

## SUMMARY POVERTY REDUCTION AND SOCIAL STRATEGY

Country:	Bangladesh	Project Title:	Emergency Assistance Project
Lending/Financing Modality:	Special Assistance Grant	Department/Division:	South Asia Department/Bangladesh Resident Mission

### I. POVERTY AND SOCIAL ANALYSIS AND STRATEGY

**Poverty targeting:** Targeted intervention—geographic

#### A. Links to the National Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Growth Strategy and Country Partnership Strategy

Under the 6th Five Year Plan, Bangladesh experienced GDP growth and prudent macroeconomic management that led to a decline in poverty, particularly extreme poverty, and improvement in some non-income dimensions of poverty and the gender wage gap.<sup>a</sup> Progress was made in building human capital and providing the poorer sections of society with access to health care and basic infrastructure and services, including sanitation and rural electrification, as reflected in improved social indicators. However, progress in income and non-income indicators has not been even across the country, with districts such as Coxsbazar registering limited progress. In view of the positive outcomes under the 6th Five Year Plan, the Government of Bangladesh followed a similar strategy under the 7th Five Year Plan, with four overarching targets: (i) accelerating the average annual growth rate to 7.4% per year; (ii) making growth more inclusive, pro-poor, and environmentally sustainable; (iii) reducing poverty to 18.6% and extreme poverty to about 8.9%; and (iv) providing productive jobs for all new entrants to the labor force.<sup>b</sup> ADB's assistance, as formulated in its country partnership strategy (CPS), 2016–2020 for Bangladesh, builds on the inclusive and sustainable growth assessment included in the CPS<sup>c</sup> and aligns with the government's Vision 2021 and 7th Five Year Plan, whereby ADB will support, among others, easing infrastructure constraints in poverty-stricken areas.

Coxsbazar District, with a population of 2,290,000 and an estimated inflow of more than 700,000 displaced persons from Myanmar since August 2017, is one of Bangladesh's most vulnerable districts, with a 16.6% estimated poverty rate based on head-count ratio and using upper poverty lines.<sup>d</sup> Coxsbazar is one of the 20 (out of 64) identified lagging districts in Bangladesh, with the Teknaf and Ukhiya Upazilas (subdistricts) among the 50 most socially deprived Upazilas (out of 509). Difficult terrain, bad roads, and insufficient infrastructure contribute to poor living conditions. Lack of arable land and consequent dependence on markets for food in Teknaf and Ukhiya drive high levels of food insecurity and vulnerability to price fluctuations and food availability. The area has limited access to drinking water, particularly in remote rural areas, and only one-third of people have a drinking water source in their dwelling. This, combined with low access to improved sanitation facilities, has contributed to high levels of malnutrition. Access to health facilities is restricted by distance and the limited capacity of facilities to provide services. There are serious protection concerns related to trafficking and organized crime in Coxsbazar because of poverty and its position on the border with Myanmar and the Bay of Bengal. Displaced persons have been present in villages in Teknaf and Ukhiya since 1991, but the inflow of displaced persons since August 2017 has been a significant shock to a community that already experiences underemployment, underinvestment, and poor access to services.<sup>e</sup> The government is acting through multiple departments to respond to the influx. The Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, represented by the RRRC commissioner at local level, is the response operations coordinator. Camps have been set up, on-the-ground support provided, and substantial relief items distributed. The government has requested ADB to support easing basic infrastructure constraints in the project area, building on humanitarian support provided by different United Nations agencies, the World Bank, and NGOs.

#### B. Results from the Poverty and Social Analysis during Due Diligence

1. **Key poverty and social issues.** Coxsbazar, especially Teknaf and Ukhiya, has high baseline levels of poverty and environmental vulnerability. The poor and the very poor depend largely on daily labor for their main income source. Most settlements are in rural villages and agricultural plots interspersed with forest, plantations, and ecologically critical areas. Coxsbazar is located in a multi-hazard environment where recurrent extreme weather events undermine households' resilience and livelihoods. Unlike the rest of Bangladesh, Coxsbazar and its surrounding areas are ethnically and religiously diverse districts.<sup>f</sup>

2. **Beneficiaries.** The potential beneficiaries will be the displaced persons living in the camps in Coxsbazar, with benefits accruing to the host communities that have been negatively affected by the population influx.

3. **Impact channels.** The various infrastructure interventions and the provision of basic services through the project will improve living conditions at and build the resilience of the camps in the project area. The rehabilitation and reconstruction of roads will accelerate relief distribution, improve mobility in the camps, and facilitate economic activities and income generation. The provision of clean water and access to sanitation and latrines in and around the camps will improve the health of the communities and prevent waterborne diseases, especially among women and children. Access to electricity and better lighting will result in safer mobility for women and children and help bridge the demand–supply gap for fuel and energy household consumption. The interventions in disaster risk management will enhance the ability of the affected communities to respond to disasters.

