



# India: Assam South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation Corridor Connectivity Improvement Project

Project Name	Assam South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation Corridor Connectivity Improvement Project	
Project Number	53335-001	
Country / Economy	India	
Project Status	Approved	
Project Type / Modality of Assistance	Loan	
Source of Funding / Amount	Loan 4265-IND: Assam Road Network Improvement Project	
	Ordinary capital resources	US\$ 300.00 million
Strategic Agendas	Environmentally sustainable growth Inclusive economic growth Regional integration	
Drivers of Change	Gender Equity and Mainstreaming Governance and capacity development Partnerships Private sector development	
Sector / Subsector	Transport / Road transport (non-urban)	
Gender Equity and Mainstreaming	Effective gender mainstreaming	
Description	<p>The project will upgrade about 312.5 kilometers (km) of state highways and major district roads (MDRs) in Assam, including six road sections in the western, central, and southern regions. Reduced travel time and vehicle operating costs, and the operation of public transport services, will improve the mobility and accessibility of people in the less developed areas of Assam; and provide a vital link to markets, jobs, social services, and education and health facilities. Improved connectivity from the Assam hinterland to SASEC corridors is expected to spur growth in the entire state. The project will also strengthen the institutional capacity of the Public Works (Roads) Department in climate and disaster resilience, road asset management, and safeguards; and conduct road safety improvement works and a road safety awareness program.</p>	
Project Rationale and Linkage to Country/Regional Strategy	<p>The Government of Assam (GOA) targets building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and fostering innovation to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all in the Assam Vision 2030 released in 2016. The GOA's Assam Vision 2030 has strategic architecture on (i) implementing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as a single synergized initiative; (ii) technology, innovation, knowledge management, and management of change; and (iii) mobilization and utilization of resources. It emphasizes transport connectivity as a strategy to double the industry's share in employment and the net SDP by 2030.</p> <p>In 2021, the GOA launched Asom Mala, a flagship road improvement program to enhance the quality and service of state highway and MDR networks and fill critical infrastructure gaps through effective interventions like the development of alternative corridors, feeder routes, and roads near international borders. The Asom Mala program has identified 31 priority sections of state highways and MDRs, with a total length of 1,296 km, for improvement. The program is funded by the state budget and external financing, including this project.</p> <p>The proposed project aligns with ADB's country partnership strategy for India, 2018-2022, which aims to boost economic competitiveness, create more and better jobs, provide inclusive access to infrastructure networks and services, address climate change and increase climate resilience, and build greater institutional capacities. The project contributes to six operational priorities of ADB's Strategy 2030.</p>	
Impact	Sustainable and inclusive growth in Assam achieved.	
<b>Project Outcome</b>		
Description of Outcome	Connectivity to South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation corridors in the western, central, and southern regions of Assam improved.	
<b>Progress Toward Outcome</b>		
<b>Implementation Progress</b>		
Description of Project Outputs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. State highways and MDRs improved.</li> <li>2. Institutional capacity of Assam PWRD in climate and disaster resilience, road asset management, and safeguards strengthened.</li> </ol> <p>Road safety measures on state highways and MDRs in the project districts enhanced</p>	
Status of Implementation Progress (Outputs, Activities, and Issues)		
Geographical Location	Nation-wide, Assam	
<b>Safeguard Categories</b>		
Environment	B	
Involuntary Resettlement	A	
Indigenous Peoples	A	

