

Title: Support to Bangladesh's National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (2015 - 2021)

Background

This programme responds to a request from the Government of Bangladesh to work in partnership to address the diverse challenges of rapid urbanisation. Urbanisation in Bangladesh presents a large and complex challenge. By 2050, Bangladesh's urban population is expected to double. Currently, an estimated 10 million urban dwellers live in poverty and 3.2 million in extreme poverty. These poor communities typically reside in marginal areas and are increasingly subject to climate pressures, inadequate service provision, malnutrition, exploitation, violence and insecurity.

Theme

Building resilience – improving the integration of poor communities into municipal planning, budgeting and management, with a particular focus on women and girls and their climate resilience; piloting of options for scale up and lesson learning at national level to inform overall urban policy and poverty reduction.

Local Context

Bangladesh is rapidly urbanising; its urban centres are struggling to provide the basic services, core infrastructure, livelihood opportunities, effective governance and clear lines of accountability required to address the challenge sustainably. Bangladesh's acute vulnerability to climate change combined with a lack of urban planning and disaster preparedness mean poor households are in a continued state of vulnerability, often residing on marginal lands and being highly exposed to shocks and stresses such as flooding, chronic waterlogging and forced evictions. Urban centres such as Khulna along the southern coastal belt are at particular risk from salt water intrusion and drainage congestion.

People are already factoring environmental issues into their migration decisions, often responding to seasonal flood events by migrating to urban centres for work. Future climate change will intensify these patterns, increasing demands on urban services which themselves will face mounting climate pressure.

What is being done?

The UK is providing £60 million over 6 years (2015 - 2021) to support the implementation of the Government of Bangladesh's (GoB) National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP). Throughout its lifetime, the programme will work in 25-35 towns and cities. Up to £20 million of ICF funding has been made available to support the systematic integration of climate risk into urban development in Bangladesh.

The programme's main activities include:

Strengthening municipal and national government capacity to deliver pro-poor, climate sensitive urban development: Municipalities will be supported to identify and incorporate value for money measures which address the needs of the poorest and enable towns to plan and budget for climate change. Advocacy and lesson learning at the national level will inform national policy and pilot new funding models.

Strengthening community organisations in informal settlements: Building on the success of the preceding Urban Partnerships for Poverty Reduction programme (UPPR), support will be given to low-income community groups to mobilise, identify priorities and establish networks to engage with and influence municipal government.

Improving livelihoods and well-being: The programme will incorporate a number of livelihood and wellbeing activities which address specific challenges faced by the urban poor and women and girls in particular. These include: (i) continuing the focus on improved nutrition started under UPPR; (ii) piloting mechanisms to address violence against women and girls; (iii) developing skills for productive employment and income generation, and; (iv) combating early marriage through stipends conditional on secondary school attendance.

Piloting options to improve land tenure and developing low cost housing initiatives: The programme will facilitate improved land tenure for low-income high density populations and develop low-cost housing where demanded and feasible.

Climate smart rehabilitation of small scale infrastructure: The programme will provide small amounts of grant finance to support community funding and loan mechanisms for climate smart infrastructure

Expected Results

- 35 more effective, inclusive and climate smart towns and cities with improved tax and revenue generation;
- Over 4 million people in slums across Bangladesh directly benefiting from the programme's activities;
- 1.4 million households involved in locally-managed savings and credit schemes, with over £83 million of savings generated by the end of programme;
- 230 urban poor settlements with improved tenure security
- 7,000 households receiving loans for improved and climate resilient housing in urban poor settlements