

SUMMARY POVERTY REDUCTION AND SOCIAL STRATEGY

Country:	Nepal	Project Title:	Bagmati River Basin Improvement Project
Lending/Financing Modality:	Project	Department/Division:	South Asia Department Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture Division

<p>I. POVERTY AND SOCIAL ANALYSIS AND STRATEGY</p> <p>Targeting classification: General intervention</p> <p>A. Links to the National Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Growth Strategy and Country Partnership Strategy</p> <p>Nepal's poverty reduction strategy aims to reduce poverty through broad-based economic growth, inclusive social development, good governance, targeted programs, and rural infrastructure development. These objectives have been maintained in the 2010 budget and are supported by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) country partnership strategy, 2010–2012 for Nepal, which proposes support for broad-based inclusive economic growth through key sectors, including agriculture and rural development with investments in rural roads, irrigation, and agricultural research, income generation for marginalized rural areas, information technologies, market support, and extension services. The strategy is structured around four development pillars: (i) inclusive economic growth, (ii) inclusive social development, (iii) governance and capacity building, and (iv) climate change and environmental sustainability. The Bagmati River Basin Improvement Project is expected to improve, enable, and contribute to each of these individually and in a combined manner.</p> <p>B. Results from the Poverty and Social Analysis during PPTA or Due Diligence</p> <p>1. Key poverty and social issues. The poverty incidence (headcount rate) for Nepal in 2010–2011 was 25.16%. The poverty rate is much lower in urban areas (15.5%) than in rural areas (27.4%). The poverty rate is the lowest for 1-person households (3.3%), increases to 7.4% for 2-person households, and reaches 37.6% for households having 7 or more members. Households that are closer to facilities are less likely to be poor than the national average. Having good access to schools, public hospitals, paved roads, markets, agricultural centers, cooperatives, and banks has a large effect on poverty. While households headed by women have slightly lower poverty rates (23.7%) than the national average (25.2%), they are overrepresented in the poorest quintile.</p> <p>The Bagmati River Basin combines urban and rural poverty issues. Basin water insecurity is a significant aggravating factor for both. Current water scarcity in Kathmandu Valley affects every household; members have to spend substantial time, energy, and money to secure their domestic water supply needs. The average duration of water supply in Kathmandu Valley is 0.4 hours per day and the availability of water is approximately 20 liters per capita per day. Most people, particularly the poor, often pay high prices or use contaminated water from shallow wells or rivers. Household sewage is mostly discharged in the Bagmati River and its tributaries. Lack of availability of sufficient water and sanitation facilities is a prime cause of the high incidence of disease and mortality among urban poor.</p> <p>Basis for the targeting classification: The project targets a river basin that has a core strategic importance for the country as it hosts the capital city. The basin has a large population of poor and vulnerable households but is not the poorest river basin of the country. Improving water availability and quality in the basin through better management, particularly in Kathmandu Valley, will have an important multiplier effect for the entire country.</p> <p>2. Beneficiaries. Kathmandu Valley residents who have been experiencing the serious water deficit, worsening sanitation, and continuous degradation of their holy river will be the primary project beneficiaries. They include the urban and peri-urban poor who use the Bagmati River for bathing and other purposes. In the lower reach of the basin, extremely violent floods frequently endanger livelihoods. Investment activities in water management, water quality improvement, watershed conservation, and flood management will directly benefit all, including the poor and socially excluded.</p> <p>3. Impact channels. The project addresses water security issues exacerbating poverty in Kathmandu Valley by improving water governance, restoring river health in the upper Bagmati watershed, and providing rainwater harvesting for households in new urbanizing areas. Flood impacts for the lower Bagmati River will be reduced by the provision of effective flood forecasting and warning systems especially targeting the rural poor.</p> <p>4. Other social and poverty issues. Kathmandu Valley has been experiencing degrading pollution in the Bagmati River and its tributaries, many of which have become open sewers. Augmentation of water in the river to enhance the river environment, and free it of pollution has been the priority demand of all stakeholders. The primary demand of stakeholders for the lower reach of the river basin is to be protected from floods.</p> <p>5. Design features. The project establishes systems and capacity for integrated and participatory river basin management with at least 33% participation of women. The project addresses poverty and social issues through an improved riparian environment that will facilitate 30% employment generation for women from rehabilitations works.</p>
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II. PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERING THE POOR

1. Summarize the participatory approaches and the proposed project activities that strengthen inclusiveness and empowerment of the poor and vulnerable in project implementation.

The project is participatory in all its components. Potential project stakeholders include government agencies involved in water resource development and management; local government bodies such as the village development committees and ward committees; water user associations; households; and other interest groups such as private sector, nongovernment organizations (NGOs), academia, and religious groups. A number of local NGOs and community-based organizations (CSOs), such as Friends of Bagmati, NGO forum, Pro-Public, and Bagmati Sewa Samiti, are very active in supporting conservation of the Bagmati River, including awareness raising and education on sanitation, solid waste management, watershed conservation, and riverbank and cultural sites restoration. The project is developed based on the integrated water resources management (IWRM) principle of which the ultimate goal is to bring stakeholders to share a common vision of water resource management and development. The consultative process initiated since October 2010 during the project identification and design stage will be continued. The NGOs and CSOs working under the project will ensure specific targeting of riverine poor households and provide them with options for their current practices.

2. If civil society has a specific role in the project, summarize the actions taken to ensure their participation.

Civil society is already actively engaged in activities aiming to improve the health of the Bagmati River and are expected to play a critical role in several aspects including (i) promotion of individual household rooftop rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharge, (ii) watershed management in Shivapuri Nagarjun National Park and buffer zones, (iii) solid waste management, (iii) support to village development committees and riverine communities for riverbank management, and (iv) implementation of the project communication strategy and gender action plan.