4. **Other social and poverty issues.** ADB support aims at easing basic infrastructure constraints in the project area and builds on and complements humanitarian support provided by the government and NGOs through ISCG.



Is broad community support triggered? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
2. <b>Strategy to address the impacts.</b> No action required.
3. <b>Plan or other actions.</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No action
<b>V. ADDRESSING OTHER SOCIAL RISKS</b>
<b>A. Risks in the Labor Market</b>
1. Relevance of the project for the country's or region's or sector's labor market, indicated as high (H), medium (M), and low or not significant (L). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (L) unemployment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (L) underemployment <input type="checkbox"/> retrenchment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (M) core labor standards
2. <b>Labor market impact.</b> This project will not have significant labor market impact as it will generate short-term informal market labor opportunities.
<b>B. Affordability</b>
The project will contribute to restoring the income and livelihood of affected people and does not have any direct impact on affordability, since it will mostly target the rehabilitation and reconstruction of critical public and social infrastructure. However, high demand for construction materials—and related price escalation—may restrict local communities' access to affordable construction materials.
<b>C. Communicable Diseases and Other Social Risks</b>
1. The impact of the following risks are rated high (H), medium (M), low (L), or not applicable (NA): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (H) Communicable diseases <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (H) Human trafficking
2. <b>Risks to people in project area.</b> ISCG is assessing risks of human and drug trafficking; child labor; sex work; and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV; and will flag them as needed within the framework of the project-supported public consultations and awareness campaigns, as indicated in the GESI action plan.
<b>VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION</b>
1. <b>Targets and indicators.</b> The design and monitoring framework includes social and/or gender and development-related indicators and targets at the output level, which are reflected and expanded in the GESI action plan.
2. <b>Required human resources.</b> The LGED, RHD, the Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board, and the Department of Public Health and Engineering will serve as both executing and implementing agencies. The project team will recruit a full-time social development expert for the PIU in addition to the two part-time social development experts assigned to RHD and LGED project activities. The expert will liaise with the Bangladesh Resident Mission's Gender and Development Team on the timely and effective implementation of all social and/or gender and development design features and the GESI action plan.
3. <b>Information in the project administration manual.</b> Social and/or gender and development design features are consistently reflected in section VIII (Gender and Social Dimensions) of the project administration manual. The GESI action plan is adequately costed in the relevant budget items of the detailed cost estimates, with terms of reference for the social or gender and development experts included in the consultants' outline terms of reference.
4. <b>Monitoring tools.</b> The project team will establish a system at the PIU for the collection and analysis of district data disaggregated by sex, age, and ethnicity. The project quarterly progress reports will present the disaggregated data and will include, as an attachment, GESI action plan implementation progress.

ADB = Asian Development Bank, CSO = civil society organization, FY = fiscal year, GDP = gross domestic product, GESI = gender equality and social inclusion, GIHA = Gender in Humanitarian Action, ISCG = Inter Sector Coordination Group, LGED = Local Government Engineering Department, NGO = nongovernment organization, PIU = project implementation unit, RHD = Road and Highways Department, RRRC = Office of the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commission.

<sup>a</sup> Government of Bangladesh, Ministry of Planning. 2011. *6th Five Year Plan, FY2011–FY2015: Accelerating Growth and Reducing Poverty*. Dhaka; and ADB. 2016. *Bangladesh: Consolidating Export-Led Growth—Country Diagnostic Study*. Manila.

<sup>b</sup> Government of Bangladesh, Ministry of Planning. 2015. *7th Five Year Plan, FY2016–FY2020: Accelerating Growth, Empowering Citizens*. Dhaka.

<sup>c</sup> ADB. 2016. *Country Partnership Strategy: Bangladesh, 2016–2020*. Manila.

<sup>d</sup> Government of Bangladesh, Ministry of Planning. 2017. *Preliminary Report on Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2016*. Dhaka.

<sup>e</sup> Needs and Population Monitoring and Assessment Capacities Project Analysis Hub. 2018. *Rohingya Crisis: Host Communities Review*.

<sup>f</sup> United Nations Development Programme. 2017. *Social Impact Assessment of the Rohingya Refugee Crisis into Bangladesh: Key Findings and Recommendations*.

<sup>g</sup> Groups or population identified as Indigenous Peoples within the context of ADB's Safeguard Policy Statement will be referred to in this document as *tribes, minor races, ethnic sects and communities* (following the request of the Government of Bangladesh).

Source: Asian Development Bank.