

SUMMARY POVERTY REDUCTION AND SOCIAL STRATEGY

Country:	Bangladesh	Project Title:	SASEC Dhaka–Northwest Corridor Road Project, Phase 2
Lending/Financing Modality:	Multitranche Financing Facility	Department/Division:	South Asia Department/Transport and Communications Division

I. POVERTY AND SOCIAL ANALYSIS AND STRATEGY

Targeting classification: General intervention

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

The deteriorated conditions of road infrastructure and constant congestion in Bangladesh have become a major hindrance in the development of trade and a hardship for daily users. This is further constrained by the mixture of slow and fast-moving traffic. To rectify this issue, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) is proposing to support the improvement of the Dhaka–Northwest international trade corridor through the approval of a \$1.2 billion loan through the multitranche financing facility (MFF) modality. The key activities proposed to be financed are: (i) expanding the Dhaka–Northwest international trade corridor, phase 2—190-kilometer (km) corridor from Elenga through Hatikumrul to Rangpur;^a (ii) improving the capacity of the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) for road operation and management; and (iii) bridging the \$150 million cost overrun incurred under phase 1 of the project (i.e., the Joydepur–Chandra–Tangail–Elenga section).^b

The Dhaka–Northwest international trade corridor will be upgraded to a four-lane highway with separate lanes for slow-moving vehicles. The corridor is currently congested, carrying a traffic volume of 15,000 to 20,000 vehicles per day (excluding two- and three-wheelers), making it the second-busiest artery in the country after the Dhaka–Chittagong road. The project will improve the connectivity between Dhaka and the northern region of Bangladesh as well as with India. The project is strongly aligned with the government's Vision 2021 and the newly approved Seventh Five-Year Plan, (FY2016–FY2020), which aims to remove major infrastructure constraints. It is also in line with the latest ADB country partnership strategy, 2016–2020 for Bangladesh, which promotes investments in transport and urban development.^c The project will be implemented by the RHD.

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

1. Key poverty and social issues. The direct area of influence includes five districts^d covering a population of over 15,000,000.^e Overall, the poverty rate in the districts ranges from 20% to 47%.^f According to the poverty and social analysis (PSA), the main sources of income in the project area are business (40%), day labor (26%), agriculture and crop selling (20%). Nearly 89% of the district residents have access to electricity, 73% use tubewell water for drinking (lower than the national average of 85%), and 93% use wood as the main source of fuel for cooking. The main means of transportation are bicycles (17%), rickshaws (15%), and buses (14%), and walking remains important too (19%).

2. Beneficiaries. The estimated 12.4 million residents living in the project's direct area of influence are the project's primary beneficiaries, as well as businesses and service industries along the corridor and those working in the trade sector.

3. Impact channels. The project is expected to decrease the travel time from Elenga to Rangpur while reducing road accidents and fatalities. The project will broaden the access to markets in the northern region of Bangladesh and improve trade with neighboring countries, particularly with India. This in turn will contribute to economic growth and poverty reduction.

4. Other social and poverty issues. No other social and poverty issues were identified.

5. Design features. The phase 2 design includes 380 km (total for both sides) of lanes dedicated to slow-moving vehicles (i.e., primarily rickshaws, bicycles, motorcycles, and tractors) that are properly separated from the main highway corridor, 25 pedestrian overpasses, and 7.5 km of footpaths. The additional scope for phase 1 includes 30 km of footpaths.

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. From 2014 to 2016, consultations were conducted along the corridor, reaching out to 1,140 people. These included 30 public consultation meetings, 15 focus groups discussions, and special consultations in sensitive areas. Moreover, close to 7,000 households were individually surveyed and informed about project impacts. The participatory process helped inform directly affected people and the residents at large about the project, its benefits, and impacts; also allowed for extensive feedback; and ensured that concerns were taken into account in the final design. Overall, people in the project area demonstrated a high level of support for the project.

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

A nongovernment organization (NGO) was recruited to implement the resettlement plan.

3. Explain how the project ensures adequate participation of civil society organizations in project implementation. Community-based organizations will be regularly consulted as part of the resettlement process.

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

H Information gathering and sharing **M** Consultation **M** Collaboration **H** Partnership

5. Will a project-level participation plan be prepared to strengthen the participation of civil society as interest holders for affected persons, particularly the poor and vulnerable? ☒ Yes. ☐ No.

