| 311,936 tCO2e reduction in GHG emissions over project life |

**TOWARDS THE FUTURE**

This is the first repowering project in the country and the South Asia region. It is expected that the project will demonstrate the opportunity of repowering of more gas-based steam plants for the existing capacity of 1,600 MW in Bangladesh.
OVERVIEW

Bangladesh is among the leading country to expand solar home systems in countryside. But the country has significant potential to scale up renewable energy for electricity generation. The total installed renewable energy generation capacity is currently 461 Megawatt (MW) and the share in grid supply only 1.5 percent. Resource assessments indicate an additional 3,666 MW of renewable energy capacity. To exploit this potential, the government of Bangladesh has put in place several plans and targets for adding renewable energy capacities.

The World Bank is supporting the government of Bangladesh with the **Scaling Up Renewable Energy Project** to add up to 310 Megawatt (MW) in renewable energy generation capacity and mobilize private sector participation to meet the growing demand for electricity in the country. It will also help the country meet its climate change mitigation commitments.

Furthermore, the cost of electricity from utility-scale solar PV is expected to be considerably lower than the diesel and heavy fuel oil-based generation which represent as much as 25% of total electricity generation in Bangladesh. The project will help Bangladesh meet its growing demand for electricity in a sustainable and cost-effective manner.
CHALLENGE

Despite the government commitment, progress on increasing the share of renewable energy has been slow. There are number of reasons for this, including:

(i) Need for project implementation experience and strengthening institutional capacity: Till date, Bangladesh has only two small-to medium size solar projects and the rooftop PV market is nascent.
(ii) Financing Market Challenges: There is a lack of deep domestic financing market to provide long-term financing to projects, lack of due diligence capacity and lack of a functioning syndication market.
(iii) Land constraint: Utility scale solar or wind require large amount of land. Being a densely populated country, land is the major challenge for developing utility-scale RE.
(iv) Project Development Challenges: These barriers include insufficient data on resource availability, lack of technical studies, and inadequate preparation and due diligence of projects.

APPROACH

The project will build a 50 MW solar panel energy park in the Feni district, which will be the first large-scale grid-tied solar PV project in Bangladesh and implemented by the Electricity Generation Company of Bangladesh (EGCB). The project will support the Infrastructure Development Company Limited (IDCOL) to develop a Renewable Energy Financing Facility and provide resources to the Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority (SREDA) to support a pipeline of renewable energy projects.

The project engage both the public and private sectors and includes a combination of measures to address the barriers. The Project will increase installed capacity of renewables through piloting and gradually scaling up investments in key market segments. The project will also help mobilize up to $120 million from the private sector and commercial banks and another $92 million from other sources of financing. The Renewable Energy Financing Facility will provide credit to developers of both rooftop solar PV and large-scale, land mounted solar PV.

The design of the Project considers the government strategy to develop a pilot through a public power generation utility in parallel to development of competitive tenders on public land for private sector IPPs.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- **310 MW** generation capacity of renewable energy constructed
- **$120 million** private capital mobilized
- **377,000 tons** per annum of carbon dioxide emissions reduced

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The project is currently entering its implementation phase. The tender for the EGCB 50MW project is under preparation, IDCOL has identified a pipeline of rooftop PV sub-projects that could benefit from the project financing, and SREDA is preparing a number of capacity building activities to key stakeholders.
OVERVIEW
With 93 percent population having access to electricity, Bangladesh has significantly increased electricity generation capacity. Yet, its per-capita electricity consumption is one of the lowest in the world. Even those with access to grid electricity suffer from frequent supply disruptions due to network congestion and over-loading. The Rural Electricity Transmission and Distribution Project aims to reduce system losses and enhance capacity in the electricity network in rural Bangladesh.
**CHALLENGE**

While the number of electricity consumers has grown steadily in Bangladesh over the last decade, so has the availability of electricity, driven primarily by systems loss reductions and increase in generation capacity. With more than 300,000 new connections every month, the rural electricity network has been expanding rapidly. However, the rural electricity system has become overloaded and experiences frequent load-shedding, leading to high technical losses and frequent service interruptions. The distribution and transmission system is currently limiting further growth in rural electricity sales. For any additional electricity to reach consumers, the distribution and transmission system needs to be upgraded through replacement of small conductors and introduction of new lines and associated substations.

**APPROACH**

The project primarily focuses to reduce technical losses in the rural grid electricity system and helps to ensure that a greater percentage of electricity generated is reached to rural consumers. The investments envisaged will also increase the capacity of distribution and transmission system to supply and distribute additional power to consumers as additional generation becomes available. The project will strengthen the institutional capacity of the two implementing agencies - Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board (BREB) and the Power Grid Company of Bangladesh (PGCB). The project will support new lines and substations as well as upgrade existing lines in the rural areas. Implementation of the project started with 5,500 of line construction (completed) and systems loss reduction of 2 percent.

**RESULTS**

- 2.5 percent reduction in systems losses, serving 1 million people per year
- Improved reliability and quality of electricity supply to 25 million people in rural Bangladesh

**TOWARDS THE FUTURE**

The project will make an important contribution to the vision of universal access to electricity in Bangladesh by the year 2021 by strengthening the rural electrification network. By improving the efficiency of the system, the project will ensure more power is available to consumers. The project will improve the reliability and quality of electricity supply in rural Bangladesh which in turn will help fuel growth.
OVERVIEW

The lack of availability and reliability of power is a key constraint to job creation and poverty reduction, hampering the competitiveness of Bangladesh’s economy. The supply of power has not been able to keep pace with the rapid growth in demand. The consumers experience frequent power outages. In addition to shortfalls in power generation, Bangladesh’s aging and inadequate transmission and distribution systems impose severe constraints on power delivery to consumers.

The **Enhancement and Strengthening of Power Transmission Network in Eastern Region Project** will improve transmission capacity and ensure efficient evacuation of power for reliable electricity supply in the eastern region, which is an important economic and industrial hub. The project will help develop a strategy and roadmap for maintenance of the implementing agency and support them to access local and international financial markets. Furthermore, the technical designs will incorporate features to enhance climate resilience of the transmission lines. About 275,000 households and 16,000 agricultural consumers will get new electricity connection. Further, project would generate a total employment for about 121,500 persons.
**CHALLENGE**

In recent years, the government has significantly increased power generation. But, only investing in power generation is not sufficient, unless that is supported by improvement in transmission and distribution. To ensure reliable and quality electricity supply for increasing numbers of consumers connected to the grid, it is critical to address transmission system bottlenecks. The network is currently under pressure due to the rapid growth of demand for electricity. A considerable number of grid substations and transmission lines are overloaded leading to unreliable electricity supply in major load centers. The system also faces growing physical constraints to expand due to lack of Right of Way for the lines and land for substations in densely populated areas. Bangladesh’s growing power system will require wheeling of 50GW capacity through the transmission network by 2041. But, investments in power generation will not have the intended benefits to consumers without an adequate and timely upgrade of electricity transmission and distribution systems.

**APPROACH**

By using IDA scale-up facility, the project will expand the network in the eastern region, covering the Greater Comilla, Noakhali and partly the Greater Chittagong area. Grid networks in this region are aged and have low capacity. The Greater Comilla region has more than 1000 people per square km. Comilla and Noakhali together are the second largest load centers of Bangladesh after the capital city of Dhaka. The Greater Chittagong area is a major commercial and industrial hub with the Government, taking initiatives to set up multiple economic zones, upgrade port facility and transportation network. Due to lack of electricity supply capacity, economic growth of this area is stagnant. A network analysis by Power Grid Company of Bangladesh (PGCB) identified operational bottlenecks. The project will build substations and rehabilitate an existing one in the country’s eastern part. To improve transmission capacity the eastern region, the project will build 13 new substations and rehabilitate an existing one and build a 230 kV transmission line through greater Comilla and four short distance 132 kV lines in Comilla and Noakhali areas. These will help integrate renewable energy and new generations into the grid.

**EXPECTED RESULTS**

- **157 km** existing transmission lines rehabilitated
- **13 new substations** constructed and 1 rehabilitated
- Increase in transformation capacity by **9,040 MVA**
- Reduce average interruption frequency by **70 times per year**
- **290 km** new transmission lines constructed

**TOWARDS THE FUTURE**

Network investments under this project are expected to maximize leverage of public finance by unlocking private sector growth and bringing a transformational economic impact in the eastern region. The project is also expected to enable imported electricity after the establishment of an HVDC interconnection at Comilla with Tripura by importing 500MW of power.
OVERVIEW

Despite significant increase in power generation capacity and access to electricity in recent years, Bangladesh is struggling to ensure quality and reliability of power supply. Unreliable power supply leads to voltage drops and outages resulting in about 2 percent loss of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The power system requires upgradation and modernization to cope with the growing economy.

The Power System and Reliability and Efficiency Improvement (PSREI) Project aims to help Bangladesh meet the increasing demand for electricity by improving the reliability and efficiency of the entire power system, from electricity generation to transmission.
CHALLENGE
The rapid increase of the power system size amplifies the challenge to ensure quality and reliability of supply with present operational tools and rules. The power system operation needs to address the following three issues to operate and expand efficiently: i) ensure frequency control ii) reduce voltage fluctuations and iii) enable merit-order dispatch.

The system is still reliant on manual dispatch and controls that cannot ensure system economy and security. Demand-supply mismatch results in wide variation of system frequency and voltage fluctuations. Unstable frequency causes supply disruption; both unstable frequency and voltage drops damage household appliances. Unreliable power supply causes significant production loss in case of industrial users. Lack of system automation and integration implies considerable delays and uncertainty in balancing the demand and supply situation. An absence of spinning reserve leads the system to give dispatch to inefficient and expensive power plants. Absence of automated merit order dispatch results in uneconomic system operation and leads to high cost supply; it requires substantial annual subsidy. There is a need to modernise and upgrade the power system infrastructure and the related operating procedures.

APPROACH
To modernize and upgrade Bangladesh’s power system, the project will implement primary frequency control and install both software and hardware to integrate generators with National Load Dispatch Centre (NLDC). It will also modernize SCADA/EMS and dispatch protocol. The project will address critical transmission bottlenecks by reconductoring of 40 km line and installing dynamic line rating (DLR) to improve utilisation of transmission capacity. It will also support capacity development of utilities especially in operational procedures and enhance cooperation among the agencies to sustain the outcomes.

Merit order dispatch protocol maximizes power generation from more efficient and less expensive generators. The project will undertake an in-depth institutional and policy review to identify barriers that have led to non-merit-order dispatch and lack of cooperation of generators with NLDC. The review will recommend actions to address the constraints.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Reliability of power supply enhanced through frequency control, voltage management and outage reduction

Fiscal savings expected from reduction of fuel usage driven by merit order dispatch

TOWARDS THE FUTURE
The project will make important contributions towards the government’s vision of ensuring reliable and affordable power for all, through upgradation and modernization of the national power system. Reliable and low-cost power will benefit households and facilitate industrial and business growth. The project will reduce fiscal burden as the efficient and optimum power system will cut down fuel consumption. Reduced use of carbon intense fuel will lower greenhouse gas emission.
SECOND RURAL ELECTRIFICATION AND RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

OVERVIEW
Life used to come to a near standstill after sunset for the great majority of Bangladeshis living in the countryside. About two-thirds of rural households have access to grid electricity, and they often suffer from power cuts due to lack of supply and network congestions. The Second Rural Electrification and Renewable Energy Development Project (RERED II) helped increase access to clean and renewable energy in rural Bangladesh.
CHALLENGE
At present, against a peak summer demand of 15,527 (MW) in FY 2019 electricity, supply is lower than required. The urban areas with large industrial loads are prioritized for power supply, leaving rural areas with a disproportionate share of power cuts. The dispersed nature of rural settlements and the numerous rivers that crisscross the country make grid electrification in many areas of Bangladesh both difficult and expensive. Although the government is making progress to address the power generation shortage, but reliance on grid electricity alone will not allow the Bangladesh government to realize its vision of universal access to electricity by 2021.

APPROACH
The RERED II project supports renewable energy options, including solar home systems (SHS) in remote rural areas where grid electricity is not yet economically viable. With a SHS, a household can operate 3-4 lights and a television for at least four hours a day. Millions of rural people are benefiting from electricity from SHS who were otherwise dependent on expensive kerosene lamps which pollutes indoor air.

The project has helped more than 5.4 million rural households and shops access electricity through solar home systems. A total of 58 non-government organizations (NGOs) called partner organizations are installing the various renewable energy products through micro-credit schemes. The partner organizations procure and install the systems in rural households as per technical standards set by the implementing agency, IDCOL.

The project is piloting solar mini-grids in remote areas including chars and islands, solar irrigation pumps as well as improved cook stoves that uses half the amount of firewood needed by traditional stoves and biogas digesters.

TOWARDS THE FUTURE
Introduction of LED technologies in the SHS has enabled smaller-capacity and lower-cost systems to support the same energy needs that earlier required a larger capacity and higher cost systems. The smaller systems are now becoming affordable to the poorer rural population. Other interventions are replicating the SHS implementation model to increase access to electricity through renewable energy sources. The improved cookstove program has funding from the Green Climate Fund for its Phase 2, with a target of reaching 5 million end users.

RESULTS IN NUMBERS

6.84 million remote households and rural shops have access to renewable energy
Over 60 percent of the beneficiaries are women
Contributed to 14.4 percent increase in access to electricity in the country
20 solar mini-grids installed providing electricity to 3,000 shops, businesses, households
867 solar irrigation pumps installed, benefitting 300,000 farmers
1.65 million improved cookstoves sold across the country
ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES
**OVERVIEW**

The seafood sector is of strategic importance for the Bangladesh economy as well as for food security and the livelihoods of millions of fishermen and stakeholders along the production chain. To ensure sustainability of fisheries, while enabling responsible private-sector led growth, the Government has set an ambitious reform agenda, which the Sustainable Coastal and Marine Fisheries Project (SCMFP) supports. This is a first phase of a longer-term programmatic effort to increase coastal and marine fisheries’ contribution to the country’s Blue Economy, poverty reduction and environmental stability.

| BASIC INFORMATION | APPROVAL DATE: October 5 2018 | END DATE: December 31 2023 | TOTAL COMMITMENT: $240 million | IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES: Department of Fisheries (DoF) of Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock (MoFL) |
CHALLENGE

The seafood sector has emerged as a major growth driver, consistently contributing around 4 percent of GDP for the last decade but the proportion of the fishing community living in poverty and extreme poverty remains high, at 24 and 13 percent, respectively. Lack of effective marine fisheries governance, growing overfishing and resource degradation further threaten both fisheries and fisheries-dependent livelihoods. While the country has consistently ranked among the biggest aquaculture producers globally, the productivity levels for the majority of smallholder farmers remain among the lowest. Poor access to financing and markets are barriers in both the capture and the culture segments of the sector. In line with priorities outlined in the GoB’s Blue Economy Initiative, public sector interventions are needed to catalyze a sector-wide shift “from volume to value” by enabling responsible private-sector-led growth. The Sustainable Coastal and Marine Fisheries Project aims to improve management and production in marine and coastal fisheries and aquaculture.

APPROACH

The Bangladesh Sustainable Coastal and Marine Fisheries Project (BSCMFP) is the first operation in a two-phase program that aims to improve the management of coastal and marine fisheries and aquaculture. It will help improve fisheries management systems, infrastructure, value chain investments, and encourage private sector investment. The project will stimulate fisheries sector reform by strengthening institutional capacity and investing in wider community participation in fisheries co-management to enhance best practices to reduce fishing pressure. The project will (i) enable activities for sustainable fisheries sector investments and growth; (ii) improve infrastructure and production practices; (iii) and empower communities and enhance their livelihoods.

