

Urban Governance and Infrastructure Improvement (Sector) Project



Bangladesh has more than 146 million people, a quarter of whom live in urban areas. The urban population is growing at 2.5% per year. Rapid, unplanned, and uncontrolled urbanization is creating tremendous pressure on basic urban infrastructure and will eventually limit the growth potential of the national economy. Moreover, the concentration of population and activities in a few metropolitan areas tends to aggravate urban environmental problems in the absence of adequate capacities to manage urban growth.

In 2002, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved the Urban Governance and Infrastructure Improvement Sector Project with the aim of helping selected municipalities enhance accountability in municipal management and strengthen capabilities in municipal services; develop and expand physical infrastructure and urban services to increase economic opportunities; and reduce vulnerability to environmental degradation, poverty, and natural hazards. The project also promoted participation of women in municipal management and services and improved the conditions of the poorest and the neediest groups in slum areas.

Key Project Results

Output

- About 1.85 million citizens of 30 towns, representing 6% of the total urban population, benefited
- Basic urban infrastructure facilities, including 400 kilometers of roads, 25 bridges, and 260 kilometers of drainage systems were improved
- About 650,000 people benefited from reduced flooding because of drainage systems improvement
- Living conditions of about 120,000 urban poor (7% of the beneficiaries) were improved through community-based environmental improvement works and slum improvement activities

Outcome

- The project generated about 10,000 person-years of employment opportunities for unskilled laborers, at least one-third of which went to women
- About 20,000 households had improved domestic sanitary facilities, while the public had better access to community toilets
- Tax collection and financial accountability of the municipalities increased
- The municipalities under the project improved their waste collection and disposal efficiency by at least 70%
- Women's income-generating activities were supported through microcredit, particularly in low-income areas
- Administrative transparency of the municipalities improved

Project Features

The project aimed to improve urban infrastructure, including roads, bridges, drainage systems, low-cost sanitation, solid waste management, bus and truck terminals, kitchen markets, slaughterhouses, and slums. To improve urban governance, the project promoted citizen awareness and participation, women's participation, integration of the urban poor, financial accountability and sustainability, and administrative transparency. The municipalities were assisted with project management, detailed engineering design, construction supervision, community mobilization, and institutional capacity-building programs. The investment under the project was linked with municipalities' performance and commitment to governance reform.



Project at a Glance

Cost and financing

ADB, \$60 million; Government of Bangladesh, \$22.8 million; municipalities, \$3.9 million; beneficiaries, \$0.3 million

Executing agencies

Local Government Engineering Department, in close collaboration with the participating municipalities

Implementation period

October 2002–December 2010

Asian Development Bank

Bangladesh Resident Mission

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