The NGO responsible for implementing the resettlement plan will conduct regular consultations and information dissemination as soon as it is mobilized. Special focus group consultations with vulnerable affected households will be part of that process.

III. GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT

Gender mainstreaming category: Effective gender mainstreaming

A. Key issues. Tranche 1 is categorized as effective gender mainstreaming. The same categorization is expected for the subsequent tranches given that this is an MFF with a time-slice approach and all activities have been appraised upfront. The PSA indicates that close to 40% of the women in the project area work outside their home. Their key occupations are business (70%), followed by day labor (12%), selling agricultural produce (7%), and teaching (3%). Women's preferred modes of transport are walking (55%) and using rickshaws (33%). Only 5% said they used buses regularly, although the majority (64%) said they would be comfortable traveling alone by bus. The objectives of women's most frequent motorized journeys are visits to relatives, shopping, and getting to work. Women tend to be particularly vulnerable to road accidents because 80% of fatalities are pedestrians or users of rickshaws and bicycles. The project will thus improve women's accessibility to services, workplaces, and markets while making their journeys safer. Overall, the women consulted had a positive perception of the project, viewing it as a way to improve road safety and reduce travel time.

B. Key actions.

☒ Gender action plan ☒ Other actions or measures ☐ No action or measure

The gender action plan (GAP) covers the entire MFF and includes (i) integration of gender-responsive and safety design features (i.e., 380 km of slow-moving vehicle lanes, 37.5 km of footpaths, and 25 pedestrian overpasses; (ii) road safety awareness campaigns along the corridor targeted at pedestrians (50% women), drivers, parents, schoolchildren (50% schoolgirls), and professional drivers; (iii) awareness campaigns on sexually transmitted diseases (STD) and human trafficking (50% women); (iv) proactive measures to support the rehabilitation of project affected women; (v) a target of 15% of road maintenance workers in phase 1 to be women; (vi) a target of 40% of tree plantation program workers in phase 1 to be women; and (vi) impact evaluation of gender responsiveness in phase 1.

IV. ADDRESSING SOCIAL SAFEGUARD ISSUES

A. Involuntary Resettlement

Safeguard Category: ☒ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ FI

1. Key impacts: The project will require the acquisition of 198.94 hectares of private land, affecting 17,200 households (around 53,000 persons), of whom 6,780 (40%) will be physically displaced. Most affected households (70%) are non-titleholders and 16% are vulnerable.⁹ The project will also affect 390 community structures. Given the significant resettlement impacts described above, tranche 1 is categorized as A for involuntary resettlement. The same categorization is expected for the subsequent tranches given that this is an MFF with a time-slice approach and all activities have been appraised upfront.

2. Strategy to manage the impacts. Three resettlement plans and a resettlement framework were prepared for the MFF and are disclosed on the ADB website.^h The entitlement matrix reflects the lessons from the implementation of phase 1, for which the resettlement process is ongoing. The resettlement plans include measures to ensure compensations at replacement cost, shifting and reconstruction assistance, special measures for vulnerable households, and assistance in identifying alternative plots of land to buy or rent. In addition, they include a livelihood improvement program. The RHD will implement the land acquisition and resettlement (LAR) activities with the support of an implementation NGO. The NGO selection process is completed and its staff have been mobilized in May 2017. The RHD is familiar and experienced with ADB's policy requirements: not only is it conducting the LAR process of phase 1, but also of the Greater Dhaka Sustainable Transport Project, approved in 2012 and also financed by ADB. The cost of LAR activities is estimated at \$256.56 million, including administration costs. The budget, which will be entirely financed by the Government of Bangladesh, has already been approved. Capacity development measures will be included as part of the inception of the project, provided by ADB's safeguard specialist and the CSC (Construction Supervision Consultant) resettlement expert.

