

Support to Government of Bangladesh Strategic Priorities

1. The programme will support the Bangladesh 6th Five Year Plan (2011-2015) Accelerating Growth and Reducing Poverty, by contributing towards the objective of ensuring better access for poor and marginalised groups to water, sanitation, health, infrastructure, finance and employment. It will also enable poor and marginalised people to voice their views and concerns on the issues of public expenditure policies and programmes and private sector reform.

2. The 6th Five Year Plan also emphasises establishing equal opportunities for women in all sections of society, with the objective of integrating them better into the social and economic sphere. By recognising women as a heterogeneous group with different levels of deprivation and need, COPE will ensure that context-specific challenges that women face feed into the plan.

3. COPE will support Government of Bangladesh initiatives such as the Multi-sector Programme on Violence against Women with practical guidance and suggestions on appropriate measures and activities to improve the response to violence against women and girls. This includes critical analysis of the interventions to address violence and as well as protection and support for victims including access to basic services and justice.

4. Equity is a fundamental objective of the Government of Bangladesh, enshrined within the Constitution. Welfare levels differ across the country, with four regions in particular showing the greatest level of social need: the Chars, Haor areas, Chittagong Hill Tracts in the south east and the southern coastal belt at the risk of tidal surges and salinity. These regions contain 10% of the country's population. The Social Inclusion and Gender Equality Analysis for a DFID supported Sector Programme for Primary Education highlighted that the poorest sections of the population suffer most from low quality of services. In terms of access to service indicators, the Chars and Haor are the worst. COPE intends to enhance quality in basic services by involving communities in monitoring their quality.

5. COPE will also address other pillars of the Operational Plan, by assisting in improving the quality of health (mainly sector support to public sector health provision), education (sector support to primary education), and social protection services; addressing climate and environmental justice, delivering economic benefits to poor people, and reducing corruption.

6. The implementation of COPE would support DFID's commitment to take forward interventions to expand choice and empowerment and make institutions more accountable to citizens.



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promoting human rights and good governance

Making a
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SUPPORTED BY





CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE POOR AND EXCLUDED IN BANGLADESH

Manusher Jonno Foundation, with support from UKAid and AusAid is embarking on a new programme titled Creating Opportunities for Poor and Excluded (COPE) for the next 3 years (2013-2016) which will enable Bangladeshi NGOs to work with poor and marginalised people. The programme will assist them to access basic services, social safety nets, enforce land and property rights, reduce violence against women, and secure safe working conditions for workers and working children with a living wage. Through collective action, vulnerable and marginalised people will be enabled to challenge institutions that exclude them from the benefits of development, and have a say in high level decisions that affect their lives.

The programme activities will mainly be implemented by small and medium Bangladeshi NGOs who will work directly with poor and marginalised communities. ManusherJonno Foundation (MJF) will manage the programme, provide funding, monitoring, guidance and capacity building support.

In the last 11 years, MJF has demonstrated that in partnership with NGOs and other actors it can efficiently and effectively implement community empowerment programmes to address the needs of marginalised and vulnerable groups, especially women and girls, and national advocacy programmes to change laws and policies. It has also shown that it can work effectively with policy makers and scale up its operations effectively. MJF will work with 122 partner organisations having experience on Human Rights and Governance initiatives.

RATIONALE

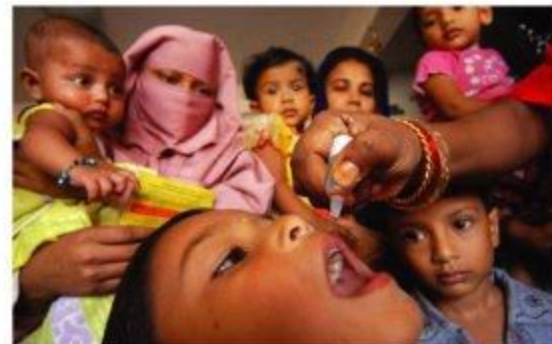
Despite recent achievements and improvements in health and education indicators, over 30% of Bangladesh's people still live below the national poverty line. Even though the economic growth of 5-6% since 1990 and good progress on human development indicators, the basic needs of around one third of the population have yet to be met — Bangladesh has made great progress in creating opportunities for women and girl students but still 40-60% of women experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime.

Almost 1 in 5 people (26 million) still live in extreme poverty. Of these, 11 million people are estimated to be stuck in chronic poverty, with no prospect of improving their condition; 7,000 women die in childbirth every year; 41% of all children under five are stunted, and 36% are underweight which is amongst the highest in the world.

These marginalised people are not adequately represented by decision makers. They are often excluded from the decision making forums. To change this situation, these people need to raise their concerns, be heard by decision makers, and be able to hold those decision makers to account.

How this problem will be addressed

The programme will support partner organisations to organise communities of poor and marginalised people to make them more aware of their rights and entitlements, enable them to claim those rights at the same time making service providers aware of their responsibilities and respond to the demands of the community. The programme will also support collective action to address the institutions that keep those marginalised people poor, improve the capacity of civil society organisations to influence legislation, national policies and implementation.



RESULTS EXPECTED

The immediate outcome will be to give marginalised and vulnerable men, women, and children access to economic, social, political, and legal entitlements, including quality public goods and services. Specifically, over the three years of the programme:

- An additional 1.1 million poor and vulnerable people (215,000 households) will be benefited from social safety-nets (old age and disability allowances, feeding programmes etc.);
- 95,000 victims of violence against women and girls will be helped to obtain medical and/or legal assistance;
- 23,550 more acres of khasland will be leased to poor and vulnerable households;
- 105,000 more workers will be ensured a living wage, or safer working conditions;
- 10,800 potential migrant workers will receive training in safe migration, and how to avoid abuses;
- 48,000 people will be involved in monitoring of the quality of service provision by 600 health facilities, 400 schools and 300 agricultural extension offices;
- 20,000 working children (aged 14-17) will be withdrawn from hazardous work.

Other Important results

Greater dignity and confidence of poor people to stand up for their rights; building the individual and collective power of marginalised groups to enforce change, and the generation of robust, reliable and regular data as evidence of people's perception on the quality services.