

**BHAIRAB BRIDGE PROJECT: ASSESSMENT OF THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL ACTION PLAN**

**[Final Report]**

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## Executive Summary

For construction of the Bhairab-Ashuganj Bridge, the government acquired land on both sides of the Meghna river that affected the owners of small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) and their employees in the area. To remedy the possible negative impact, a *Social Action Plan* (SAP) was prepared to ensure that affected persons receive appropriate compensation and other support to reconstitute their livelihoods. Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh (CCDB) was given the responsibility to implement the plan. The purpose of this monitoring was to assess the achievements in implementing the plan, identify weaknesses, if any, and recommend remedial measures. Several approaches such as review of documents, survey of the affected persons and rapid appraisals with stakeholders were used to monitor the implementation of SAP. The monitoring data were collected in February-March 2000.

The monitoring report covers various aspects of compensation payments and grievance resolution mechanisms of the plan. *The achievement of the project was poor and insignificant* at the time of monitoring. The progress of the implementation of SAP was very slow. In Bhairab side, of the 2,374 project affected persons (PAPs) identified by CCDB, only 102 were compensated, 20 cases were ready for approval but not paid, and 54 cases were in the process. In Ashuganj, no payment was made but 154 cases were ready for payment, 200 were sent to Dhaka for clearance, and 94 cases were in the process.

*No indication of inconsistency between the official and actual payments and no incidence of deduction from payments were found.* However, all affected persons had to pay extra-money in various occasions to receive payments. CCDB never demanded extra-money but asked affected persons to submit supporting documents. Most of the affected persons expressed their dissatisfaction about the performance of CCDB. They had to spend many workdays to collect necessary documents. Each wage labourer, on average, had to pay about Tk. 450 to receive Tk. 2,400.

The Project Compensation Policy (PCP) was generally followed in calculating the amount of compensation defined in the SAP. *The affected persons were unhappy about the calculation procedure, felt that the value of land was heavily under-estimated and demanded actual market value for the acquired property.* The provision of paying Tk. 2,400 for losing job regardless of the type of employment created a negative image on RHD and CCDB.

The information, education and communication (IEC) activities of CCDB were grossly inadequate. The affected persons were confused and expressed their unhappiness about the project. They had little knowledge about their entitlements, compensation procedure and the role of *Grievance Redress Committees (GRCs)*. Although three GRC meetings were held, the committee members had no

time to resolve any complain through GRCs. *It is recommended that CCDB will increase its information campaign efforts.*

There were confusions about the eligibility of wage labourers to receive compensation payments. The decision that the employers would be requested to provide the final list of their workers to be eligible to receive compensation would create more confusion among the affected persons. *CCDB should immediately conduct meetings with wage labourers and inform them the eligibility criteria.* The delay in resolving grievances may affect the credibility of CCDB, RHD and the donors. Given the occurrence of mass agitation against SAP, CCDB should consider grievance mitigation as a priority.

A significant proportion of employees and labourers lost their job. The poor and women constitute the most vulnerable group among the affected persons. Most of the poor women had to live on savings or compensation money and many of them had to take loans from local moneylenders. The women and children are unlikely to be able to come forward to claim compensation for losses. *CCDB should identify them, help them in getting compensation and arrange to provide makeshift accommodations for them.*

CCDB had no work plan in the project for its workers. Thus, it was not possible to monitor their achievement against the targets. They should have detail work plan for each worker based on which their performance should be reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis.

Absence of RHD in the project sites created problems as the GRC meetings required to be conducted by the Dhaka-based RHD official. *CCDB should involve the local RHD officials to chair the GRC meetings.* If GRC meetings are held in Bhairab for both sites, the poor and women from Ashuganj will not be able to participate. *It is, therefore, recommended that GRC meetings should be held in Ashuganj as well.*

While it is too early to suggest the method and time for conducting next monitoring, it is expected that the second monitoring should not begin before the payments of compensation is complete. The most appropriate time for the next monitoring of SAP implementation will be during the initial phase of the resettlement of project-affected persons. A combination of both survey and participatory appraisal methods would be adequate.

## Introduction

### The backdrop

The Roads and Highways Department (RHD) of the government of Bangladesh planned to construct a highway bridge over the Meghna river connecting Bhairab and Ashuganj towns. The government of United Kingdom (UK) has been providing both financial and technical assistance to this project. The acquisition of land and structures on that land on both Bhairab and Ashuganj sides of the river was necessary to build approach roads to the bridge, river training and embankment protection work, and alternative access to ferry ghats. The bridge project already acquired approximately 116 acres (47 ha) of land. Both the Bangladesh and UK governments are required to adhere to the *OECD DAC Guidelines on Involuntary Displacement and Resettlement of Project Affected Persons* (PAPs) in any infrastructure project. A comprehensive socio-economic survey (SES) in the area was carried out to identify the project-affected persons and assess the negative impacts of the bridge project. The findings of the survey were used to prepare and finalise the *Social Action Plan* (SAP) for the resettlement of the PAPs. The SAP included measures for mitigation of adverse impact on affected persons, parameters for entitlement, grievance resolution mechanisms, cost estimates, implementation timeframe, and monitoring and evaluation of the project. The SAP aimed to ensure that PAPs receive appropriate compensation and other forms of support so that they can reconstitute their livelihoods. Continued financing of the bridge project depends on successful implementation of SAP and resolution of disputes according to the DAC guidelines.

