



## MULTIPURPOSE DISASTER SHELTER PROJECT

# SHELTER FROM THE STORM

### BASIC INFORMATION

APPROVAL DATE:  
**December 16  
2014**

END DATE:  
**September 30  
2020**

TOTAL COMMITMENT:  
**\$375 million**

IMPLEMENTING AGENCY  
**Local Government Engineering  
Department (LGED)**

### 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.

## 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.



## 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