Marking the World Bank’s first reengagement in Bangladesh’s fisheries sector in nearly two decades, the project will help stimulate fisheries sector reforms.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Improved management of targeted coastal belt capture and culture fisheries, including the introduction of fisheries management plans and effective monitoring and surveillance for over 300 industrial and over 15,000 semi-industrial and artisanal fishing vessels

60,000 fisher households will receive support to improve access to finance and for livelihood activities outside the capture fisheries sector

Improved productivity, financing and market access for over 15,000 aquaculture smallholders

Over ten-fold increase in the availability of more productive and disease-resistant aquaculture inputs in the Bangladesh market

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

Building on the sector governance and management achievements pursued under the current project, the second phase of the program is expected to invest in consolidating the sector reforms, building on the fisheries management improvements; scaling up pilots to improve coastal communities’ and fishers’ livelihoods; and continue to close the infrastructure and technological gaps to enable sustainable private sector participation, with the objective of generating higher-value capture from domestic and export-oriented capture and culture fisheries.
OVERVIEW

Microenterprises diversify economic activity and contribute significantly to poverty alleviation. In Bangladesh, half of population depend for livelihoods on 7 million existing microenterprises. These microenterprises account for 90 percent of all economic enterprises in the country. However, there is little evidence that these microenterprises are growing sustainably. They often impact the environment negatively.

Bangladesh is also known for its success in pioneering approaches that support microenterprises. Organisations such as Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), an apex microcredit funding and capacity building organization established by the Government to reach out to the poor, started microenterprise loan programs in 2001, implemented through 178 Partner Organizations throughout the country. The Sustainable Enterprise Project is supporting this partnership with the government to help microenterprises adopt cleaner technologies.
CHALLENGE
Cumulatively, the impact of microenterprises on the environment are substantial. The contamination due to microenterprises are often unduly high because they lack investment in technology to reduce their footprint. Microenterprises are also highly exposed to risks induced by climate change. They typically operate within very narrow profit margins and are often forced to prioritize short-term profitability over environmental sustainability, occupational health risks and long-term financial sustainability. Poor access to market and access to finance are notable barriers.

Other challenges include a) pollution, contamination and climate resilience; b) information and knowledge gaps about the markets, technologies; c) capacity gaps of microenterprises, communities and microfinance institutions; d) poor regulatory environment, such as lack of certification and safety standards; high cost of regulating microenterprises through enforcement; and e) low access to finance.

APPROACH
The project will help about 20,000 microenterprises adopt environmentally friendly practices in the manufacturing and agribusiness sectors. It will provide loans to microenterprises for innovative, environmentally sustainable technologies and practices and for shared amenities to reduce pollution and reduce pollution environmental degradation. It will help promote basic safety standards, certify eco-labeled products, low-polluting, cleaner, greener technologies.

It will enhance access to finance for environmentally friendly microenterprises in targeted sectors through sub-loans. This will, in turn, lead to adoption of innovative and environmentally-friendly technologies and practices, reduce environmental impacts, and strengthen existing environmentally sustainable practices. The project will also provide access to long-term financing to microenterprises for clean and efficient technology. The Project will help Bangladesh create quality jobs, improve competitiveness, and boost growth while improving environmental sustainability and resilience to climate change.

EXPECTED RESULTS
In the first call for proposals, 11 partner organizations with sub-projects have been selected. 3,000 microenterprises will be supported in the first year. One-third of these are expected to be owned by women.

TOWARDS THE FUTURE
Although the project has only been under implementation phase for a year, it has made good progress. More sub-projects will be approved in the coming years. The design of the project is well recognized, and other development partners may add resources to this project.
OVERVIEW

Healthy forests are critical for reducing poverty. About 19 million Bangladeshis depend on forests for their livelihoods and almost 60 percent of domestic energy comes from fuelwood. Yet, the forest cover is decreasing: the proportion to land under forests is only 11 percent in Bangladesh which is significantly lower than the Asian average of 26 percent. Forest degradation is primarily caused by: clearing for agriculture and infrastructure development, unmanaged fuelwood and timber extraction and fires for shifting cultivation in hills.

The Sustainable Forest and Livelihood (SUFAL) project will help improve forest cover through a collaborative forest management approach involving local communities and sustainable management of forest resources. The project will also support forest dependent communities with alternative livelihood to reduce poverty vis-à-vis their dependency on forest resources.
CHALLENGE
In the last several decades, Bangladesh witnessed a steady decline in forest cover. Largely driven by unsustainable logging, conversion of forest areas into settlements, pastures, croplands, wastelands, or land used for recreational or industrial purposes. The forest cover has been declining by 2.1 percent annually in the last three decades alone. At present, only 13.20 percent of land in Bangladesh has tree cover with density of 30 percent and above. Further, the sudden influx of over 725,000 Rohingya to Cox’s Bazar caused the loss of nearly 13,000 hectares of forest.

The Bangladesh Forest Department (BFD) faces challenge to effectively manage the remaining natural forests and prevent degradation due to high population density and incidences of encroachment. BFD also faces institutional constraints of budget and short staff.

APPROACH
The project supports an important shift in BFD’s approach to managing forests: (i) from a purely law enforcement approach towards collaborative forest management; and, (ii) from a regulatory approach to service delivery to enhance private sector engagement. The project will support alternative income generating activities (AIGAs) for the forest-dependent communities in the coastal, hill and central districts, including Cox’s Bazar where displaced Rohingya population took shelter. The project will help the host communities by providing alternative income generation activities, improving the availability of wood for fuel in a sustainable way and reducing human-wild elephant conflict.

BFD, for the first time, will empower communities by transferring funds to their accounts to build trust and improve the partnership. The project will be implemented in selected sites in 147 Upazilas (sub-districts) of 27 districts. These areas include most natural forests and Protected Areas outside Sundarbans and Chittagong Hill Tracts.

EXPECTED RESULTS
The project will and establish collaborative forest management and plant trees in about 79,000 hectares of forest land

Increased access to Alternative Income Generating Activities for forest dependent communities in targeted sites

Increased incomes and resilience of the communities and reduce dependencies on the forest harvest

TOWARDS THE FUTURE
The project will generate significant economic returns. AIGAs will have a long-term impact as they will provide the communities an option of using them as revolving funds to re-finance income generating activities. The government is committed to scaling up forest sector investments. The recently closed World Bank projects- the Climate Resilient Participatory Afforestation and Reforestation Project and the Strengthening Regional Cooperation for Wildlife Protection in Asia demonstrated the MOEFCC and BFD’s implementation capacity.
FINANCE, COMPETITIVENESS AND INNOVATION
OVERVIEW

Despite the growth in insurance sector in the last five years in Bangladesh, still insurance penetration remains very low: less than 1 percent of the population has insurance coverage. A resistant and robust insurance sector helps people, especially the poor, and businesses to protect themselves from shocks and enables financial sector diversification as well as create long-term financing. It also helps individuals, families, and organizations for better managing and transferring risks and investments.

To strengthen the insurance regulatory structure and further develop the insurance sector of the country, the World Bank is providing support through the Bangladesh Insurance Sector Development Project (BISDP). The project aims to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Insurance Development and Regulatory Authority (IDRA), Bangladesh Insurance Academy (BIA), and the country’s two state-owned insurance corporations—Sadharan Bima Corporation (SBC) and Jiban Bima Corporation (JBC)—through modernizing their systems and business practices. It will also help increase the coverage of insurance to provide protection for people’s life and property.
CHALLENGE
The key challenges, include lack of institutional capacity of IDRA in addition to it becoming a first-time implementor of a Bank-financed project. Other challenges include underperforming of state-owned insurance companies and lack of tailored products to suit the people’s needs. The project focuses on building the necessary IT systems in IDRA, BIA, SBC and JBC in order to ensure a stable and secure ICT infrastructure. To do this, business processes will need to be improved and systems put in place to automate those processes. IDRA and state-owned insurance corporations have already started the modernization process that the project will be supporting. Strong coordination and consultation with beneficiaries is critical to ensure consistency in the implementation of project components.

APPROACH
The project takes a comprehensive and integrated approach to transform the insurance regulatory/supervisory structure in Bangladesh. It aims to improve governance and market practice in the insurance sector. The project also will provide support to IDRA to strengthen its capacity and modernize its operations through upgrading its information systems to adopt a risk-based supervision (RBS) regime that ensures transparency and improves policy holder’s protection and governance. BIA will be restructured and modernized to develop the professional skills and data needed for the insurance market. Public awareness and trust needs to be built in the sector. The functions and market practises of SBC and JBC will be enhanced to improve effectiveness and growth.

TOWARDS THE FUTURE
Through various training programs aiming to transform the implementing agencies, the project will provide support to the Financial Institutions Division (FID) which manages its ownership rights over state-owned insurance corporations. Successful strengthening of IDRA’s capacity will enable effective regulation/supervision and market practice within the insurance sector. Confidence and trust in insurance will be enhanced and insurance coverage will be increased as the project focuses on affordable premium, adequate coverage and improved policyholders’ consumer protection. As a result, the project will promote further development of capital markets in Bangladesh.

EXPECTED RESULTS

| 70% of the domestic insurance market would be supervised by smart Risk-based Supervision (RBS) of IDRA by 2022 |
| 20 million insurance policy holders (life and non-life) by 2022 |
**OVERVIEW**

Bangladesh needs faster and higher growth to attain its vision of becoming an upper middle-income country by 2031. Inadequate infrastructure is among the key binding constraints to higher growth. It is estimated that the overall investment rate needs to go up from 26 percent of GDP to 34 percent of GDP for an 8 percent plus growth. Out of the total investment need, around $3-5 billion is needed annually for investment in infrastructure.

The **Investment Promotion and Financing Facility II (IPFF II)** project helps Bangladesh to enhance the local financial institutions’ capacity to provide long-term financing for private sector led infrastructure projects diverse sectors, including energy and power, roads and bridges, industrial parks, waste management, health and education infrastructures and others. The project was undertaken following the success of the predecessor project, IPFF that facilitated financing of 21 sub-projects in the power, ICT, health, water treatment and port sector. In the first phase, $300 million IDA resources were put in and another US$ 300 million equivalent resources were crowded in from the market.

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<th>BASIC INFORMATION</th>
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<td>June 30 2022</td>
<td>$356.7 million</td>
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CHALLENGE
In Bangladesh, the required investment in infrastructure is constrained by the fiscal space and lack of adequate private participation in infrastructure sectors. The government is promoting private sector-led infrastructure projects. But, due to limited capacity and market constraints, the local financial institutions traditionally could not meet the longer term financing demand for building infrastructures. As investment activities are mostly dependent on short-term commercial bank loans, private entrepreneurs find it difficult to source long-term equity and debt for funding long-term infrastructure investments. Moreover, globally, such long-term financing for infrastructure project requires a vibrant bond market for both government and corporate debt instruments. In Bangladesh, the capital market is nascent and there are several regulatory and institutional issues that need to be addressed before long-term financing for infrastructure can take a robust form. The project will focus on banking and non-banking financial institutions’ term lending operations, but it will be constrained by their ability to issue and invest in capital markets instruments, as governed by the Banking Companies Act 1991.

APPROACH
Built on the success of IPFF I, IPFF II aims at piloting innovative instruments beyond simple lending for maximizing the crowding in effect. The project follows a financial intermediary lending model of financing whereby partial debt financing (up to 50 percent of the total project cost) is provided for 8 – 20 years through participating financial institutions, selected based on rigorous performance indicators. Bangladesh Bank has a 10-member team that acts as the Project Implementation Unit on behalf of the Ministry of Finance for on-lending the fund. Finally, the private investment sponsor that was contracted by the concerned government agency/ministry utilizes the fund for construction and implementation of the infrastructure sub-project.

EXPECTED RESULTS
Over $350 million to be crowded in from the market as private investment in infrastructure

At least 15 banks and non-bank financial institutions to adopt World Bank Performance Standards for management of environmental and social risk management (ESRM) in infrastructure projects

Improved capacity of local financial institutions to lend for longer term

TOWARDS THE FUTURE
The IPFF II pipeline includes sub-loan applications for port, industrial park, high-tech park, hospitals, and ICT sectors. In FY 2019, about $30 million is expected to be disbursed for a dry-dock and a high-tech park sub-project. In total, the project aims at stimulating the market for over $ 600 million infrastructure investment. It will collaborate with Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC), IFC, and World Bank Group’s capital markets development initiatives to foster an ecosystem where diverse financing instruments—like project bonds, guarantees, credit enhancements, mezzanine financing and securitizations—can be issued and invested by institutional investors like mutual funds, pension funds, life insurance funds along with banks.
OVERVIEW

Bangladesh’s government-owned export processing zones (EPZs) positively promoted trade and investment by addressing land scarcity and other policy constraints. The Private Sector Development Support Project (PSDSP) helps the Government of Bangladesh develop a new generation of privately owned and developed economic zones (EZs) and hi-tech parks (HTPs). The government envisions to move from eight EPZs developed over a 40-year period to more than 100 EZs and HTPs developed over the coming decade.
CHALLENGE

Lack of serviced land and quality infrastructure are binding constraints for greenfield investments in Bangladesh. The topography and population density have led to a scarcity and high cost of land with much of the land being waterlogged or occupied. Additionally, an inefficient land administration system and deficiencies in urban planning have led to an opaque land market. Access to reliable power is another binding constraint and firms in urban areas report that they lose on average 12 percent of their potential sales to electricity outages, which is more than any other country in the region.

APPROACH

The World Bank, together with UK’s Department for International Development (DFID) and IFC is supporting the Private Sector Development Support Project to scale up support for the recently licensed and new economic zones to attract foreign and domestic investment as well as to create more jobs in the manufacturing sector. The project crowds in private investment in EZ and HTP development through a public subsidy for last mile infrastructure and promotes compliance with international quality standards, building codes, and good social and environmental practices. The project supports the government’s goal of licensing 100 zones through private and public-private partnerships by 2025, which will ultimately employ several million workers. It helps develop new EZs through identifying, licensing, and negotiating Public-Private Partnership for economic zone development. It also supports civil works that connect new zones with major road, power and water arteries and provides firm level training and process development to effectively collaborate with zone-based enterprises and their suppliers. The new EZs and HTPs will provide streamlined administrative procedures to businesses in both the manufacturing and service sectors. It is piloting initiatives to strengthen social and environmental compliance in Bangladesh’s existing Export Processing Zones.

EXPECTED RESULTS

**Generated**

$3 billion in direct private investment

Created more than 23,000 jobs, of which 20% are female workers

Generated more than $200 million direct investment by zone tenant companies

**BEZA and BHTPA completed more than 50 site assessments, feasibility studies/master plans for new economic zones, with Mongla and Kaliakor awarded as the first zone/park under the public private partnership regime**

**18 licenses issued to establish private sector-led Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and High-Tech parks**

**20 companies certified with the ISO 14001 Environmental Management Standard, and more than 50 firms certified with quality standards such as ISO: 9001, ISO: 27001, CMMI-3, and CMMI-5**

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The additional finance will build on the gains realized by the original credit and contribute to enhancing the quality standards in the zones and in their governing institutions. It will strengthen capacity to identify, plan, license, and negotiate PPPs concessions to develop EZs as well as private EZs; construct last-mile offsite infrastructure and shared onsite facilities; and strengthen demand-driven skills formation and encourage good social and environmental practices. The move from a publicly driven to a privately driven zone development process will help rapidly expand the footprint of serviced land for productive investment and thereby accelerate economic growth.
OVERVIEW
The Bangladesh economy has undergone important structural shifts and the industrial sector has become a large contributor to growth and employment. The Export Competitiveness for Jobs Project contributes to the government’s policy of diversifying exports beyond ready-made garments (RMG), which currently make up 82 percent of exports. The project will help diversify exports in labor-intensive and globally competitive industries such as leather goods, footwear, plastics, and light engineering. It will also help Bangladesh create more and better jobs for its population.
CHALLENGE

Firms in the non-RMG manufacturing sector are seeking to integrate into global value chains but development is held back due to insufficient technology and skills adoption, and a general lack of compliance with international environmental, social and quality standards. Market failures such as information asymmetry between foreign buyers and Bangladeshi sellers regarding standards and accreditations in high-income markets and coordination failures where market participants are too disorganized to effectively address issues of mutual interest, such as policy advocacy, articulation of demand for skills, and agreement on common needs for technology adoption, act as impediments to growth.

