In 1960, the construction of Kaptai Dam inundated 40% of the prime cultivable lands in the Bangladesh’s Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) and displaced about 100,000 of the CHT population, resulting in intensified shifting cultivation in all three districts as affected people were resettled. This changed CHT from being self-sufficient in cereals to becoming a food-deficit area. The pressures of land policies (transmigration and awarding of land to migrated persons) and their associated ethnic confrontations aggravated an insurgency that spanned more than 20 years, and ended with the signing of the CHT Accord in 1997. CHT residents were economically adversely affected. Insurgency also damaged much of the rural infrastructure and depleted natural resources.

To help increase rural household incomes in CHT subproject areas, in July 2011, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved the Second Chittagong Hill Tracts Rural Development Project. The project aims to increase in average annual household income in subproject areas by Tk20,000 from Tk63,000 in 2010, and increase income-generating opportunities for men and women in subproject areas.

ADB’s Second Chittagong Hill Tracts Rural Development project is in line with the strategic directions of ADB’s South Asia Department, which focuses on sustainable infrastructure, climate change mitigation and adaptation, human development, regional cooperation and integration, public–private partnership, and good governance.

Project Features

Small village roads and footpaths between and within village and markets.

To increase access to health services, schools, and markets, and provide increased economic opportunities, the project improves access within villages and to union and upazila roads by constructing about 92 kilometers (km) of village roads, footpaths, and steps through community contracts. Communities are also constructing about 100 market sheds.

Improvement of 166 km of rural roads.

About 105 km of union roads; 61 km of upazila roads; 3,884 meters of bridges and culverts; and extension of three functional buildings of Bandarban, Khagrachari, and Rangamati executive engineers’ offices of LGED are upgraded and improved. Of the total proposed road length, 71 km of the roads are in Bandarban, 53 km in Rangamati, and 42 km in Khagrachari.

Small-scale water resources infrastructure.

The project improves small-scale irrigation and water supply in up to 600 villages. About 4,000 hectares receive increased irrigation supplies and 600 villages benefit from improved water supply. Beneficiary communities do the civil works, and are trained in technical and management skills by a nongovernment organization (NGO).

Villagers now have access to health services, schools, and markets, and increase their economic opportunities through the new village roads and footpaths between and within the village and markets.

(continued overleaf)
Project Brief

Project Features

(continued)

Watershed management. Participatory watershed management practices, including vegetative and bioengineering measures, agroforestry, growing and intercropping leguminous crops, composting, mulching of root crops, and small-scale structural works, are done in six sample watersheds. Activities are implemented by beneficiary communities, with support from an NGO, and covers about 55 hectares on a pilot basis.

Micro agribusiness development. Poor rural households increase their incomes through capacity building in high potential commodities, marketing, and organizational skills; learning marketing by establishing common interest groups, comprising 30% women's representation; and improving agriculture production of high potential commodities of CHT, such as pond fisheries, high-value fruits and vegetables, and medicinal plants.

The project was designed through extensive and rigorous consultation with all stakeholders.

Women are included in planning, implementation, and operation and maintenance, which enhance their capacity and role in decision making, and strengthen technical skills.

The Project at a Glance

Cost and financing: Asian Development Fund, $55 million

Project approval date: 14 July 2011

Project themes: Economic growth, Social development, Gender equity, Capacity development

Status of project implementation: Ongoing

Expected loan closing date: 30 June 2019

Executing agency
Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs Bangladesh

ADB department
South Asia Department
Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture Division

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