



Summary of DFID's work in Bangladesh 2011-2015

August 2012

Why we work in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is a country with enormous potential. Since the early 1990s, the economy has grown by five to six percent a year and it has weathered the recent global financial crisis well. Alongside its economic achievements, Bangladesh has made some excellent progress on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), especially in reducing income poverty, getting nearly all girls and boys enrolled in primary schools, and reducing child and maternal mortality.

But Bangladesh is poor, rapidly urbanising and highly vulnerable to natural disasters like floods and cyclones which are expected to get worse with

climate change. Levels of poverty and inequality are still high, with more than four in ten people living on less than \$1.25 (£ 0.77) per day and over three quarters of the population on less than \$2.00 (£1.24). Population growth is a continuing challenge, with about 150 million people living in an area the size of England and Wales. Thanks to the success of family planning programmes, more women now have a choice over whether, when and how many children they will have, and the population growth rate has slowed. But basic services like health and education still need to expand fast to keep pace with the young population, and the quality of these services needs to improve. One in 19 children die before they reach five years old, and around 120,000 babies die every year in their first month of life. Thirty per cent of women are undernourished and over 7,000 die each year due to complications of pregnancy and childbirth. Bangladesh is off track on MDG7 (access to water and sanitation). Contamination of drinking water with arsenic (from natural sources) and sea water are big challenges. The state's ability to finance and deliver services effectively remains weak, and is hampered by unstable politics and high fiduciary risks.



'I feel relieved after opening the store. There was a time when my wife and I would eat just once a day. Now we eat three times.'

Bano Mali, a shop owner



'Before maternal death was dangerously high. But now, the rate has gone down thanks to facilities offered.' Zohra Akhater, a nursing supervisor from the Accelerating Progress on Maternal Health Project

What we will achieve

- Lift 1.5 million people out of extreme poverty by providing training or assets like cows to help people set up businesses.
- Provide access to improved water sources for 1.3 million more people and improved sanitation for 2.8 million more people.
- Help at least 15 million people to cope better with the devastating effects of floods, cyclones and climate change, through access to early warning systems.
- Ensure 500,000 girls and boys complete primary education.
- Support 1.2 million women to give birth safely with skilled carers and improve the quality of care their babies receive.
- Help the Government to provide better and more efficient basic services to more people, as well as help increase the number of people who pay taxes to fund these kinds of services.

Who we work with

The UK has a strong track record of delivering results for poor people in Bangladesh, by working flexibly and in partnership with others. We will continue to work closely with Government of Bangladesh, international agencies such as the UN, other donors and civil society organisations and have signed a Joint Cooperation Strategy. We are also expanding work with the private sector. We work closely with other UK Government Departments to help achieve security and prosperity for Bangladesh.

How we work

The UK's strategy for its development work in Bangladesh builds on the progress already made and aims to help the country achieve its ambition to become a middle income country that no longer needs aid. To maximise the impact of UK aid for poor people, we are scaling up approaches that we know work well, and developing new ways of working in tougher areas. Our top three priorities are:

- Accelerating progress on access to basic services and poverty reduction, focusing on lagging areas and excluded groups including women, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities.
- Supporting private sector development, jobs and skills, as the foundation for more sustainable, equitable and higher growth and development over the long term.
- Helping to reduce and manage risks to development, especially those related to governance and security, natural disasters and climate change and the economy.

In all of our work, we pay particular attention to tracking results and ensuring the best possible value for money. Partner organisations share the responsibility for demonstrating that every pound of UK tax payers' money has been used to achieve real change for Bangladesh.



'We are working for the rights of children all over Bangladesh to help them and their families come out of poverty with UK aid. UCEP is providing 'good value for money' to poor, underprivileged children.'

Brig. Gen. Aftab Uddin Ahmed (Retd.),
Executive Director, Underprivileged Children's
Educational Programme (UCEP)



'I buy charcoal from homes and take it to sell where demand is quite strong. It is not only the monetary help from UK aid but the small business training that brought major change in my life. I can support my family now.'

Meherunissa from DFID's Shiree project

The UK believes transparency is essential to make sure aid resources are used properly and lessons are shared widely. Key DFID transparency initiatives in Bangladesh include:

- Helping the Government to put in place a new Aid Information Management System, to analyse what resources are available and how they are being used.
- Reforms to the Government's public financial management systems – this will improve transparency and efficiency of all public spending, not just aid.
- Work with Transparency International Bangladesh and other civil society actors to generate more debate between the Government and citizens about progress in improving the delivery of services like health, education and legal services, and to tackle corruption.
- An e-registry of all the international treaties, laws and regulations affecting businesses in Bangladesh.

For more information

For a more detailed breakdown of Bangladesh's Operational Plan, please visit: www.dfid.gov.uk/bangladesh
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