APPROACH

The Export Competitiveness for Jobs Project helps growth and competitiveness of these manufacturing sectors by helping firms access international markets, overcome technology, infrastructure and skills shortfalls, and enable them to comply with international quality standards. It will also help private companies enhance productivity; improve environmental, social and quality standards; and access to shared infrastructural facilities. It will address critical constraints that prevent private sector companies from accessing international markets and integrating with global value chains - by enhancing knowledge, skills and capacity to improve compliance standards; address constraints related to quality and productivity improvements through skills and technology diffusion - by establishing technology centres; and address infrastructure constraints - by supporting development cluster infrastructure. The implementation engages multiple stakeholders, including private sector associations in the relevant sectors, and government agencies as required.

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The project activities are on a positive track and the implementation is expected to gain momentum in the coming months as turnkey technical assistance contractors mobilize and start delivery. This is one of the priority projects for the Government of Bangladesh to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) by diversifying exports and create quality jobs.

EXPECTED RESULTS

1 million people reached in awareness raising campaigns targeting compliance in the leather sector reached through print, television and social media

180 sector representatives (buyers and sellers) have been brought together in local trade fairs

Environmental and Social Compliance Guideline for leather goods and footwear sector has been launched by the Honourable Prime Minister

Feasibility studies completed for the leather sector design and technology center; and technical assistance firms selected
OVERVIEW

Bangladesh is on pace to fulfil its aspirations to become an upper-middle-income country by 2031. Strong macroeconomic fundamentals, economic liberalization, trade integration and large inflows of remittances have underpinned resilience and growth in Bangladesh. However, access to long-term finance continues to affect many enterprises. The **Financial Sector Support Project (FSSP)** will support developing long-term financing market in Bangladesh. The project will enable the participating financial institutions to provide long-term financing to private firms. It will also help strengthening the financial sector regulator and infrastructure.
**CHALLENGE**

To reach a higher growth trajectory, investment in Bangladesh – both public and private – will have to increase. Only one-quarter of investment is funded by banks and capital markets. Without long-term financing, private sector cannot invest in construction of plants, machinery and equipment. Long-term financing is also needed for infrastructure investments.

The ability of banks to provide long-term finance is constrained by several factors. The banking sector is dependent on short-term deposits, limiting its ability for maturity transformation. The sector faces challenges from financial sector infrastructure weaknesses, gaps in regulation and supervision, and overall underperformance. This impacts its ability to sustain high credit growth and subjects it to asset-liability maturity mismatches stemming from the inability to attract long-term funding.

At the same time, capital markets have a long way to go towards playing a significant role in the provision of long-term finance. Corporate bond issuances are few and, while the equity market has grown rapidly, market capitalization is below 20 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

**APPROACH**

The FSSP is supporting private firms through the provision of long-term finance, while other fundamental financial reforms are undertaken. The project works through participating financial institutions that will extend over $250 million in long-term sub-loans (with tenors of 3 to 10 years) to private firms throughout its lifetime.

The financing is available to exporters, new entrepreneurs, small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) and other private sector firms, mainly manufacturing units. Notably, the funds will be recycled and extended multiple times over to more private firms beyond the project’s life cycle. In addition, FSSP aims to utilize the remaining funds to address some of the fundamental constraints to financial infrastructure and the capacity of the banking regulator.

**EXPECTED RESULTS**

| 47 sub-loans totaling $242 million provided to private companies | Outstanding foreign exchange long-term loans of participating financial institutions reaching $550 million | 40% of government payments processed through electronic means | 45 financial institution officers received training on safeguards |

**TOWARDS THE FUTURE**

A recent survey collected stakeholders’ feedback on the funding facility and process, as well as the quality of services provided by the Bangladesh Bank (BB) and participating financial institutions (PFIs). All respondents agreed that their business benefitted from the long-term finance. 93 percent opined that the tenor of the sub-loans received was adequate while 98 percent agreed that the cooperation from BB and PFIs was satisfactory. All firms and participating financial institutions responded that they benefited from the environmental and social awareness and training. The project is currently undergoing a soft restructuring.
OVERVIEW

In recent years, the manufacturing—particularly the ready-made garments (RMG) sector—has been a major driver of the economic growth. It employs more than four million workers, most of whom are women, and accounts for 84 percent of the country’s total exports. However, the pace of job creation has almost stalled in the RMG sector.

In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, Bangladesh will need to increase private investment—especially foreign direct investment (FDI)—to raise productivity levels, diversify exports and accelerate economic transformation. Economic zones and hi-tech parks will be critical to attract private investment, diversify export and create more quality jobs.
CHALLENGE
To reach the next level of economic transformation, Bangladesh will need to attract more FDI. Bangladesh Export Zones Authority (BEZA) was established to lay the foundation for a market of serviced industrial land to attract private investment and create jobs in manufacturing and industry. It is critical that BEZA strengthen its core expertise and build capacity in areas important to its continuing success, including planning, asset and financial (pricing) management, safeguards management, monitoring and regulatory enforcement, and space for private participation.

APPROACH
The project will promote and attract direct private investments in selected public and private economic zones and software technology parks where it will help address binding supply-side constraints. It will help create an enabling environment for Bangladesh to maintain and attract domestic and foreign producers by significantly strengthening BEZA’s capacity to manage social and environmental safeguards and introduce a social and environmental counselor program for economic zones.

The project will develop the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Shilpa Nagar II (BSMSN-2) economic zone in Mirsarai-Feni, including road networks with stormwater drainage, solar-powered streetlights, climate-resilient water, sanitation, and power network. This will be a state-of-the-art green and resilient economic zone that will set an example for sustainable, resilient and environmentally sound industrial development in Bangladesh.

It will also establish Dhaka’s first digital entrepreneurship hub in the Janata Software Technology Park and turn it into a green building.

The project will encourage digital entrepreneurship through training and innovation support, with special emphasis on women digital entrepreneurs. This will include a program to mentor, advise and train digital entrepreneurs for start-up and scale-up facilities and University Innovation Hubs in technological universities and business schools.

By creating jobs and attracting private investment, the project will help economic recovery from the pandemic.

EXPECTED RESULTS

150,000 new jobs  $3.7 billion in direct private investment in economic zones  150 companies using green and resilient services and facilities  30,000 tones/ year of greenhouse gas emissions avoided
GOVERNANCE
OVERVIEW

A sound Public Financial Management (PFM) system is essential for sound macroeconomic management and good governance. Over the past two decades, the government has made efforts to improve the Public Financial Management (PFM) systems. These reforms improved the medium-term expenditure framework and financial management legislation; strengthened capacity for debt management; developed a fiscal programming framework; introduced a new budget and accounting classification system and (BACS); and improvements were made to the integrated budget and accounting system (iBAS++). Additionally, the Institute of Public Finance and the Financial Management Academy were developed to build capacity of government officials.

The Strengthening Public Financial Management Program to Enable Service Delivery (SPFMS) aims to build on past reforms and improve fiscal forecasting, and public budget preparation and execution. This will also help improve fiscal discipline, financial reporting, pension and debt management and greater transparency and SOE governance. PFM reforms will contribute toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and upper middle-income status by 2030.
CHALLENGE

Despite the important improvements in PFM garnered under pass reforms, there is significant room to improve several PFM areas, which are limiting effective delivery of services to citizens. Some limitations include: less than optimal budget absorption capacity, shortcomings in the revenue forecast and expenditure budgets, insufficient fiscal and performance monitoring of State-owned Enterprises (SOEs), and significant delays in the preparation of fiscal reports. These key PFM bottlenecks are affecting the timely availability of resources for service delivery.

APPROACH

The government is committed to address PFM bottlenecks by strengthening financial management institutions and systems. In 2018, the government approved a PFM Action Plan (2018-23), which lays out the PFM priorities. SPFMS will help the government implement eight of the 14 components in the Action Plan.

SPFMS uses the World Bank’s Program for Results financing instrument developed with ten disbursement linked indicators (DLIs). The government will use its own rules and procedures of the PFM process and systems throughout implementation. This ensures that work processes are suitable for Bangladesh’s context. Additionally, SPFMS allows the necessary flexibility for the government to course-correct as needed to achieve reform targets.

The PFM reform leadership, coordination and monitoring will provide the needed program management, reporting and behavioural change support.

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The program will create efficiency that frees up resources for service delivery to the citizens. Well-functioning audit committees will help to resolve issues leading to significant fund recoveries. Improved SOE performance monitoring and reduced financial support from government will contribute to additional fiscal resources. The learning hub at the Institute of Public Finance will build capacity of civil servants, enabling them to tackle PFM challenges using best practices.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Informed budget preparation and a medium-term debt strategy
- Improved capacity of Budget Management Committees
- Accelerated budget release to Disbursing Officers
- Reduced cash held outside of the Treasury Single Account
- Modernized payment processes: electronic funds transfer system
- Streamlined pension processing and payment systems
- Strengthened assessment, disclosure and monitoring of SOEs
- Implemented an effective change management approach and governance structure for PFM reform, including the functioning of a PFM Learning Hub
OVERVIEW

Public procurement is among the most significant issues affecting public sector performance. Appropriate and efficient use of public fund for procurement is important for Bangladesh, like any other country, to achieve its growth aspirations. Public procurement is not just a mechanism for executing transactions but an integral part of strategic development process. Although the landscape of procurement has been reshaped in the last several years, yet several challenges remain particularly in the areas of implementation delays, ineffective contract administration, and inadequate capacity for quality project implementation monitoring.

The World Bank is supporting the government of Bangladesh with the Digitizing Implementation Monitoring and Public Procurement Project (DIMAPPP) to improve public procurement performance and enhance capacity for implementation monitoring of development programs/projects. With this intervention, the entire public sector procurement, covering over 1300 agencies, will come under the electronic government procurement (e-GP) system and implementation of all development programs/projects will be monitored digitally.

DIGITIZING IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING AND PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PROJECT

TECHNOLOGY DRIVES PUBLIC PROCUREMENT REFORM

BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL DATE:    END DATE:    TOTAL COMMITMENT:    IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:
July 28 2017  June 30 2022  $55 million  Central Procurement Technical Unit, Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED)

OVERVIEW

Through e-tendering we can submit tenders from our own home. I have won over 40-crore taka work through this fair and transparent manner. The Kanashakula-Bhuttibhatshala road is my first work through e-tendering.

MD. ASHRAFUL ALAM
Contractor, Sherpur District
**CHALLENGE**

Procurement delays especially in large value contracts coupled with delayed project implementation affects the timely delivery of services with quality, thereby impacts the achievement of development goals of the government. The introduction of digital technology in procurement helped improve performance of a few key agencies who piloted electronic procurement (E-GP). But vast majority of the public agencies remained outside the scope. Key challenges include inconsistent use of IT-based solutions in procurement, poor contract management and administration, absence of systemic measurement of procurement performance by all agencies, inadequate capacity of procurement management and inadequate skill and know how in monitoring project implementation. With the proposed enhancement of e-GP system and digital monitoring, a transformational change is expected in the development programs when the entire public sector will have on-line uniform and consistent framework with built-in digital tracking mechanism from the start to end of the project.

**APPROACH**

The project aims to help Bangladesh expand e-GP to all public sector organizations and improve capacity to monitor implementation of development projects and programs using digital technology. For this, it provides support for restructuring of the existing procurement nodal agency, Central Procurement Technical Unit (CPTU), into an authority with more autonomy, enhancing the scope of e-GP covering all public sector organizations, professionalizing procurement management including the introduction of open contracting data standards (OCDS), citizen engagement in monitoring and citizen portal. It also also encompasses behavioural change communication and strengthening capacity of the Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED) to monitor implementation of all development programs/projects digitally.

Necessary law to establish the Authority, including amendments of the existing Public Procurement Act 2006 will be in place while a strategic approach to bring in all public sector organization under the uniform framework of e-GP and digital implementation monitoring (electronic Project Management Information System, e-PMIS) will be pursued. The project has an extensive program for professionalizing public procurement officials with each having a unique tracking number. The project has been also piloting citizen’s engagement for monitoring procurement contracts at rural areas, which will be complimented by a citizen portal containing disclosable information of development program contracts.

**EXPECTED RESULTS**

- Reducing procurement lead time to **70 days** from the existing 100 days
- Enhancing invitation of bids in e-GP to **75%** from **2%**
- Making citizen monitoring of procurement contracts effective in **45** sub-districts Monitoring at least 45% of development program implementation digitally

**TOWARDS THE FUTURE**

Through interface of the e-GP system with the Accountant General’s office for payment system and the smart NID card, the National Board of Revenue is expecting to bring about a transformational change in the procurement practice of the country. The project monitoring information system (e-PMIS) will be integrated with associated electronic platforms of the government to provide a uniform structure across the country for programs implementation monitoring.
OVERVIEW

Low revenue mobilization capacity stands out as one of the main development challenges in Bangladesh. Improving Bangladesh’s ability to raise tax revenue, and in particular, strengthening the Value Added Tax (VAT) administration is critical for faster economic growth. At its current level, tax revenue collection provides an insufficient base of domestic revenue for Bangladesh to finance investment in human capital and infrastructure required to reach middle-income country status by 2021. Over the medium term, this places the country at a distinct disadvantage in terms of managing fiscal policy and having sufficient resources for infrastructure investments and improved service delivery.

The VAT Improvement Program (VIP) aims to modernize Bangladesh’s value added tax (VAT) administration and to increase tax revenue by introducing automation, including online VAT taxpayer services, and improving transparency in the VAT administration system. Such services help encourage better compliance.
**CHALLENGE**

Compared to other countries in South Asia, the ratio of tax collection in Bangladesh remains low at 9 percent of GDP in FY 2017. Bangladesh has not been able to sustain improvements in tax collection, particularly in VAT to raise tax revenue – a key resource to mobilize investments in economic growth and development. In FY 2017, the VAT and supplementary duties collection stood at 4.8 percent of GDP compared to 4.7 percent and 4.4 percent of GDP in FY 2016 and FY 2015 respectively.

**APPROACH**

The VAT Improvement Program Project aims to introduce automation, including online VAT taxpayer services, and improve transparency in the VAT administration system. The project aims for the ratio of VAT to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to increase by at least one percentage point of GDP by 2019.

A new VAT and Supplementary Duty Act is expected to come into effect in July 2019. This will provide better services and reduced administrative costs for taxpayers. The VIP provides the impetus for a shift from manual to automated and modernized core tax business processing in a transparent manner. The program is part of the government’s broader tax reform agenda as articulated in the Tax Modernization Plan 2011-16, which envisaged policy and institutional reform alongside automation of NBR operations to improve services to taxpayers, reduce administrative costs and improve compliance.

The project includes a campaign to raise awareness of the need to register and file for VAT. It will also support the VAT administration system in becoming fully compliant with the Right to Information (RTI) Act.

The VAT Improvement Program follows a Program for Results financing instrument, which disburses entirely against results – rather than procurements. There are six disbursement linked indicators, includes process milestones, to keep the VAT implementation plan on track and increase in the number of VAT payers. It aims to increase online filing and payment, proactive disclosure and improve fiduciary environment.

**EXPECTED RESULTS**

Active registered taxpayers increased by **30,000**

At least **1 percentage point increase** for the ratio of VAT to GDP by 2019

**TOWARDS THE FUTURE**

Despite significant implementation challenges, the National Board of Revenue (NBR) is committed to the implement the VAT and Supplementary Duty Act.