3. Explain how the project ensures adequate participation of civil society organizations in project implementation.

The project was designed with the participation of NGOs and CSOs. Both the NGO forum and Bagmati Sewa Samiti were part of the project preparatory technical assistance steering committee. The project proposes to ensure CSO participation by engaging them in project activities. An experienced media organization will be engaged to implement the project communication strategy to involve local communities and ensure transparency and accountability.

4. What forms of civil society organization participation is envisaged during project implementation?

CSOs are functional where the urban areas are well established. In newly urbanized areas, the local community is not yet organized. The participation and institutional strategic plan supports the formation of CSOs in new settlements for river health improvement. CSOs will continue to be consulted and informed through project implementation, and some will be recruited for designing and implementing rainwater harvesting and water conservation practices.

Information gathering and sharing (H) Consultation (H) Collaboration (H) Partnership (H)

5. Will a project level participation plan be prepared to strengthen participation of civil society as interest holders for affected persons particularly the poor and vulnerable?

Yes No

The project will be guided in accordance with the principles and actions identified in the communications strategy and the Participation and Institutional Strategic Plan. The key objective of the consultation process is to build a consensus among the stakeholders on how to improve water management in the Bagmati River. This includes collaborative decision on river basin planning and action plan. This consensus will have to be regularly maintained through continuous feedback and stakeholders' information.

III. GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT

Gender mainstreaming category: effective gender mainstreaming

A. Key issues. Although women participate in different activities almost equally as men, their position in key decision-making processes and access to major household assets is far below than that of men. In Kathmandu Valley, poor women, in particular, tend to suffer more due to lack of water, sanitation, and other basic urban services as they are the main collectors, carriers, users and managers of domestic water use. Washing of clothes and utensils in the polluted water aggravates their unhygienic and unhealthy environment.

B. Key actions. Conservation of water source will augment water availability in the river and improve the river environment. Flood forecasting and early warning will reduce exposure of woman and children to flood impacts. Integrated river basin planning will also address capacity strengthening of women and vulnerable communities to improve their contribution to environment protection, watershed conservation, improved sanitation, and healthy environment.

Gender action plan Other actions or measures No action or measure

The gender equality and social inclusion action plan integrates mitigation and enhancement measures designed to empower and increase the participation, role, and status of women in their families and communities. This includes 750 jobs per month generated from rehabilitation works of which 30% by women.

IV. ADDRESSING SOCIAL SAFEGUARD ISSUES	
A. Involuntary Resettlement	Safeguard Category: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> FI
1. Key impacts. The project involves no acquisition of privately owned land and will be limited to the existing right-of-way for the river improvement.	
2. Strategy to address the impacts. No impacts, but a resettlement framework was prepared as a prudent measure to address any unforeseen involuntary resettlement related issues during project implementation.	
3. Plan or other Actions.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Resettlement plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Combined resettlement and indigenous peoples plan
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resettlement framework	<input type="checkbox"/> Combined resettlement framework and indigenous peoples planning framework
<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental and social management system arrangement	<input type="checkbox"/> Social impact matrix
<input type="checkbox"/> No action	
B. Indigenous Peoples	Safeguard Category: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> FI
1. Key impacts. There are no indigenous peoples, as defined for ADB operations, in the project area.	
Is broad community support triggered? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
2. Strategy to address the impacts. Not applicable.	
3. Plan or other actions.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous peoples plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Combined resettlement plan and indigenous peoples plan
<input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous peoples planning framework	<input type="checkbox"/> Combined resettlement framework and indigenous peoples planning framework
<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental and social management system arrangement	<input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous peoples plan elements integrated in project with a summary
<input type="checkbox"/> Social impact matrix	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No action	
V. ADDRESSING OTHER SOCIAL RISKS	
A. Risks in the Labor Market	
1. Relevance of the project for the country's or region's or sector's labor market.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unemployment (L) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> underemployment (L) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> retrenchment (L) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> core labor standards (L)	
2. Labor market impact. No impact.	
B. Affordability	
No impact anticipated. No cost implications or affordability issues affect the target communities.	
C. Communicable Diseases and Other Social Risks	
1. Indicate the respective risks, if any, and rate the impact as high (H), medium (M), low (L), or not applicable (NA):	
<input type="checkbox"/> Communicable diseases (NA)	<input type="checkbox"/> Human trafficking (NA)
<input type="checkbox"/> Others (please specify) _____	
2. Describe the related risks of the project on people in project area. Not applicable.	
VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION	
1. Targets and indicators: The overall impact of the project will contribute to decreasing health hazards due to contaminated water, increasing job opportunities due to a safer business environment especially for tourism, and increasing public satisfaction as the holy Bagmati River can again meet necessary standards for social and cultural uses. The expected outcome is improved river environment and flood management, which will reduce contaminations of people bathing and using water from the river, while increasing water availability in the river and for households. Improved flood management through the provision of a flood forecasting and early warning system will substantially reduce the impact of floods by allowing people to organize themselves and put their belonging in flood-safe places.	
2. Required human resources: The project will provide a gender specialist, a monitoring and evaluation specialist, and social mobilization and development and communication specialists.	
3. Information in the PAM: The PAM includes a comprehensive benefit monitoring and evaluation system. Regular monitoring will be done by project staff and the RBO, when formed, to measure effectiveness and quality of activities. Review missions will monitor implementation of the gender equality and social inclusion action plan review. Midterm reviews and regular reporting on the progress and challenges will be done during quarterly project progress reviews and reporting.	
4. Monitoring tools: The project's monitoring and evaluation unit will monitor the gender and poverty targets with the support of the project management design and supervision consultant.	

Source: Asian Development Bank.