Summary of Environmental and Social Aspects	
Environmental Aspects	The project impacts include dust, noise, and air quality impacts; and occupational and community health and safety risks. A consolidated initial environmental examination has been prepared for all six project roads with contract package-specific environmental management plans, which were attached to bid documents for works. The project team held meaningful consultations with affected communities and key stakeholders, and the concerns and inputs raised have been considered in the final alignment and road designs. None of the project roads are located within any notified protected area or eco-sensitive zones that would require environment or wildlife clearance under environmental impact assessment notification. However, three project roads (A03, A04, and A21) require forest diversion. Asian elephant movement has been reported at Komorakata Reserve Forest along project road A21, and elevated road structures have been designed along the elephant crossing points to avoid human-elephant conflict. Three project roads (A04, A23, and A26) are in key biodiversity areas (KBAs). None of these KBAs qualify as critical habitats following the International Finance Corporation's Performance Standard 6 and its accompanying Guidance Note. However, the golden langur ( <i>Trachypithecus geei</i> ), an endangered primate endemic to Assam and Bhutan, is a qualifying species for a critical habitat because of its limited distribution range and considering the two closely located corridors of A03 and A04 falling within it. Mitigation measures have been included in the environmental management plans to ensure that no negative impacts on these species and KBAs occur because of the project. A natural habitat assessment determined that the project will not cause any net loss; rather, it will create a net gain because of afforestation measures. Awareness campaigns will include material on nearby KBAs and key species. The project will conduct a pre-construction assessment of wildlife crossing structures and develop related mitigation measures before construction. A biodiversity expert is included in the CSC to guide and refine the implementation of mitigation measures and monitor their effectiveness. Consultation will continue throughout the project implementation. Concerns will be addressed through the grievance redress mechanism of the state government. The PWRD will monitor the implementation through dedicated PIUs in the project districts, supported by the CSC. The PWRD will prepare semiannual monitoring reports and submit them to ADB for disclosure, both on the ADB and PWRD websites, and conduct annual monitoring during operations until the project completion report is prepared by ADB.
Involuntary Resettlement	The project will minimize involuntary resettlement impacts by constructing bypasses and realignments in congested areas and revisiting the proposed right-of-way at sections of the project roads. Still, the six project roads will require about 375.3 hectares (ha) of private land and 77.72 ha of government land, and about 6,987 households (35,030 individuals) will be affected by land acquisition and resettlement. The impact on about 3,414 households (15,875 individuals), which is about 48.86% of the total, will be significant. The significant impact comprises physical displacement of 769 households, economic displacement of 2,559 households, and both physical and economic displacement of 86 households. The PWRD has prepared six resettlement plans following the relevant acts and policy, and ADB's Safeguard Policy Statement, based on preliminary resettlement surveys, social assessments, and consultations with all stakeholders. The resettlement plans outline the entitlements, summary of public consultations and information disclosure, grievance redress mechanism, and institutional arrangements to ensure orderly implementation; and will be updated based on the information gathered during the award enquiry phase and as the project design is finalized. The PWRD has the capacity and commitment to ensure that land acquisition and resettlement activities are carried out adequately, following all applicable requirements. The PWRD will engage a resettlement plan implementation consultant to implement the six resettlement plans. The PWRD will prepare semiannual monitoring reports and submit them for disclosure, both on the ADB and PWRD websites. An external monitor engaged by the PWRD will monitor land acquisition and resettlement independently to validate the implementation of the resettlement plans, following national requirements and ADB's Safeguard Policy Statement.
Indigenous Peoples	Project road A03 passes through Chirang district; project road A21 passes through West Karbi Anglong and Karbi Anglong districts; and project road A23 passes through Dima Hasao district in Assam. These roads have a significant population of tribal communities organized under their respective councils. Tribal communities own about 336,488 ha of land along the three project roads. About 29% (2,041 households) of the project-affected households are tribal households. The major scheduled tribes affected in the Dima Hasao autonomous district are Dimasas, Vaipheis, Khasi-pnars, and Khelmas. The scheduled tribes in the Karbi Anglong autonomous district are Karbis, Rengmas, and Kuki-Chin people. In Chirang, most are the Bodo tribe. An adequate assessment of impacts has been done in terms of the physical, economic, social, and cultural impacts, including the land tenure system. The project will have no impact on their social and cultural activities. The impacted people will remain in the same village with the same community. An IPP has been prepared, including the following development activities: (i) providing quality educational facilities for each project road, (ii) providing community toilets in marketplaces, (iii) supplying water to the tribe villages, and (iv) restoring heritage and developing tourism. The IPP also documents broad community support for the project that will cause physical displacement from traditional and customary lands and the potential impact on lifestyles. The IPP has been disclosed on the ADB and PWRD websites, and hard copies have been made available at local council offices in the local language and in English. Institutional capacity building of the PWRD is required for the implementation of the IPP and will be supported by the resettlement plan implementation consultant. The PWRD will prepare semiannual monitoring reports and submit them for disclosure, both on the ADB and PWRD websites. An external monitor will be engaged to validate the implementation progress of the IPP.
Stakeholder Communication, Participation, and Consultation	
During Project Design	Intensive stakeholder consultations with vulnerable groups during the project preparation confirmed that the connectivity to other villages, market centers, educational institutions, health centers, and district centers are the major issues of people living along the project roads.
During Project Implementation	Consultation will continue throughout the project implementation.
Business Opportunities	
Consulting Services	PWRD will engage construction supervision consultants for road improvement works, consulting services for institutional development of PWRD, and consultancy services for road safety improvement of secondary roads in Project districts.
Procurement	Procurement (including consulting services) to be financed by ADB will follow ADB Procurement Policy (2017, as amended from time to time) and Procurement Regulations for ADB Borrowers (2017, as amended from time to time).
Responsible ADB Officer	Tanaka, Yasushi
Responsible ADB Department	South Asia Department
Responsible ADB Division	Transport and Communications Division, SARD
Executing Agencies	Public Works (Roads) Department, Government of Assam
Timetable	
Concept Clearance	27 Jan 2022
Fact Finding	21 Mar 2022 to 10 May 2022
MRM	21 Sep 2022
Approval	02 Dec 2022
Last Review Mission	-
Last PDS Update	02 Dec 2022

## Loan 4265-IND

Financing Plan		Loan Utilization			
	Total (Amount in US\$ million)	Date	ADB	Others	Net Percentage
Project Cost	500.00	Cumulative Contract Awards			
ADB	300.00	-	0.00	0.00	%

Counterpart		200.00	Cumulative Disbursements			
Cofinancing		0.00	-	0.00	0.00	%

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Project Page	<a href="https://www.adb.org/projects/53335-001/main">https://www.adb.org/projects/53335-001/main</a>
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