To do so, NBR has initiated a Medium-Term Revenue Strategy which will help in achieving the goals of domestic resource mobilization (DRM) reforms. Developing a multi-year and holistic strategy and an action plan is important for revenue policy, legal and administrative reform consistent with the countries’ development goals, and enhancing the ability of tax systems to achieve strong, robust growth and wider social objectives.
OVERVIEW

The Government of Bangladesh’s ‘Digital Bangladesh Vision’ views digital development as core to its overall economic development strategy. The Vision aims to digitalize the government, public service delivery to citizens as well as businesses. Further, it envisions improving digital capabilities of the workforce and IT industry to prepare for the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Technology is shifting production patterns and employment skills-in-demand globally. Individuals need relevant skills to find opportunities to work in rapidly digitizing sectors and occupations, both in Bangladesh and globally. Firms must digitize to access new markets and modes of production. The COVID-19 pandemic has heightened the value of digital connectivity and services. Transitioning to new digital business models can help mitigate the impact of the pandemic and any future crisis by keeping business operations running smoothly in the short term and improving productivity in the long term.
**CHALLENGE**

Bangladesh’s reliance on labor intensive manufacturing for exports and on remittances from low-skilled workers makes it vulnerable to the disruptive impact of emerging technologies and the Fourth Industrial Revolution unless it gears up for digital transformation.

COVID-19 has impacted economic activities across all sectors. Private consumption, the main engine of growth, is expected to slow and declining remittance inflows will likely reduce household income. The decline in exports, and fall in industrial production, are expected to dampen growth.

Further, Bangladesh remains to be one of most vulnerable countries to climate change. Therefore, it is critical have proper digital infrastructure in place to continue operating and delivering services in the face of natural disasters.

**APPROACH**

The project will establish an integrated, cloud-computing digital platform for all government agencies and improve cyber-security of ICT systems across the public sector. This will build resiliency for future crises as the platform will enable the government to operate virtually and deliver critical public services to citizens and businesses.

It will help the government develop legal frameworks, policies, rules, and implementation capacity to establish an enabling environment that is consistent with a digital government and digital economy. A Digital Leadership Academy will be established under the Bangladesh Computer Council (BCC) to serve as the government’s digital innovation hub and training for its civil service.

The project will train more than 100,000 youth in digital and disruptive technologies and establish Centres of Excellence with academia and the ICT industry. It will create 100,000 jobs, with a special focus on women. It will raise the revenues of IT firms by $300 million and promote local IT firms in international markets. The project will help digitalize small and medium enterprises and strategic industries to reduce vulnerabilities from the pandemic and prepare for the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

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**EXPECTED RESULTS**

- **$200 million** in cost-efficiency savings through use of Integrated Digital Platform by GoB agencies
- **61 GoB Ministries and Divisions** with improved end-point cybersecurity
- **100,000 jobs**, 30 percent of which are for women
- **$300 million** increase in revenue of IT industry firms supported by the project activities
- Establish a shared, cloud-computing platform for use by any GoB agency to build, operate and maintain its sector-specific systems, applications and services
HEALTH, NUTRITION & POPULATION
### Basic Information

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<th>Approval Date:</th>
<th>End Date:</th>
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<td>April 3 2020</td>
<td>December 31 2023</td>
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### Implementing Agencies:
Directorate General of Health Services of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

### Overview

Bangladesh has made significant progress across a range of health, nutrition and population (HNP) indicators, achieving wide coverage of high-impact interventions (such as immunization, oral rehydration therapy and family planning). The Bangladesh government is committed to attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, including SDG 3, which focuses on ensuring health and promoting well-being for all. The country’s high population density and rapid urbanization, however, makes it prone to high rates of morbidity from outbreaks of infectious diseases, including those outbreaks that typically follow the occurrence of natural disasters. Like the rest of the world, Bangladesh has been affected by the outbreak of novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19).
CHALLENGE

While the government’s health service delivery network is substantial, government health spending is inadequate and as a proportion of gross domestic product is among the lowest in the world. As a direct consequence, individuals have to bear a large share of health care related expenditure with 67% of health expenditures borne by households through out-of-pocket expenditures. In addition, there is limited capacity to prevent, detect and respond to public health emergencies, based on an assessment of the country’s International Health Regulations (IHR) core capacities to respond to public health threats, carried out by a Joint External Evaluation in 2016. The health systems are stretched in responding to the COVID-19 crisis and additional resources are needed to strengthen it.

APPROACH

Within three weeks of detection of the first COVID-19 case in Bangladesh, the World Bank approved $100 million for immediate support to the Government of Bangladesh to prevent, detect and respond to the threat posed by COVID-19 and strengthen national systems for public health preparedness.

In doing so, the project will support implementation of the relevant parts of the national plan to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Suspected cases of COVID-19 reported and investigated based on national guidelines
- Designated hospitals with isolation capacity
- Designated laboratories with COVID-19 diagnostic equipment, test kits, reagents, and trained staff per national guidelines
- Districts in which COVID-19 risk communication materials have been rolled out
- Doctors and nurses trained in COVID-19 infection prevention and control
OVERVIEW

Bangladesh has made remarkable progress in the health, nutrition and population (HNP) outcomes and has surpassed many neighbouring countries in South Asia in terms of achieving the health-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Over the last few decades, key health indicators such as child and maternal mortality, as well as fertility rates, have dropped significantly while slow progress has been made on child undernutrition. Despite the progress, Bangladesh continues to face challenges with health system governance and equitable access to HNP services, including across regions and socio-economic groups.

The World Bank is supporting the government’s Fourth Health, Population and Nutrition Sector Program (Fourth HNP Sector Program) covering the period 2017-2022. The HSSP’s objective is to strengthen HNP sector’s core management systems and delivery of essential HNP services with a focus on Chittagong and Sylhet divisions. The HSSP supports the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare’s (MOHFW) program through three main components: (a) governance and stewardship; (b) HNP systems strengthening; and (c) provision of quality HNP services.
CHALLENGE
The HNP sector faces three major challenges:

i) Foundational financing and system development priorities: Health care expenditure as a percentage of gross domestic product in Bangladesh is under one percent, far below the required level of the World Health Organization. While there are high levels of coverage of basic high-impact interventions, such as immunization, utilization of government services is low for some key services, such as delivery care.

(ii) Unfinished MDG agenda: It is important to maintain the gains achieved in many areas—such as immunization coverage—and further improve quality and coverage and reduce socio-economic and regional disparities. In some regions, including Sylhet and Chittagong division, key health indicators are below national average. Improvement in child undernutrition has been slow. More needs to be done to control of communicable diseases, particularly tuberculosis.

(iii) Emerging challenges: As the country experiences demographic changes, emerging health challenges include non-communicable diseases (NCDs), adolescence health care and low HNP outcome among urban poor and high dependence on private sector services requiring high out-of-pocket health spending.

APPROACH
The government of Bangladesh has pursued a sector-wide approach (SWAp) since 1998, adopting a series of multi-year strategies, programs and budgets for management and development of the sector, with support from both domestic and international financing. The current Fourth HNP Sector Program covers 5.5 years (2017-22) with a planned cost of US$14.7 billion. The HSSP provides a platform for co-financing of the government’s sector program with a credit of US$500 million from IDA, a grant of US$15 million from the Global Financing Facility (GFF), and a multi-donor trust fund of US$40 million by Development Partners (Netherlands, Sweden, United Kingdom and Canada).

RESULTS
50 million people benefitted in Sylhet and Chittagong divisions

Improved capacity of MOHFW to deliver HNP services

TOWARDS THE FUTURE
The HSSP is mobilizing additional resources to support the government for providing HNP services in Cox’s Bazar district to about one million displaced Rohingya population.
POVERTY AND EQUITY
OVERVIEW

Quality statistics are necessary for development and poverty reduction efforts. They provide evidence for policy decisions. Recognizing the importance of timely and quality statistics in policy decisions, the Government of Bangladesh approved the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) in 2013, together with the Statistics Act 2013, that envisages an “integrated, professional, efficient, and effective National Statistics System, under the guidance and leadership of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) and to produce official statistics that meet the current and evolving needs of national and international users in a transparent and timely fashion using international standards.”

The NSDS Implementation Support Project will support the implementation of key elements of the NSDS strategy. It will help improve the capacity of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) to produce and disseminate quality statistics in a timely manner.
CHALLENGE
Bangladesh needs to strengthen the National Statistical System to produce quality core statistics and make them accessible in a timely manner by building the capacity of BBS. This requires acting on three levels: first, there is a need for an enabling environment where the statistical system has the necessary legal and institutional support to conduct its business. This entails updating statistical legislation, policies and institutional arrangements. Second, it is key to improve BBS's organization and the production of statistics by strengthening management systems, improving human and ICT resources, and the statistical infrastructure. Finally, it is important to focus on strengthening user-producer dialogue so that statistics are used, and users’ feedback is incorporated in the production cycle or make statistical production more user-centric.

APPROACH
The project acts on the three levels of interventions mentioned above and are closely related and should be implemented in a synchronized and well-sequenced way. The project aims to overcome key bottlenecks and build the foundation for future investments contemplated under the NSDS strategy. It will enhance coverage and improve collection and quality of data for core statistics, including, national accounts and statistics on price, labor, industry, social sectors, and agriculture. Where applicable, it will also produce gender-disaggregated data. The project will build on the progress made in some reform areas of the NSDS.

EXPECTED RESULTS
Core statistics produced by BBS are improved in line with international standards
Core statistics released on schedule
Core surveys’ microdata is anonymized and made accessible
Increased user satisfaction with BBS

TOWARDS THE FUTURE
The project has started implementation.
SOCIAL PROTECTION
OVERVIEW
Despite Bangladesh’s robust economic growth, the pace of job creation has slowed sharply in recent years. The creation of quality, inclusive jobs is a critical priority to speed up the journey toward upper middle-income status and attain the Sustainable Development Goals. The Bangladesh government’s agenda targets faster job creation, improved job quality, and access to jobs for vulnerable groups through reforms in several critical areas including trade and investment, environmental standards and climate change, pensions, strengthened worker protection, expanded women’s labor market participation, enhanced support for overseas migrants, and improved coordination of skills development programs.
CHALLENGE

Despite Bangladesh’s remarkable development progress, availability of quality jobs remains a persistent challenge. Jobs are often of poor quality with high levels of vulnerability; these include unpaid agricultural workers, day laborers and overseas migrants. Moreover, workers are at risk from lack of basic occupational health, safety, and environmental standards. With 36 percent females participating in the labor force versus more than 80 percent males, gender disparities remain acute.

Due to the country’s high vulnerability to climate change, the need to create alternative livelihoods for current and future migrants is critical. At present, many government and development partners’ programs aim to support these target groups, but fragmented programs require better coordination and robust institutional support.

The COVID-19 pandemic has put livelihoods of several million in both formal and informal sectors at risk. As of early April 2020, more than $3 billion in existing RMG export orders had been cancelled and most large global buyers have suspended future orders. This has forced the closure of many factories, putting a million or more jobs at risk in the RMG sector.

APPROACH

The Second Programmatic Jobs Development Policy Credit—the second in a series of three operations—will support the government program of reforms to address the country’s jobs challenges by: (i) modernizing the trade and investment environment; (ii) strengthening systems that protect workers and build resilience; and (iii) improving policies and programs that enhance access to jobs for vulnerable populations, especially during the pandemic.

The program of reform actions is built around three pillars:

• To unlock short-to-medium term job creation and accelerate recovery from COVID-19 by improving the overall environment for private investment and exports.
• To increase protection of workers and includes new actions to strengthen and expand of safety nets in response to the COVID-19 crisis. This pillar builds on the Bank’s broad engagement with the GoB in strengthening social protection and labor market systems.
• To strengthen programs and institutions that support youth, women, and overseas migrants to access current and emerging job opportunities.

EXPECTED RESULTS*

Improved and more sustainable trade and investment environment:

• 25% reduced time and cost to set up a new business
• 5% annual growth in new business registration (10% for women-owned businesses)
• 70% reduced rate of physical inspection of imports and 3-6 days reduced time to clear imports
• 891 bond license holders outside of RMG sector to increased access to the bonded warehouses
• Full compliance to environmental standards under the National Environment Policy 2018 of key export-oriented industries.
• 10% per annum increase in total ministry budget allocations to ‘climate change capacity building and institutional strengthening’
• 500 firms reached through trainings/assessments of ESQ and OSH guidelines

Strengthened worker protections and build resilience:

• 5 million individuals supported by new cash transfer programs
• 1000 labor and safety complaints addressed by DIFE (quarterly average), of which 50 relate to sexual harassment or Gender-based Violence (GBV)

Enhanced access to jobs:

• Reduced average cost of migration through formal channels
• 30% real increase in budget allocation for supporting the protection of migrants
• 50,000 workers trained in partnership with private industries (of whom 20,500 are women)
• 500 competency standards (by occupation and level) developed and introduced in at least one training center
• Licensing and regulatory framework for child daycare centers adopted for use

*under all three operations
OVERVIEW

Despite Bangladesh’s success in reducing poverty, still a large number of people live below and around the poverty line. The Government of Bangladesh currently implements a number of cash transfer programs to benefit the poorest and most vulnerable populations. To cover the most socially excluded populations—the poor elderly, widowed, and persons-with-disabilities—four major cash transfer programs are in place: the Old Age Allowance, Allowances for the Widow, Deserted and Destitute Women, Allowances for the Financially Insolvent Disabled, and Stipend for Disabled Students, which collectively reach six million poorest people with a total budget of BDT 40.80 billion in FY 2019.

The World Bank’s Cash Transfer Modernization Project aims to improve the transparency and efficiency of these four cash transfer programs by modernizing service delivery. The project provides technical assistance to the Department of Social Services (DSS), under the Ministry of Social Welfare (MoSW), which implements these programs, as well as financial support for the Old Age Allowance. Modernization of service delivery would directly benefit vulnerable populations, which would include current beneficiaries of cash transfer programs, as well as non-beneficiaries who may qualify for these programs.
CHALLENGE

The cash transfer programs face four major challenges:

- Lack of harmonized business process: When multiple programs operate without a harmonized business process or coordination, they may duplicate efforts or fail to achieve potential synergies. Further streamlining can allow more optimal utilization of their respective resources.
- Lack of Pro-Poor Targeting: Beneficiary identification currently relies solely on local governments, which risks exclusion of the poor and inclusion of the non-poor. A uniform targeting system across programs combined with local screening process can better help identify the poor and improve the accuracy of and transparency of the process.
- Outdated Administrative Systems: The digitization of program information and processes such as payment delivery can significantly improve the responsiveness to citizen and beneficiary needs.
- Limited Social Accountability: Rudimentary payment systems could significantly undermine social accountability. This has a negative impact on the elderly, persons-with-disabilities, those living in remote areas, and the socially excluded, who face multiple barriers to access points of service and thus rely on intermediaries often at a cost.

APPROACH

As outlined in the National Social Security Strategy, major social assistance programs are expected to be administered by Ministry of Social Welfare (MoSW), from 2026 onwards, for more harmonized service delivery. To position itself for this upcoming mandate, MoSW has commenced setting up a service delivery system for major cash transfer programs, while institutionalizing a model to integrate other programs in the future. Building upon the MoSW platform, other line ministries are expected to implement various special programs covering disaster response, food security, social empowerment, etc.

Meeting this objective requires significant changes to program administration to overhaul business processes – outreach, intake and registration, needs assessment, decisions on enrollment, recertification, case management and benefit payment as well as grievance redress mechanism, among others. The planned modernization of such processes would entail the extensive use of information and communications technology tools and interoperability mechanisms. This would enable the establishment of a results-based monitoring and evaluation system to rigorously assess the poverty impacts of these programs and better support policymaking endeavors.

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The project envisages an improved selection process so that those who are most in need of social protection can benefit from it; improved efficiency and transparency in program administration so that the scope of leakage or poor management of scarce public resources can be minimized; and facilitate convenient payment collection for vulnerable people so that they can have access to their entitlements, close to home, as and when required without being exploited by intermediaries.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- **80%** of beneficiaries belonging to lowest two expenditure quintiles
- **60%** of the poorest population covered by cash transfers
- **BDT 20 billion** of benefits delivered via digital payment
- **1/3** reduction in time taken for cash withdrawal by beneficiaries
OVERVIEW

Bangladesh has made remarkable progress in reducing poverty over the past two decades. Yet, the country is among the 10 countries with the highest prevalence of malnutrition. About 31 percent of children under five are stunted. The children from poor households bear a disproportionate burden of stunted growth. Ensuring nutrition prenatally and in the early years helps to maximize a child’s brain development and growth and is critical to boost the earnings capacity in the later years of life and to prevent the transmission of poverty across generations.