3. Plan or other Actions.

☒ Resettlement plan ☐ Combined resettlement and indigenous peoples plan
☒ Resettlement framework ☐ Indigenous peoples planning framework
☐ Environmental and social management system ☐ Social impact matrix ☐ No action

B. Indigenous Peoples

Safeguard Category: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ FI

1. Key impacts. The project is categorized as C as per ADB's Safeguard Policy Statement (2009). The alignment does not affect tribal lands, and the survey confirms that no indigenous person is affected. The same categorization is expected for the subsequent tranches given that this is an MFF with a time-sliced approach and all activities have been appraised upfront. Is broad community support triggered? ☐ Yes ☒ No

2. Strategy to address the impacts. An indigenous peoples framework was prepared to comply with MFF requirements.

3. Plan or other actions.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous peoples plan | <input type="checkbox"/> Combined resettlement plan and indigenous peoples plan |
| <input checked="" 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 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.**

L unemployment **L** underemployment **L** retrenchment **M** core labor standards

All civil works contracts under the project will include provisions to ensure compliance with core labor standards (e.g., no child labor; no bonded labor; no work discrimination regardless of gender, race, and ethnicity; and freedom of association and collective bargaining)

2. Labor market impact. The project will not have any impact on the labor market.**B. Affordability.** The project will not affect the affordability of travel by road.**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):**

M Communicable diseases **M** Human trafficking **M** Others: Road safety

2. Describe the related risks of the project on people in the project area.

STD and HIV/AIDS: Overall, Bangladesh is considered to have a low prevalence of HIV/AIDS with a rate of 0.7% reported among high-risk groups.ⁱ The project is on an existing corridor and as such is not expected to contribute to an increase in HIV/AIDS and STD. However, the contractor will conduct an HIV/AIDS awareness program via an approved service provider to reduce the risk of HIV transmission between and among the civil works personnel and the local community, to promote early diagnosis and assist affected individuals.

Human trafficking: Bangladesh is an important source of internal and cross-border human trafficking. Most trafficking routes are by boat in the south or by road in the west toward West Bengal in India. The majority of victims are men who are lured by traffickers with the prospect of getting a job overseas but are then exploited into forced labor. Although it was not possible to obtain official data, local news and print media show that international and rural to urban trafficking is on the rise. However, given that the project corridor is on an existing highway, it is not expected to contribute to an increase in human trafficking. Nevertheless, community awareness campaigns on human trafficking will be conducted along the corridor.

Road safety: the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority recorded 2,394 road accidents in 2015, which led to 2,376 deaths. The actual number is likely to be much higher because many accidents remain unreported. Over 80% of fatalities are vulnerable road users, e.g., pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists. In addition to its safety design features, the project will include a comprehensive community road safety awareness campaign and will target residents along the corridor, schools, and gas stations, as well as professional drivers.

VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**1. Targets and indicators:** These are included in the resettlement plan and GAP.

2. Required human resources: The RHD is recruiting an NGO to implement the resettlement plan with around 10 key experts and 20 field staff. The CSC will have one international and two national resettlement specialists as well as one international and one social development specialist. To review the implementation progress and compliance with the resettlement plan, an external monitor will be hired by ADB under capacity development technical assistance.

3. Information in project administration manual: The manual provides more details on implementation arrangements.

4. Monitoring tools: The resettlement plan and GAP indicators will be the basis for the development of a monitoring system to be developed by the NGO, project implementation unit, and CSC resettlement experts.

^a This includes the Hatikumrul interchange.

^b The 110 km section was approved by ADB in 2012 as part of the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) Road Connectivity Project, which is still ongoing. The earlier project is now considered phase 1 of the proposed project. For more information: <http://www.adb.org/projects/40540-014/main#project-pds>

^c Government of Bangladesh, Center for Policy Dialog. 2007. *Bangladesh Vision 2021*. Dhaka; Government of Bangladesh, Planning Commission, General Economics Division. 2015. *Seventh Five Year Plan, FY2016–FY2020: Accelerating Growth, Empowering Citizens*. Dhaka; ADB. 2016. *Country Partnership Strategy: Bangladesh, 2016–2020*. Manila.

^d Bogra, Gaibandha, Rangpur, Siranjanj, and Tangail.

^e These estimates are based on the Bangladesh 1991 population census taking into account population growth.

^f Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics' 2010 Household Survey.

^g Over half of the vulnerable households are headed by men and are living below the poverty line.

^h Resettlement Plans (accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 2 of the main text).

ⁱ World Health Organization. 2014. *Bangladesh Country Cooperation Strategy 2014–2017*. Dhaka.