The Income Support Program for the Poorest (ISPP) Project—also known as the Jawtno Program—initiated a cash benefits program for the poorest mothers and pregnant women in exchange for their participation in activities to improve their children’s nutrition and cognitive development. ISPP is built upon the success of the pilot Shombhob, which found that beneficiary households experienced an increase in consumption of nutritious foods and children’s health outcomes when cash transfers were linked to the use of growth monitoring and nutritional counseling services.

The project will benefit 10 percent of the poorest households across 43 of poor Upazilas with high child malnutrition rates.

VOICES

I have my own post office cash card and am very happy to receive payment with which I can act on the knowledge I learn at my community clinic sessions to improve health and nutrition of my children..

SHEFALI BEGUM
Project beneficiary, Bhurungamari
CHALLENGE
Well-designed safety net programs can improve child health and nutrition outcomes, while contributing to poverty reduction goals. The Government of Bangladesh currently spends over 14 percent of its budget on over 100 safety net programs. But only a small portion of this budget supports programs that aim to improve maternal and child nutrition and cognitive development. Most safety net programs are implemented by Union Parishads, which face administrative capacity issues and operate with limited budgets. At the same time, the numerous line ministries responsible for the various safety nets do not systematically coordinate implementation efforts at the local level. Given this situation, setting up common administrative platforms at the local level for safety net beneficiary identification, enrolment, and payment can enhance implementation capacity in safety net delivery.

APPROACH
The ISPP Project provides income support to the poorest mothers based on their uptake of services aimed at improving their children’s nutrition and cognitive development. Pregnant women and mothers of children below five years from poor households will be eligible for social assistance under the project. The beneficiary mothers and pregnant women will receive quarterly electronic cash transfers for utilizing services related to their children’s health and development, including antenatal care visits, child growth monitoring and early learning activities for children under the age of five at the community clinics. The project also helps improve the coordination among safety net programs at the local level by building common administrative and service delivery platforms, in partnership with the Directorate General of Health Services, the Postal Directorate, and the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

EXPECTED RESULTS
- **600,000 poorest mothers** to receive cash transfers
- **2.7 million poor people** across **43** upazilas in northern Bangladesh to benefit
- **Improved capacity** of local level government to deliver safety net programs

TOWARDS THE FUTURE
As part of building and protecting human capital from the early years, the Government is designing the nationwide Child Benefit Scheme: the ISPP Project provides demonstrative value on the design, implementation and impact of this critical investment.
OVERVIEW

The Government of Bangladesh currently implements several public workfare and humanitarian assistance programs to support the poorest populations during periods of seasonal unemployment and to provide protection against disaster-induced shocks. These programs are the (i) Employment Generation Program for the Poorest, (ii) Food for Work / Work for Money, (iii) Test Relief, (iv) Vulnerable Group Feeding, and (v) Gratuitous Relief, which cover around twelve million beneficiaries with a total budget of BDT 70.19 billion in FY 2019.

The World Bank is supporting Bangladesh with the Safety Net Systems for the Poorest Project which aims to improve the equity, efficiency and transparency of these major safety net programs to benefit the poorest households. The Project provides the majority of its resources towards performance-based co-financing for the Employment Generation Program for the Poorest implemented by the Department of Disaster Management (DDM) under the Ministry of Disaster Management & Relief (MoDMR). The remainder of the financing is provided as technical assistance to DDM, as well as to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) under the Statistics & Informatics Division (SID) to support the establishment of the country’s first universal social registry.
CHALLENGE

While Bangladesh has halved the number of poor people living in the country since 2000, nearly a quarter still live below the poverty line while more than one in ten live in extreme poverty. Safety net programs play a significant role in the country’s poverty reduction efforts, and public expenditure on such programs is approximately 1.4% of GDP per fiscal year. Despite the range of interventions, only one-third of the poor are covered by safety nets primarily due to challenges in identifying households who may qualify for social assistance based on their vulnerability and poverty status, as well as in identifying inclusion errors in safety net programs. The programs implemented by DDM represent a significant share of the social protection budget and improvements to program targeting, as well as other aspects of service delivery, would help to ensure the right benefits reach the right people at the right time.

APPROACH

The Project co-finances a portion of Government expenditures on beneficiary wages under the Employment Generation Program for the Poorest. The co-financing uses a results-based disbursement modality based upon incremental improvements in the performance of the major safety net programs implemented by DDM. Results targets currently focus on improvements to (i) household targeting, (ii) administrative systems, and (iii) payment systems, aspects of these programs which address their equity, efficiency and transparency. These targets would be achieved by the (i) utilization of poverty data to identify potential recipients of social assistance, (ii) establishment of a common safety net program management information system (MIS) for better administration, and (iii) scale-up digital payments of cash benefits. In addition, the Project supports the establishment and operationalization of the National Household Database (NHD) to facilitate household targeting for safety net programs across different ministries and thus help harmonize a major process in the social protection service delivery system.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Greater share of beneficiaries in, and benefits going towards, the bottom expenditure quintile

Reduced duplication of beneficiaries across programs

Improved access and security in the delivery of benefits

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The Project will leverage improved delivery systems for safety net programs to support the development of the adaptive capacity of such programs in mitigating and responding to shocks. In this regard the use of the NHD across other government programs is a strategic priority.
SOCIAL, URBAN, RURAL AND RESILIENCE
OVERVIEW

In South Asia, Bangladesh continues to witness one of the most rapid and unplanned urbanization. Yet, the cities, especially the district towns and municipalities offer inadequate infrastructure and low levels of urban services. They face severe challenges such as inadequate technical and financial capacities, insufficient administrative capacity, low accountability, and inadequate basic urban services that constrain them from developing into competitive and modern cities.

The Municipal Governance and Services Project (MGSP) helps to make the participating municipalities and city corporations become strong, responsive and inclusive local government institutions providing better urban services and responding promptly and effectively to emergencies. The project is benefitting around 3.4 million people living in 26 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), mostly located in main growth corridors along national highways.
CHALLENGE
Since urban areas contribute almost 60 percent of GDP of Bangladesh, managing urbanization effectively is critical for achieving the country’s vision of becoming an upper-middle income country by 2031.

The ULBs had historically limited capacity to respond to urbanization challenges. The 335 ULBs (11 City Corporations and 324 Pourashavas) are responsible for providing basic urban services, such as roads, drains, streetlights, municipal markets, transport terminals etc. But most of the ULBs do not have or use standard urban planning and management tools, such as strategic plans or master plans. They often lack the required skills to respond to the evolving challenges of urban growth and hence cannot effectively provide quality services to their residents. Furthermore, many ULBs lack financial resources needed to develop infrastructure. Generally, the residents are not involved in planning process and hence the municipalities’ investment programs do not always reflect the needs of the community.

APPROACH
In response to urban governance challenges, MGSP is helping develop an accountable and inclusive local governance system.

MGSP provides operation and maintenance grants to the pre-selected 26 ULBs for routine maintenance of municipal assets. The project is supporting participating municipalities gain access to resources by providing block grants for further infrastructure investments. To qualify, ULBs are required to meet performance targets, such as municipal planning, social accountability, public financial management and revenue mobilization.

The project also supports the national government agencies responsible for addressing the increasing challenges of rapid urbanization in Bangladesh. It has provided training to officials of 26 ULBs for e-GP, financial management, social and environmental monitoring, contract management, etc. Further, the project is supporting nationwide computerization of ULBs. Around 63 urban local bodies have received financing through a mix of grants and loans for improvement of basic urban services.

TOWARDS THE FUTURE
The World Bank is assisting the Government, through the LGED and the BMDF, with resources and capacity building in supporting the ULBs meet their gaps and needs. In the coming years, as the country continues on its growth path -- with concomitant rising urbanization -- there will be an increasing demand for improved urban infrastructure and services. The World Bank will continue its support for building up an effective urban management system in ULBs and improve the quality of life for the urban population.

RESULTS
Benefiting 3.4 million people living in 26 Urban Local Bodies
14,604 meters of road works/retaining wall improved
256 km of urban roads constructed
160 km of drains improved
84 km of footpath constructed
667 bridges/culverts constructed
65 street lights constructed
OVERVIEW

Bangladesh is among most disaster-prone countries in the world. It is susceptible to floods, cyclones and earthquakes. The Government of Bangladesh has instituted disaster risk reduction policies and invested in infrastructure along coastal areas to mitigate the risks from floods and cyclones. Over the years, government has demonstrated that investment in flood management and cyclone preparedness saves lives, reduces economic losses and protects development gains. Disaster Risk Management (DRM) solutions in an urban context present greater challenge. The vulnerability of Bangladesh’s urban areas is neither well understood, nor adequately addressed in the country’s policy framework.
CHALLENGE
Land use planning regulations and public service delivery in urban areas could not keep up with the pace of growth. The current regulatory environment is opaque and enforcement mechanisms for urban development control do not address structural safety, leading to lack of enforcement capability and accountability. In this context, any hazards, such as floods, fires, building collapses, or earthquakes, present a formidable threat to life and prosperity.

With the nearest major fault line believed to be in less than 60 km away, Dhaka is vulnerable to seismic risk and fire. Moreover, the city is poorly prepared to respond to a crisis of a significant scale within the metropolitan area. Sylhet, one of the largest cities in the country, is also near to a fault line and extremely vulnerable to earthquakes. Recent tragedies of building collapse or building fire underscores the extreme vulnerability of the built environment and need to increase capacity to respond to disasters.

APPROACH
The Urban Resilience Project (URP) will address seismic risk and reduce structural vulnerability of future building constructions in Dhaka and Sylhet. It helps strengthen the capacity of the public agencies to respond to emergencies and strengthen systems. The project will help put an emergency management system in place; mobilize resources at all levels; and assign roles and responsibilities more efficiently. It will develop a consensus-driven analytical foundation required for longer-term investments to reduce risk in the built environment of Dhaka, Sylhet and other cities. The project also supports the institutional infrastructure and competency to reduce long-term disaster vulnerability in Dhaka. It will address both the existing built environment as well as future development.

EXPECTED RESULTS
Increased decentralized emergency response services in Dhaka and Sylhet.

Increased capacity of officials and emergency management response personnel.

Systems and assessments established to reduce vulnerability of buildings.

TOWARDS THE FUTURE
While the Urban Resilience Project targets Dhaka and Sylhet, this approach can be scaled up in the future to focus on other urban centers. Retrofitting key infrastructure, supporting risk sensitive land use planning, addressing flooding and seismic vulnerabilities, and scaling up emergency management and response would strengthen institutions and increase resilience in other cities as well.
OVERVIEW

The country is self-sufficient in food production but in the event of significant natural disaster, progress can be hampered. The Bangladesh Weather and Climate Services Regional Project (BWCSR) seeks to modernize the country’s weather, water, and climate information systems for forecasting and strengthening of service delivery in priority sectors and communities. It aims to build institutional capacity and coordination of agencies which are vital to strengthening disaster preparedness and climate resilience in Bangladesh.

BANGLADESH WEATHER AND CLIMATE SERVICES REGIONAL PROJECT

EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS FOR BETTER RESILIENCE

BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL DATE: June 03 2016
END DATE: December 31 2022
TOTAL COMMITMENT: $113 million
IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:
Bangladesh Meteorology Department (BMD),
Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB), Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE)

OVERVIEW

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CHALLENGE
Due to its unique geographical position, Bangladesh is exposed to extreme weather events such as tropical cyclones associated with storm surges, floods, thunderstorms and drought. Unavailability of reliable forecasting and information on weather and climate can affect the productivity of key sectors such as agriculture. Hence, the country needs to modernize hydrological and meteorological (‘hydromet’) services and strengthen early warning systems.

This requires substantial investment in and transformation of its hydromet service providers: the Bangladesh Meteorology Department (BMD) and the Hydrology Division of the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB). Currently both have inadequate observation network, hardware, software and human resource capacity. They also require a re-visioning of their agencies to meet the rapid advances in science and technology. There is considerable unmet demand from user sectors such as agriculture, water, disaster management, aviation, energy ministries.

Implementation challenges relate to the inherent technical complexity and multi-institutional nature of the issues being addressed.

APPROACH
The Bangladesh Weather and Climate Services Regional Project aims to modernize the country’s overall meteorological system, including weather forecasting, early warning systems, and delivery of weather and climate services. It also aims to improve access to such services by priority sectors and communities. The project will help strengthen meteorological information services, hydrological information services and early warning systems and support the development and delivery of agrometeorological information. In addition, a contingent emergency response is available, which enables immediate reallocation of project funds to support disaster response following a request from the government in the event of a major natural disaster.

TOWARDS THE FUTURE
The project hopes to bring in innovation, both technological and operational, to help the country access the latest advances in the field and build capacity through collaboration with universities.

The Department of Agricultural Extension is implementing the third component of the project: generating agromet advisories for farmers in all 64 districts, twice a week, in collaboration with research agencies and BMD. These advisories also include livestock, poultry and fisheries sectors. National level advisories are also prepared and disseminated once a week. Early warning systems for lightning, dissemination mechanisms and medium are being designed and developed.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- 100,000 vulnerable people to receive early warning alerts for significant weather and water hazards
- Improved capacity for weather forecasting (with 24-hour public weather forecasts)
- Farmer groups will receive agro-advisories
- Establishment of a user satisfaction measurement system
- 300,000 farmers will have access to information
- Agro-met Kiosks will be installed in 487 Upazilas
- Approximately 1 million people in 4 districts to receive community-level early warning systems for extreme weather events
OVERVIEW

Coastal embankments are an integral part of the disaster risk reduction program for Bangladesh. There is clear evidence that embankments provided an effective buffer during the tidal surge resulting from Cyclone Sidr. The Coastal Embankment Improvement Project (CEIP) continues to help Bangladesh mitigate some of the large impacts of cyclones and flooding and improve emergency response in the coastal region.
**CHALLENGE**

Bangladesh’s coastal zone spans over 580 km of coastline and includes territory where 28 percent of the country’s population resides. The proportion of people living below the absolute poverty line is higher in the coastal area than in the rest of the country. A recent World Bank study on the cost of adapting to extreme weather estimated that 8 million people are currently vulnerable to inundation depths greater than 1 meter due to cyclonic storm surges. In a changing climate and without further adaptation measures, this number will increase to 17 million people. Moreover, about 13.5 million people would be exposed to inundation depths greater than 3 meters. There is an urgent need to rehabilitate and upgrade polder protection and enhance the resilience of coastal areas to cyclones, tidal and flood inundations, and salinity intrusion.

**APPROACH**

The project aims to: (i) increase the area protected in selected polders from tidal floods and storms, which are expected to become more severe due to climate change; (ii) improve agricultural production by reducing saline water intrusion in selected polders; and (iii) improve the government’s capacity to respond promptly and effectively to a crisis or emergency.

The project supports the rehabilitation and upgradation of protection polders to protect the areas from tidal flooding and frequent storm surges and reduce saline intrusion to enhance agricultural productivity. Rehabilitation of 17 polders in six coastal districts will provide direct protection to 760,000 people including 380,000 females living within the polder boundaries. This will enhance their livelihoods as increase agricultural productivity, and strengthen the overall resilience of the coastal areas.

A comprehensive analysis will be undertaken to better understand the coastal dynamics to increase climate resilience in the coastal area.

**EXPECTED RESULTS**

- **17 Polders** to be rehabilitated in 6 coastal districts: Bagerhat, Khulna, Satkhira, Barguna, Patuakhali, and Pirojpur
- Improved protection for **760,000 people** living within polder boundaries have better protection
- **100,800 hectares** of area to be protected
- **Cropping intensity** to be increased by **180%**

**TOWARDS THE FUTURE**

$25 million out of the total of $400 million for the Coastal Embankment Improvement Project (CEIP) is from the Pilot Program for Climate Resilience (PPCR), a targeted fund within the Climate Investment Funds (CIF) framework. PPCR continues to pilot ways in which climate risk and resilience may be integrated into core development planning and implementation. Future projects may follow CIF’s programmatic approach and investment, with a focus on strengthening the capacity of key institutions on adaptation and establishing web-based mechanisms for information and knowledge management.
OVERVIEW

With 36 percent of the country’s urban population living in Greater Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh has become one of the world’s most densely populated cities. The Dhaka Metropolitan has been the country’s engine of economic growth and job creation. To achieve its vision of becoming an upper-middle income country by 2031, Bangladesh must manage Dhaka’s urban growth. Dhaka’s urban development has not kept up with the city’s population growth, resulting in a messy and uneven urbanization process.
**CHALLENGE**

Dhaka is one of the least liveable cities in the world. According to EIU Global Livability Index 2018, it ranked 139 out of 140 cities. Many residents, including the 3.5 million people living in informal settlements, often lack access to basic services, infrastructure, and amenities. Livings standards in many slums are worse than in rural areas, despite proximity to jobs. Only two-thirds of the city is covered with piped water, less than 1 percent of domestic sewage generated is treated, and 60 percent of municipal solid waste is collected. Severe traffic congestion is endemic, a consequence of inadequate infrastructure and public transport relative to the high population and economic density. Dhaka is the world’s fourth most polluted city; with pollution levels 8 times higher than World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines. Public and open spaces are declining as a share of land use. The low liveability index disproportionately affects vulnerable and excluded groups such as the poor, women and elderly.

**APPROACH**

The **Dhaka City Neighborhood Upgrading Project (DCNUP)** will help Dhaka transform into a more liveable and competitive city. The project aims to improve public spaces and urban services in four large neighborhoods—Kamrangir Char, Lalbagh, Sutrapur-Nayabazar-Gulistan, Khilgaon-Mughda-Bashabo—under the Dhaka South City Corporation. It will undertake interventions that are designed through a collaborative process with beneficiaries and that can be implemented quickly. The project will help improve the livability, vibrancy and regeneration of neighborhoods and thus enhance civic lives. The project will finance improvements in public spaces such as streets, sidewalks, parks, open spaces and community centres. It has identified priority areas for “rapid results” through consultations with civil society, think tanks and urban professionals. These include: improving pedestrian safety and mobility, enhancing open and green spaces to rejuvenate surroundings, transforming existing community centres into multi-use facilities to serve neighborhoods, and revitalization of waterfront areas.

The project will enhance accessibility, usability, and safety, disaster and climate resiliency of the public spaces. It will also pilot interventions for safe mobility and traffic management. It will cater to the needs of women, youths, elderly and disabled, who often refrain from using public spaces.

**EXPECTED RESULTS**

- **20%** increase in number of people accessing enhanced public spaces
- **1 million** people enjoy improved urban living conditions
- **Improvement of 30** hectares of public spaces
- **Engagement with 60%** of citizens of the selected neighborhoods for design of sub-projects
- **30 km** of roads rehabilitated
- **100%** outreach to community of selected neighborhoods regarding improvement in public space

**TOWARDS THE FUTURE**

The project will contribute to learnings for rapid results for future expansion of sustainable urban public space improvement in other major cities in Bangladesh with increased capacity of the City Corporations as lead implementing agencies in sustainable urban development. The project will also contribute to the broader scheme of development for metro Dhaka as a whole, with expansion happening in the north, east and southern fringes.
OVERVIEW
Bangladesh has had a long history of local governance stretching back over 130 years, but it is only recently that local governments are increasingly realizing their potential within the development of the country. Built on the success of two preceding projects, the Third Local Governance Support Project (LGSP-3) aims to empower the local governments at grassroots level with discretionary funds that would enable communities decide and implement local development priorities. The pioneer project, LGSP was the first nationwide effort to strengthen the Union Parishads (UPs), the lowest tire of local governments in Bangladesh. Beginning in 2006, LGSP had successfully strengthen local governments that provide accountable services and has helped create the space for deeper decentralization. LGSP2 continued to support Government of Bangladesh’s decentralization efforts with the objective of strengthening Union Parishads to become accountable and responsive, supported by an efficient and transparent intergovernmental fiscal system to Union Parishads (the lowest tier of local governments). The LGSP-3 supports the institutionalization of these activities and processes in the government system.
CHALLENGE

Local governments in Bangladesh operate in a highly constrained policy and institutional environment. They have inadequate fiscal autonomy and own source revenues, limited decision-making powers, and weak accountability systems. Subnational expenditure as a share of total government expenditure has been less than 4 percent, while less than 2 percent of total government revenue is collected at local levels. However, the over 4,500 UPs provide communities with opportunities for inclusive participation in civic affairs, to enhance government accountability and transparency at the grassroots level.

Successive governments have affirmed their intent to devolve powers to lower levels through more autonomy and increased allocation of resources. In 2009, the local government laws were revised to facilitate the transfer of additional expenditure responsibilities and enhanced fiscal resources to UPs. These reforms enabled a transparent and predictable fiscal transfer system for UPs and established by the consecutive phases of LGSP. Fiscal transfers supported by the project enabled UPs to execute their assigned expenditure mandate as per the 2009 UP Act.

APPROACH

By covering all 4569 UPs with about 130 million population, LGSP-3 continues to provide direct block grants to eligible UPs that meet the minimum transparency and governance conditions (i.e., participatory planning and open budgeting, timely submission of biannual financial reports, and annual audit clearance), along with full discretion for communities to decide their own priorities and grant utilization. In the final two years of LGSP-3, the administering of the basic block grants and the annual audits of all UPs will be brought under the direct purview of the Local Government Division of the Government of Bangladesh.

The LGSP2 established a nationwide performance grant system with clear criteria and transparent assessment, supported by rigorous annual financial audits mainstreamed in all UPs nationwide. The open budgeting and planning as means for citizen engagement enabled the community members to discuss spending needs, set their priorities, and debate spending efficacy. Also, strengthening the UP Helpline and introducing women’s forums at the Upazila level will also continue under LGSP-3. The project continues to earmark about 30 percent of the grants for local schemes to be prioritized by women. It also has established a management information system for monitoring, evaluating and supervising local governments.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Over 130 million people across the country benefitted from enhanced resources in conjunction with improved governance and service delivery.

All 4,569 Union Parishads get annual financial audit and performance assessment for improved financial accountability.

30% of funds to schemes prioritized by women, through over 400 functional Upazila Women’s Development Forums.

20% annual increase in Union Parishad own-source revenues nationally.

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The ongoing LGSP-3 aims to mainstream and institutionalize the formula-based UP fiscal transfer system into the government’s inter-governmental fiscal framework, through several significant policy reforms. Given the upcoming institutionalization of the basic block grants and the UP audits in the mainstream government system under LGSP-3, the processes introduced under LGSP and further bolstered under LGSP2 in empowering the lowest tier of local governments of Bangladesh, is likely to be sustained.
OVERVIEW

Approximately 40 million people in Bangladesh live in urban areas, and 21 percent of them live below the poverty line. Rapid urban growth has put considerable burden on urban infrastructure, most notably housing. Every year, about half a million new people arrive in urban areas in Bangladesh. Lack of adequate planning and development of cities results in an inability to accommodate this influx and this strains urban infrastructure including water supply, sanitation, transport and especially, housing.

The Low-Income Community Housing Support project pilots a community driven approach to improve the living conditions of the urban poor in selected municipalities. Through the project, around 24,000 urban poor who live in informal, low-income settlements or slums will be able to access technical assistance, infrastructure grants, and housing loans to improve their living conditions. The project uses a community-driven approach, building community organizations with a history of self-managed projects and a desire to improve their local neighbourhoods.
CHALLENGE

Slums and informal low-income settlements in Bangladesh’s urban areas provide housing solutions for the urban poor, but inadequate living conditions undermine continued economic growth and poverty reduction efforts. The urban poor are more vulnerable than the rural poor to economic fluctuations, higher costs of living, underlying insecurity of tenure, and rising land prices. Without secure tenure, the urban poor remain largely in inferior dwellings for fear of evictions. There is a critical need for alternative models of affordable housing as well as for basic infrastructure and services in informal settlement that can allow communities to thrive and climb out of poverty, rather than staying in an urban poverty trap.

APPROACH

The project takes an incremental and community-driven approach to improve living conditions in Bangladesh. It builds on organized community groups with a history of savings, and experience in planning and executing small-scale infrastructure schemes. The National Housing Authority (NHA) will help community organizations plan to change and upgrade their neighborhood. NHA will also provide technical expertise in the form of community architects, engineers and mobilizers to help identify improvements to the public services—including access to roads, drainage and sanitation, electrification, waste collection and disposal, and public spaces like parks, ponds or community centers—that the government can provide. Where possible, the NHA also tries to address land tenure issues to provide greater security to residents. This has been done in one community by giving the housing collective that was established there, titles to the public land that NHA has acquired.

Working with the Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), an umbrella organization for micro-finance NGOs, the project advances housing finance for the urban poor. PKSF has introduced a new housing loan for low-income group borrowers for house repairs, improvements/extensions, or construction of a new house. The housing loan product is financially sustainable and does not require government subsidy.

EXPECTED RESULTS

24,000 urban poor living in informal and low-income settlements will benefit

40,000 beneficiaries will be able to access housing loans, both through community based and other approaches (e.g. personal, joint liability, group guarantee, etc.)

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

Creating affordable housing for Bangladesh’s burgeoning urban poor population is a challenging issue. The project tests out various models for affordable housing for low-income communities. The success of the program will show that individual lower-income households are a bankable market segment thereby leading to greater financial inclusion. NHA provides scope to further test and scale up initiatives throughout the country, and holds a promise for the future of affordable housing in Bangladesh. If the pilot works well, the new housing loan can be made available to low-and middle-income groups, who cannot easily access financial institutions and banks.
OVERVIEW

Due to the low and flat topography, Bangladesh is highly vulnerable to natural disasters, especially in its coastal zones. From 1980 to 2000, nearly 60 percent of the deaths caused by cyclones worldwide occurred in Bangladesh. Due to the effects of climate change, an increase in the frequency and severity of cyclones, sea level rise and other natural disasters is likely to happen, making it even more essential for Bangladesh to adapt to increased uncertainty. By providing improved access to safe havens in the event of a natural disaster, the Multipurpose Disaster Shelter Project (MDSP) benefits nearly 14 million people in nine coastal districts.

VOICES

The changing climate is making lives more difficult for vulnerable communities such as mine. We need to work harder to adapt. The new shelters being built means there is still hope for our villages and for our families.

HASINA BEGUM
Headmistress of Paschim Napitkhali Primary School in Barguna
CHALLENGE

The longitudinal position of Bangladesh, its proximity to the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean, creates a tropical monsoon climate prone to cyclones, floods and droughts. Nearly 40 million people live along the 710 km long coast, exposed to cyclones and other natural disasters. Cyclones accompanied by powerful storm surges hit the coastal areas and often causes inundation over a vast area.

Multipurpose disaster centres have been highly effective in saving lives in disaster-prone coastal districts. The Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) calls for the repair, maintenance and construction of additional cyclone shelters throughout the coastal zones, as a priority intervention.

The Government’s assessment suggests 7,124 multipurpose shelters will be needed by 2025 to improve disaster resilience across 14 coastal districts. Of these, around 4,760 will be needed on a priority basis by 2020. The need assessment has also identified nine coastal districts as priority. To date, around 3,268 multipurpose disaster shelters have been constructed, leaving another 1,492 needed by 2020.

APPROACH

The growing network of cyclone shelters and the community-based early warning system has enabled Bangladesh to save lives and assets during natural disasters. In nine coastal districts, the project is improving the local population’s access to safe havens during natural disasters. During regular weather, the shelters serve as primary schools, and during cyclones and other natural disasters, they double up as shelters. Thus, the project helps improve access to primary education.

MDSP focuses on meeting the high priority needs of cyclone-prone areas with the shelters. The project also builds connecting roads and communication networks to shelters, ensuring easy accessibility.

Bangladesh has gained significant experience in the construction of multipurpose disaster shelters, most notably through the Emergency 2007 Cyclone Recovery and Restoration Project. MDSP further improves the designs of these shelters. The project is one of the very first projects to introduce steel shelters for improved quality.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- **552** new shelters to be constructed in **9 coastal districts**
- **450** existing shelters to be rehabilitated
- **550 km** of rural roads to be constructed for better access to shelters
- **14 million** people in **9 coastal districts** to benefit

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The shelter design includes a provision for one separate room with a toilet for pregnant women and will further consider accessibility for people with disabilities. Steel shelter construction is a major intervention, based on which construction criteria for future shelters may be determined.
TRANSPORT
OVERVIEW
Bangladesh is well placed to play an important role in regional trade as a transit country in South Asia. Geographically, Bangladesh’s location makes the country a gateway to India, Nepal, Bhutan, and other East Asian countries. Some corridors and associated border-crossing points connect West Bengal, India, and the Southwestern region of Bangladesh to landlocked Bhutan, Nepal and the North East Region (NER) of India. However, high logistical costs due to poor infrastructure and trade facilitation are constraining Bangladesh from playing a more active role in regional integration despite its strategic location. The Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project 1 supports the Government of Bangladesh to modernize trade related infrastructure, border management, systems, and procedures. These improvements will help Bangladesh increase regional connectivity and trade with India, Bhutan, and Nepal.
CHALLENGE

Bangladesh’s relative cost advantage from being a low labor cost producer is diminished by poor performance in trade facilitation. For example, Bangladesh manufacturers’ ‘Order to Delivery Cycle’ is 35 to 50 percent longer than many of their competitors. Trade-related infrastructure is inadequate, and border crossing times at some land ports are measured in days, rather than hours.

The land ports are unable to accommodate existing and potential trade volumes which causes delays for traded goods. A significant proportion of Bangladesh’s international trade procedures are still paper-based and continue to be managed manually, causing delays for border clearance and hampering private sector competitiveness.

APPROACH

The project supports the development and improvement of four land ports along the Southwest to Northeast Corridor that are key to facilitating regional and transit trade. They are: Bhomra, Sheola, Ramgarh, and Benapole.

Recognising that comprehensive border management and customs improvement require a clear vision, strong political will and commitment, the project supports an inter-ministerial National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee (NTTFC) to coordinate trade and transport-related policies and activities in Bangladesh.

The project will develop a National Single Window system which will allow traders to submit all import, export and transit information via a single electronic gateway, instead of submitting the same paperwork to multiple government agencies. This will facilitate faster and more transparent international trade procedures and reduce transaction time and cost for the private sector. The project will also support policies and investments to remove bottlenecks faced by women in trade and business. To bring more women traders into formal trade networks and global value chains, the project will facilitate skills development programs for women.

EXPECTED RESULTS

More than double the freight volume at land ports  

Two-thirds reduction in truck clearance time at land ports  

40% reduction in average time to meet regulatory requirements associated with import-export

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

As global and regional markets become more competitive, the demand for shorter lead times are mounting. Improving trade infrastructure and facilitation will be critical for Bangladesh to sustain and accelerate export growth, including with its regional neighbors. While trade with India increased more than five-fold, from $1.8 billion in 2005 to over $9 billion in 2018, this is less than half of its current potential. The Regional Connectivity Project will introduce modern approaches to border and customs management, including the evolution towards integrated land border facilities and an enabling environment for domestic and cross-border collaboration between land port and customs administrations.
OVERVIEW

The inland water transportation sector can play an important role in improving domestic connectivity and regional integration. As a riverine country, Bangladesh has a large and vibrant Inland Water Transport (IWT) sector. It has 700 rivers, streams and canals with a total length of about 24,000 km. Approximately 6,000 km are navigable during the monsoon (wet) period, shrinking to about 3,900 km in the dry periods. It carries approximately 194 million tons of cargo and about one-quarter of all passenger traffic. The Bangladesh Regional Waterway Transport Project 1 (BRWTP1) aims to improve the navigability and year-round safe transport for passengers and cargo along the Chittagong-Dhaka-Ashuganj river routes. This will help shift traffic away from heavily congested roads along these routes.
CHALLENGE

Despite its importance, the IWT has received little attention in the last few decades with limited resources allocated to its development. It receives only 4-7 percent of total transport sector funding. Current issues faced by the IWT sector include: (a) lack of funding allocated to maintenance of waterways other than ferry crossing routes and consequently inadequate dredging maintenance which fails to address rapid and continuous processes of sedimentation; (b) outdated hydrographic capability and limited data acquisition for river maintenance and other planning purpose; (c) poor navigation aid system and very limited night time aids; (d) poor safety culture, including outdated rules and regulations, concerning the design, licensing, construction, operation and maintenance of IWT vessels, insufficient vessel shelters, and the lack of facilities for searching and rescuing people in distress; and, (e) insufficient and dilapidated river port facilities for general cargo trade and passenger transport. Many terminal facilities consist of no more than wooden planks for embarking and disembarking passengers and especially challenging for mothers with small children, pregnant women, elderly people and the disabled.

APPROACH

The BRWTP1 will improve and maintain the navigability of inland waterways along the Chittagong-Dhaka-Ashuganj Corridor and connecting routes and support navigation safety improvements. This will help reduce travel time and cost for cargo and passenger transport and boost national and regional trade. The project will build one new general cargo terminal at Pangaon and modernize the existing cargo terminal at Ashuganj. It will also build new passenger terminals at Shashanghat (downstream of Sadarghat) and Madrashaghat (Chandpur); rehabilitate existing passenger terminal at Narayanganj; and extend existing terminal at Barisal.

Further, it will help develop River Information Systems (RIS) and provide and, funding for research and development to enable continuing sector improvement and sustainability. This includes work on sector policies and strategies needed to: improve revenue collection and management; incentivize public and private sector investments especially related to container transport; and, mitigate and improve IWT’s impact on the social and physical environment. The project will help improve the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority’s capacity to comply with international standards; adopt modern management practices for inland water transport; and achieve long-term operational and financial sustainability.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Increase navigability of project river routes

Reduction of travel time on the Dhaka-Chittagong Corridor for cargo vessels

Increase in annual revenue tariffs associated with development, maintenance, increased customer satisfaction

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

To ensure sustainability of project investments and sector improvement, several key principles have been incorporated in the project design. First, a performance-based maintenance approach is being piloted to innovate the more usual practice for river maintenance and is a departure from customary dredging contracts applied in Bangladesh which have not achieved desired results. Furthermore, the project also focuses on policy, regulatory and institutional development for the IWT sector to improve the competitiveness and attractiveness of IWT, and attract private sector investment, maintain competitive transport costs, incentivize modal shift, and get to cost-recovery and profitability for BIWTA.
OVERVIEW

As Bangladesh’s flat terrain is crisscrossed by hundreds of rivers, bridges play a critical part in the country’s road system. For every 4.5 km of roads in unions or upazilas, a bridge is needed to connect two disjointed road sections. While Bangladesh enjoys an extensive rural road network, one-fifth of the rural bridges needed are yet to be built. The Operation for Supporting Rural Bridges (SuPRb) supports the government’s newly launched rural bridge program that aims to finance, develop, maintain and manage rural bridge assets sustainably. The project will improve road connections and climate resilience in Bangladesh through building, maintaining and improving rural bridges in 61 districts.
**CHALLENGE**

There are approximately 15,000 existing rural bridges, many of them poorly maintained, on Upazila and Union roads in Bangladesh. The replacement value of existing rural bridge assets of Bangladesh is substantial, around 3 percent of the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Further, lack of good governance, accountability and transparency are major hindrances. The implementing agency for this project has limited experience in bridge maintenance; inadequate facilities to handle bridge design, construction and maintenance issues; and lacks a rural bridge inventory. Labor influx may create additional social challenges.

**APPROACH**

To improve sustainability, the project design follows a “hybrid” approach combining two World Bank financing instruments: PforR and IPF financing instruments. There will be no separate project management unit for the project’s implementation, rather the implementing agency will use its existing institutional setup.

The Program will maintain, widen or rehabilitate and build new bridges. It will also create jobs for local people, including long-term maintenance work. The program will support the government’s existing program for developing and maintaining rural bridges. It will also ensure updating of rural bridge information and management system and improving contract and fiduciary management systems. The program is expected to enhance transparency and accountability of the rural bridge sector.

**EXPECTED RESULTS**

- Maintain **85,000** meters of bridges
- Widen or rehabilitate **29,000** meters of bridges
- Construct **22,000** meters of new bridges
- **Rural bridge climate resiliency improved**

**Gender and citizen engagement aspects**

institutionalized, ultimately impacting rural people

**TOWARDS THE FUTURE**

Rural inland connectivity is a public policy priority in Bangladesh. Bridges play an important role in enhancing and maintaining inland connectivity and may unlock the opportunity to economic activities and access to essential services for people in rural areas. This will reduce poverty and improve welfare, increase agriculture production and wages, reduce inputs and transport costs, and impact on education and health sectors due to improved connectivity.
OVERVIEW

Over 300,000 km rural road network in Bangladesh open up economic opportunities for rural people and improve access to markets, schools and health facilities. The country has made substantial investments in rural roads, but often overlooked the maintenance and rehabilitation needs. In addition, the construction quality of rural roads is not up to the mark and the carrying capacity of parts of the rural road networks is inadequate. This often leads to serious road safety implications.

The Second Rural Transport Improvement Project helps address these issues by improving rural connectivity and strengthening institutional capacity for sustainable rural road maintenance. The project has been improving and maintaining a total of 5,248 km of Upazila and Union roads. Besides this, the project has introduced rehabilitation and periodic maintenance of 4,000 km of roads and integrating road safety and community road safety awareness.
CHALLENGE

With a vast network of roads, the challenges can be broad as well. From capacity building of the implementation agency to manage the roads, to poor quality of the engineering and civil works, and the delays and cost overruns in overseeing proper execution, inadequate capacity to manage contracts and procurements, there are several underlying factors behind poor quality roads. This can lead to unmitigated environmental and social impacts due to weak management capacity and increase in the number of road accidents. Overall weak governance, including inefficient allocation and use of resources and insufficient citizen oversight are some of the other challenges faced during project implementation.

APPROACH

Built on the success of the predecessor project, RTIP II continues to improve the conditions of rural roads in 26 districts. The implementing agency, LGED has extensive experience implementing donor-funded projects including by the World Bank. LGED’s decentralized units, headed by Executive Engineers in districts, are responsible for implementation on the ground. An environmental and social impact management framework has been adopted, which informed the selection of the project components beyond the first year program. Specific environmental assessments, mitigation and resettlement action plans are being prepared and implemented accordingly.

EXPECTED RESULTS

394 km of Upazila and 388 km of Union roads upgraded to paved standard
4,383 km of Upazila and Union roads rehabilitated and maintained
30 Growth Center Markets, 9 rural jetties constructed
47 km of rural waterways dredging piloted
Performance-based maintenance contract introduced for 428 km of roads
10 river jetties being constructed, 33 growth center markets being developed

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The World Bank’s engagement in the rural transport sector is making a significant impact on the rural poor in Bangladesh. Better roads lead to better lives. There is an intrinsic link between transport and human capital development. Improved mobility can unlock economic opportunities and can expand access to essential services like healthcare and education. This leads to poverty reduction and improved welfare, higher agriculture production, higher wages, lower inputs and transport costs, and higher output prices due to improved connectivity, ensuring better opportunities for rural people, mobilizing the rural economy.
OVERVIEW

Bangladesh has made great strides in developing an extensive road transport system. Yet, low construction quality and maintenance of the road network is common.

The country’s two key transport agencies, namely, the Roads and Highways Department (RHD), Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges, focuses on improving regional road connectivity and pursuing a policy of corridor-based road development to accommodate regional as well as international traffic; and the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives focuses on improving rural access connectivity to the country’s main transport corridors, which will benefit about 66 percent of the country’s rural people. LGED also aims to build double-lane Upazila Roads and Union Roads that connect to the main transport arteries.
CHALLENGE

The primary road network is in poor condition and congested, operating at or near maximum capacity and is unable to accommodate the rapidly increasing demand. Between 2014 to 2017, the motorized rate increased two and a half times. The rapidly growing number of vehicles pose serious threat to road safety. To prevent the upward trend in fatalities and injuries, urgent and scaled-up safety investments are needed. The road network needs considerable investments for upgrading and maintenance. Yet, due to inadequate national maintenance budget for roads, the repair works is often reactive and become more expensive in the long run.

Rainfall and floods damage the roads and impair accessibility. The damaged roads during the flood season results in disproportionately high costs for rehabilitation.

The transport sector faces institutional fragmentation, weak coordination, and capacity constraints. At the national level, there are 5 ministries and 21 agencies responsible for the transport sector with overlapping mandates, and conflicts between service provision and regulatory responsibilities. The capacity of various agencies needs considerable enhancement.

APPROACH

The first phase of the Western Economic Corridor and Regional Enhancement (WeCare) program will improve road connectivity along the Jashore-Jhenaidah corridor covering four western districts. It will upgrade a 48 km national highway from Jashore to Jhenaidah to a safer and climate-resilient four-lane highway. It will also upgrade and rehabilitate targeted sections of the primary, secondary and tertiary road network in Western Bangladesh i.e. 260 km of existing highway and feeder roads; and improve around 32 markets to boost local economy. The project will help enhance women’s mobility and their role in the provision of transport infrastructure by addressing the societal, institutional, and individual barriers.

The highway will also act as a strategic geographical gateway to Bhutan, Nepal, and India. The corridor will facilitate cross-border movement and trade in the Benapole and Bhomra land ports, which are the two most-used border crossing points between Bangladesh and India.

Greater connectivity will tremendously benefit Bangladesh, enabling it to trade in transport services, and earn port and road transport charges as well as transit fees and help the country become a regional logistics and transit hub in South Asia.

To improve digital connectivity, the project will install fiber optic cables along the highway to provide reliable and affordable internet access, which will be critical for emergency responses and business continuities in crises similar to the COVID-19 pandemic.

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit the poorest hard with the loss of jobs and income. Initial investment will help create jobs and support economic recovery for hardest hit population. Labor-intensive civil works—including routine maintenance of roads, clearing of water passages, and hygiene-related small work—will generate around 1.3 million days of rural employment in the first 24 months of the project. Where applicable, the project will provide working tools and personal protective equipment (PPE). In the post COVID period, the project will create jobs for the local communities through civil works for the national highway and connecting rural roads and markets. It will also support the country’s two key transport agencies—Roads and Highway Division and Local Government Engineering Department—to enhance emergency preparedness for any future pandemic or crisis.

EXPECTED RESULTS

10% improved efficiency of transport mobility of passengers and goods on Jashore-Jhenaidah corridor

5% reduced post-harvest losses especially among small farm families in rural areas

50% reduction in annual fatalities on Jashore-Jhenaidah corridor

10% of national and regional highways upgraded to climate resilient standards

20 million people being benefitted
WATER
OVERVIEW
Bangladesh achieved its Millennium Development Goals targets of halving the population without access to improved drinking water sources three years ahead of time and showed impressive progress in sanitation too. 84 percent of households have access to safe water and 57 percent of households have access to safe sanitation. Bangladesh almost eliminated open defecation. The government is committed to continue with its efforts, to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6) - safe and sustainable sanitation, hygiene and drinking water for all.
**CHALLENGE**

Achieving SDG 6 poses several challenges. Bangladesh is rapidly urbanizing, yet only 10 percent of the population—mostly living in the major cities—have access to piped water. One hundred and fifty-one (151) out of the 329 municipalities have basic piped water systems, but these systems cover only a limited population residing in town centres. They suffer from maintenance and quality problems, limited connections, high operational costs, poor service levels and low tariff recovery. Furthermore, 20 percent of the urban population experience arsenic contamination and 55 percent E. coli contamination in their water supply.

Sanitation in municipalities mainly comprise of household on-site pits and tanks that are cleaned infrequently. When cleaned, the fecal matter is dumped in drains and open lands, posing a public health hazard. Solid waste, drainage and flooding are common problems. Technical expertise for piped water supply and fecal sludge management are limited at all levels of government. Municipalities need support to build their capacity to carry out their roles effectively – from managing the design and construction of water and sanitation systems to strengthening their institutional and financial systems for operations and maintenance.

**APPROACH**

The project aims to increase access to water and sanitation services in 30 municipalities by strengthening their institutional capacity to deliver water and sanitation services. This will give 600,000 people access to improved water sources and improved sanitation services. Given the very basic institutional capacity of the project municipalities, the project aims to address capacity deficits by (a) infrastructure provision and operationally sustainable services delivery by the private sector for both water supply and sanitation, (b) institutional capacity strengthening of municipalities to enable them to play increasingly central roles in planning and supervision of services delivery by the private sector, and (c) strengthening the DPHE to focus more on policy and facilitation roles (away from direct infrastructure provision). The project’s goal is to devolve water and sanitation responsibilities to the local governments to ensure sustainability and cost-effectiveness. It directly supports the SDP target of improved services (with piped water and fecal sludge management) in municipalities, alongside strengthening the institutional capacities of municipalities to provide universal access to improved water and sanitation services in a financially sustainable manner. This involves introducing operating principles and developing the private sector.

**COVID-19 INTEGRATION**

- The project has built in an emergency assistance component, which helped immediately mobilize funding to construct handwashing stations in 30 municipalities.
- Handwashing with soap is one of the most effective ways of slowing human-to-human transmission of COVID-19 and preventing many other infectious diseases such as typhoid and cholera.
- Situated in strategic locations – such as entrances of each municipality, markets, healthcare facilities and densely populated areas – the handwashing stations will be equipped with running water and liquid soap.
- The project will also assist municipalities in building and operating public toilets as well as community level toilets, many of which will be managed by women’s self-help groups.
- In these facilities too, the project will promote safe behaviors including regular handwashing and hygiene, as well as ensure regular cleaning and disinfection of facilities along with the use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

**EXPECTED RESULTS**

- **600,000** people (at least half of whom are female) with access to improved water sources
- **150,000** people (at least half of whom are female) with access to improved sanitation services
- **30** municipalities with operational water supply systems and improved operational performance with greater ownership and sustainability of water, sanitation, and drainage infrastructure and services delivery involving operational service contracts with private sector
CHITTAGONG WATER SUPPLY IMPROVEMENT AND SANITATION PROJECT

OVERVIEW

Chittagong is the second largest city of Bangladesh with a rapidly swelling population—currently estimated at 2.9 million and expected to reach 3.7 million by 2030. The Chittagong Water Supply Improvement and Sanitation Project (CWSISP) aims to improve water supply, sanitation and drainage services in Chittagong city. The project will also help strengthen institutional capacity of Chittagong Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (CWASA). Currently, CWASA has about 75,000 active connections that provide direct treated piped water to households.
**CHALLENGE**

The water supply situation has improved in Chittagong. Currently the city’s water production capacity is 90 percent of the estimated demand but the pipe network needs to be updated. A small percentage of the city still uses tube wells. The underground water quality in the city is questionable, with high salt and iron levels, which poses health risks to the public.

However, very little investment has been made into sanitation and storm water drainage since the late 1980s. The Chittagong city lacks sanitation infrastructures: it is not connected to any form of sewerage system or effective storm water drainage service. Hence, most of the population typically utilizes septic tanks and pour-flush sanitation systems. Septic tank effluent disposal is generally sporadic and septic sludge not collected on a regular basis. It does not have sludge treatment facilities. Hence, both domestic and industrial waste are discharged to open water bodies creating environmental concerns. To initiate sewerage system and with a target of gradually bringing the entire city population under modern sewerage system, CWASA has developed a comprehensive sanitation improvement strategy with the World Bank’s support and a master plan to bring the city under planned sanitation system. To implement the proposed sewerage investments Program (2017-2065), an estimated cost of $1032.01 million will be required.

**APPROACH**

To provide access to safe water to around 650,000 residents in the city, the project is helping construct a water treatment plant in the Modunaghat area. It is also helps rehabilitate and extend the storage and distribution facilities, especially in the under-served areas. Furthermore, the project supports the updating of Chittagong’s sanitation and drainage master plans, which will help identify priority investments in the city’s drainage and sewerage networks, and for initiatives aiming to improve the city’s urban environment. The project also supports CWASAs pilot expansion of water supply and sanitation services in selected Chittagong slums, bringing better services to the urban poor. Finally, CWSISP aims to support CWASA by improving the sustainability and accountability of operations, and improving coordination for water, sanitation and drainage services between key stakeholder agencies in Chittagong.

**TOWARDS THE FUTURE**

A two-phase restructuring was carried out to this project and the revised objective aims to increase access to safe water supply and improve CWASA’s institutional capacity and investment planning for sanitation and drainage in Chittagong city. Since then, several large works contracts have been initiated and a subsequent restructuring extended the project period to allow to complete a water treatment plant, the Sanitation and Drainage Improvement Strategy and Master Plan, network transmission and distribution rehabilitation works, and key CWASA institutional strengthening initiatives. Implementation of the recommendations of the utility modernization plan is expected to bring further improvements in utility capacity and management.

**EXPECTED RESULTS**

- **650,000** people provided with access to improved water sources
- **89%** of CWASA operational costs are covered from direct water sales revenue
- CWASA achieves utility **maturity level 3**
- **$500 million** worth of priority sanitation and drainage investments identified, prepared and ready for financing
OVERVIEW
Cities in Bangladesh, especially the capital Dhaka, are characterized by rapid population growth which leads to deficit in infrastructures and service deliveries resulting in poor living conditions. Dhaka has over 3.5 million people living in low-income communities where access to water supply, sanitation, and health care is limited. There is no systematic excreta disposal and treatment system. Untreated domestic sewage and industrial waste are illegally discharged into rivers and canals polluting the water. This adversely affects the environment, living spaces and public health of Dhaka’s residents. Studies have highlighted the considerable economic, environmental, and public health costs of pollution and inadequate sanitation. Climate change further exacerbates the challenge with sanitation due to inland flooding.
CHALLENGE

Dhaka’s existing sewerage system serves only about one-fifth of the city’s population. The city has only one wastewater treatment plant which operates at less than half its capacity due to deficiencies in the collection network. The city does not have a well-developed fecal sludge management system. The disposal of fecal sludge and septage from septic tanks is sporadic. About 30 percent of Dhaka’s population disposes off their sewage through drainage networks and open channels which enter the city’s water bodies untreated. Only about 3-4% of the wastewater generated in the city is treated. Bangladesh is estimated to be losing about $3.56 billion due to health-related economic impacts of inadequate sanitation. Health-related productivity impacts of inadequate sanitation are close to $456 million. Studies have found that young children below five-years and poor households bear the highest burden of poor sanitation. Human resources in Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (DWASA) also needs to be strengthened. At present, there is no water and sewer regulator in Bangladesh.

APPROACH

The Dhaka Sanitation Improvement Project will help improve the city’s livability by establishing safely managed sanitation services in Dhaka, particularly in its southern part, benefiting around 1.5 million people. The project will establish sewage and septage treatment facilities which will help reduce inland flooding and water pollution. It will also provide 50,000 new households with sewer connections. Furthermore, to improve the quality of living in slums and low-income housing areas, the project will upgrade toilets and install communal septic tanks and Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Systems (DEWATS).

The project will support DWASA to improve efficiency in sanitation service delivery particularly in customer orientation and implementation of sewer connection strategy. It will help DWASA improve its billing system, as well as its management information system (MIS), Geographic Information System (GIS) for sanitation and IT-enabled customer complaints management. The project will also help to provide trainings to DWASA officials and also rationalize the tariff framework to improve performance efficiency.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- **1,500,000** people with access to safely managed sanitation services
- **50,000** households with access to sewer connections
- **100,000** people benefitting from Alternative (Non-network) Sanitation

**Improved efficiency** of DWASA with Operating Ratio maintained at 0.7 or below

- **150** million liters of sewage treated at Pagla Sewage Treatment Plant

**Reduced pollution** of water bodies
SUPPORT TO DEAL WITH ROHINGYA INFLUX
OVERVIEW
Since August 25, 2017, violence in Rakhine State, Myanmar, has driven more than 745,000 people from the Rohingya community cross the border into the Cox's Bazar district in Bangladesh in what became the largest refugee influx in modern times. The Rohingya are living in extremely congested conditions in makeshift settlements. The influx has put pressure on existing infrastructure and strained the social service delivery systems. The settlement areas lack basic infrastructure and services and are prone to natural disasters, specially cyclones, floods, and landslides. In response to the evolving nature of the crisis, the World Bank has taken a comprehensive, phased and multi-sectoral approach to address needs of the Displaced Rohingya Population (DRP) and the host communities.
CHALLENGE

The vast majority of Rohingya live in 34 extremely congested camps which has added an unprecedented pressure on the areas’ natural resources and led to rapid deforestation and slope instability, further increasing vulnerability of the DRP to monsoon rains, flooding, landslides and disasters. The relocation of households at-risk is underway, nevertheless, there is a lack of sufficient and suitable land to accommodate them. Lack of disaster resilient infrastructural facilities and poor road connectivity puts a serious threat to the DRP. Besides, thousands of poorly positioned and low-quality water and sanitation interventions constructed during the initial phase of the influx pose challenges. Salinity is a further risk to water quality; as are the threats of water-borne diseases which are exacerbated by low awareness among the DRP of good WASH practices.

More than half of the Rohingya population are women and girls and before coming to Bangladesh they were exposed to gender-based violence and now are at risk. At least 80 percent of the DRP are dependent on life-saving external assistance which makes them socially vulnerable. Given the scale and complex nature of the crisis, the capacity building of the implementing agencies regarding emergency response is also critical.

APPROACH

The project aims to strengthen government systems to improve access to basic services and build disaster and social resilience of the DRP. As part of improving access to basic services, the project will ensure increased supply of safe drinking water, improved sanitation facilities and hygiene promotion as well as climate resilient infrastructure for the DRP at-risk. The project will also ensure increased access to multipurpose disaster shelters, resilient roads and evacuation routes resulting in reduced climate vulnerability and multi-hazard risks. Also, the project will strengthen community resilience through increased access and participation in gender sensitive community services, youth-focused workfare activities that will mitigate the risk of engagement in negative coping behavior, tree plantation and gender-based violence prevention and response. For implementation of its components, the project will connect multi-sectoral agencies and strengthen their institutional systems by building their capacity to coordinate and communicate activities.

EXPECTED RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>30 climate resilient multipurpose disaster shelters inside the camps and 23 outside the camps to be constructed to provide shelter to 55,500 people</th>
<th>170,000 people with access to improved water sources</th>
<th>56,700 people with access to improved sanitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100,000 households participating in community workfare and services</td>
<td>205 km climate resilient access and evacuation roads and 25 km internal roads improved</td>
<td>10 climate resilient and bridges constructed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 375 lightning protection systems installed | 1500 solar street lights installed | }

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The project was approved at the World Bank board on March 07, 2019 and implementation has started.
LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR DISPLACED ROHINGYA CHILDREN

OVERVIEW
Since August 2017, more than 745,000 Rohingya fled violence in Myanmar and took shelter in the Teknaf and Ukhia Upazila of Cox’s Bazar district, according to UN estimates. More than half of them are women and are children. They join around 300,000 people displaced from Myanmar in previous years. This has placed an immense strain on an already resource-constrained service delivery system. The Government of Bangladesh continues to deliver humanitarian aid directly and through UN agencies and local/international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Cox’s Bazar is one of the poorest and among the lowest performing districts in the country in terms of education indicators. Recent influx has further exacerbated the education uptake.

The World Bank is helping Bangladesh provide informal education and psycho-social support to Rohingya children through an Additional Financing to the Reaching Out-of-School Children (ROSC) II project on grant terms. The grant will support the response to the immediate education needs of the Rohingya children and adolescents while helping to strengthen the service delivery system of GoB in Cox’s Bazar. Implementation of this of the additional financing is planned for a period of two years till December 2020.
CHALLENGE
Most of the displaced Rohingya population (DRP) are living in congested camps; the mega camps are currently the world’s largest refugee settlements. Around 55 percent of the them are under 18 years of age with very little or, for three quarters of the population, with no literacy skills. BRAC estimates that as many as 73 percent of the displaced Rohingya population have no literacy skills. The education centric response strategy described in the Joint Response Plan (JRP), prepared jointly by GoB and Development Partners estimates around 625,000 children and youth are in need of access to learning opportunities.

APPROACH
The second of a series of supports to help Bangladesh deal with the crisis, the additional financing on grant terms to the Reaching Out of School Children Project II (ROSC II) will help Rohingya children and adolescents avail basic education in Learning Centers. Informal education to the DRP children and adolescents will be delivered following the guidelines of the GoB’s guideline regarding DRP response. This intervention will be aligned with the JRP and follow the MoPME approved guideline for DRP informal education. During 2019-2020, 150,000 primary-aged DRP children will be supported with immediate access to learning opportunities in a safe and protected environment. Informal education activities will be provided in new and makeshift Learning Centers (LCs) in the camps. The DRP children will learn basic English, Myanmar language and basic numeracy skills through informal LCs while life skills and psycho-social activities will be a part of informal education which will teach children to care for themselves, their family, community and the environment and support then have a sense of normalcy. These LCs will have a safe structure for children following environmental safeguards standards. LCs will be strategically placed to benefit majority of Rohingya children. Around 300,000 DRP children and adolescents will receive psycho-social support to recover from the shock and to protected from exploitation. The activities will include cultural events, sports, homestead gardening, home-making, tree plantation, arts and crafts etc.

TOWARDS THE FUTURE
Additional Financing of ROSC II will provide informal education to 150,000 primary-aged DRP children and psycho-social support to 300,000 children and adolescents through an additional financing in grants terms in next two years (2019-2020) along with completing its original targets. The youth of host community in Cox’s Bazar district will receive pre-vocational skills training through the original ROSC II project.

EXPECTED RESULTS
150,000 primary-aged DRP children will be enrolled in 1,500 informal LCs in DRP camps in Cox’s Bazar district
300,000 DRP children and adolescents will receive psycho-social support
2,000 teachers and facilitators will be deployed and at least 50% of them will be female
100 Government Primary Schools (GPS) will be repaired to facilitate informal education teachers’ training
Capacity enhancement of offices and officials of 8 upazila offices and 1 district office of primary education will be supported
Overall strengthening of the service delivery system will be supported through capacity building of the local and central administration
OVERVIEW

Since August 2017, more than 745,000 Rohingya fled violence in Myanmar and took shelter in the Teknaf and Ukhia Upazila of Cox’s Bazar district, according to UN estimates. This has been the largest refugee influx in modern times. More than half of them are women and are children. They live in extremely congested conditions in 34 camps; the mega camps are currently the world’s largest refugee settlements. They have outnumbered the local population by almost three times.

The speed and scale of the influx resulted in a critical humanitarian emergency. Bangladesh has ably coordinated humanitarian support and provided for basic needs and humanitarian partners, both international and national, have responded rapidly to the needs of the displaced population.

Due to the poor immunization status of the Rohingya, an outbreak of diphtheria occurred shortly after arrival, and sporadic outbreaks of measles subsequently. A quick response by health agencies contained the outbreaks with low fatalities and raised immunization coverage among Rohingya children.

The World Bank is helping Bangladesh respond to the health, nutrition, and family planning needs of the displaced Rohingya population as well as strengthen the healthcare services in the Cox’s Bazar.
CHALLENGE

Health, nutrition and population (HNP) services are being provided through 190 health facilities in the camp areas with varying service provisions. Field hospitals in camps make referrals to the Ukhia and Teknaf Upazilla Health Complexes (UZHC) or District Hospital in Cox’s Bazar. Despite these efforts, significant challenges remain:

- Risks of communicable diseases are very high in congested camps and so risks from physical, sexual and gender-based violence are substantial.
- Low exposure and lack of trust to health services in Myanmar led to less demand for services like immunization, contraceptives, antenatal care, safe delivery etc.
- Coordination among the four implementing UN agencies with the two government departments and across the levels of the government – ministry, directorates, district, upazillas and camps.
- Working with other agencies for ensuring other necessary requirements which determine health outcomes like water, sanitation, hygiene, waste management, environment, female empowerment etc.
- Managing host population expectations.

APPROACH

The first of a series of assistance from the World Bank to help Bangladesh deal with the crisis, the grant to the ongoing Health Sector Support Project will help provide essential health and nutrition services to the Rohingya people.

The support follows the following principles: (1) Help strengthen the government’s capacity to respond to HNP service needs of the Rohingya, (2) not replacing the existing humanitarian assistance for the refugees, (3) HNP services to Rohingya population will focus on essential services package and mental health including gender-based violence and (4) medium-term planning.

The government signed agreements with four UN agencies – WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA and IOM for the implementation. The services will be delivered within the camps through community health volunteers, Health and Family Welfare Posts for outpatient services, Primary Health and Family Welfare Centers for basic emergency obstetrics care and outpatient services, and Women Friendly Spaces for counseling for sexual and gender-based violence.

It will also improve the capacity of the existing government facilities adjacent to the camps, including community clinics, Health and Family Welfare Centers, Union Sub-centers and Upazilla Health Complexes. The ongoing project will continue to serve the local population.

EXPECTED RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expected Result</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>86,571</td>
<td>Rohingya children (ages 0-11 months) immunized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19,005</td>
<td>births delivered in an HNP facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>facilities providing an appropriate mix of family planning methods to the Rohingya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>facilities providing emergency obstetric care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>187,500</td>
<td>Rohingya women and adolescent girls received information on sexual and reproductive health rights and gender-based violence in each year for 3 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The World Bank is exploring Cox’s Bazar district-wide health system improvement initiative to benefit both the refugees and host communities.

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OVERVIEW

Bangladesh has shown great leadership and generosity by providing shelter to around 1.1 million Rohingya in Cox’s Bazar district. This has placed immense strain on existing infrastructure and social service delivery, increasing health and disaster risks for all. Further, in Cox’s Bazar, only about half of the medical professionals’ positions are filled in government health facilities. The limited human resources are almost entirely focused on the Rohingya influx, leading to inadequate attention for routine services. The host population has experienced an increased exposure to infectious diseases like diphtheria especially after a diphtheria outbreak in the camps.

Furthermore, the prevalence of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) is high within both the Rohingya and the host community. A survey (2015) on violence against women found that 48 percent of married women in Chattogram experienced violence. GBV response services as part the health system are limited. Some of the gaps include clinical management of rape, psychosocial support/mental health, and age appropriate GBV response services for adolescents.
CHALLENGE

The Rohingya people traditionally had poor access to and knowledge about health, nutritional, and population (HNP) services. Low immunization rates (less than 4 percent) prior to their arrival in Bangladesh makes children more vulnerable to infectious diseases. Contagious diseases as well as water-borne diseases such as cholera, dengue and malaria pose a risk of spreading to the host population. Furthermore, Rohingya women and girls tend to be more vulnerable to GBV. Approximately 52 percent of the Rohingyas here are women and girls, and most have been subjected to GBV prior to fleeing to Bangladesh. While more women are now stepping out of the confines of their homes, stringent social norms, fear of sexual assault, and rising domestic violence remain as risks.

APPROACH

The project will help improve the health, nutrition and family planning services as well as address GBV through preventive and response services in Cox’s Bazar district. It will renovate and upgrade health facilities, including District Sadar Hospital and the Mother and Child Welfare Center in the localities, and the Women Friendly Spaces inside the Rohingya camps. The project will also fill in vacant positions for health professionals and ensure adequate medical supplies.

EXPECTED RESULTS

3.6 million people in Cox’s Bazar (including 1.1 million Rohingya) will have better access to HNP services and GBV preventive and response services

6 government facilities to provide 24/7 maternal health services

99,000 children (0-11 months) who have received three doses of pentavalent vaccines

15,500 women and girls utilizing GBV response services