According to an estimate, about 250 households, 600 small and medium enterprises, and various occupational groups were affected by the bridge construction, either in terms of losing land and structure or both (DFID 1999). In addition, their livelihoods were likely to be negatively affected because of the loss or disruption of local markets and activities. The owners of the large-scale commercial enterprises were able to self-monitor and put pressure on the authorities to ensure their entitlements from the project. The poor people, women and children and those in the informal sector or wage employment were more at risk. It was, therefore, felt that the impact of the construction of the bridge on poor people such as petty enterprises, wage labourers and ferry workers should be monitored. Christian Coalition for Development in Bangladesh (CCDB) was given the task of implementing the SAP. The Roads and Highways Department (RHD) of the government of Bangladesh had the overall responsibility of implementing the project. The Research and Evaluation Division of BRAC was requested by the Department for International Development (DFID) of UK to monitor the implementation of SAP.

## **Purpose and scope**

The purpose of the monitoring was to assess the achievements in implementing the Social Action Plan, identify any weaknesses, and recommend remedial actions, if needed. More specifically, the monitoring has focused on the

- a. actual compensation paid in relation to entitlements described in the SAP;
- b. assessment of any deduction from compensation payment;
- c. methods of calculation of compensation actually paid by CCDB; and
- d. methods used in dealing with appeals or grievance procedures.

Based on the findings, the recommendations about mid-term independent monitoring of the SAP was presented. As the implementation of the project began at the end of 1999, it was too early to examine the amount of compensation paid or assessment of deductions from compensation payments. This decision in no sense implies that the compensation issues have been overlooked. Rather, it recognises that the project has only been able to monitor the problems and procedures used in implementing the SAP at the moment.

## **Methods**

### **Study design**

The approach followed in conducting the monitoring was based on the experience of the inception visit to the project sites by the consultants and the discussion with the DFID Bangladesh. A combination of several methods such as reviewing relevant documents of the project, a sample survey of the PAPs, rapid appraisals such as focus group discussions (FGDs), in-depth interviews with various stakeholders and case studies were used. The idea was that the use of several approaches would provide an opportunity to verify and triangulate the data generated from various sources.

### **Review of documents**

The SAP for implementation document, socio-economic survey report of Rural Development Movement (RDM), OECD Guidelines for AID agencies, minutes of the meetings on SAP, memorandum submitted by various groups of PAPs were reviewed to understand the process and difficulties of the project.

### Sample survey

A rapid survey was conducted to get a wider picture of the current situation of the project-affected persons and the status of the compensation payments. The SAP for implementation document provided information of the number on directly affected households, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and population (Halcrow 1999). The number of affected persons was much higher in Ashuganj than Bhairab. Initially, a random sampling procedure was planned for the survey. During the inception period, it was found that the compensation payment began only at the end of 1999 and only a small proportion of the PAPs received the payments. The disbursement was not proportionately made between the PAPs of both Bhairab and Ashuganj and among various sub-groups. It was, therefore, decided that the sample of project affected persons in both Bhairab and Ashuganj sites should be purposively distributed among various sub-groups such as persons who lost land, business and job by sex. Thus, although PAPs from various categories were included in the survey, the total sample was not necessarily representative of the affected persons of the project.

A total of 191 PAPs were interviewed, 75 from Bhairab and 116 from the Ashuganj sites were selected (Table 1). Of them, 156 PAPs lost their land and/or business structure but not received compensation, 27 PAPs lost their structure and received compensation from the CCDB, and 8 affected persons received nothing from CCDB as yet. In addition, information of 263 PAPs who received or expected to receive their wage entitlements from the CCDB were also collected.

Table 1 Distribution of sample PAPs by the nature of compensation received

Nature of compensation	Project site		All
	Bhairab	Ashuganj	
Lost land/SMEs	55	101	156
Lost structure	16	11	27
Nothing	4	4	8
Total	75	116	191

### Participatory appraisal

The participatory appraisal exercises were used to assess the process of implementation of SAP, identification of problems experienced by the implementing agencies and examining the mitigation measures adopted by these agencies. To identify specific problems and remedial measures, a series of

focus group discussion (FGDs) sessions was conducted with different sub-groups of the stakeholders such as project affected persons of SMEs, large business owners, those who lost their jobs as employees of SMEs and female labourers. A large number of PAPs, particularly the women labourers in Ashuganj site, were not available as their workplace and adjacent homes were demolished. Some of them were found in other locations in the neighbourhood where FGD sessions were held. A number of PAPs was purposively selected from among the most disadvantaged PAPs, such as women and labourers, for case studies.

### **In-depth interviews**

The process and problems of the project, as viewed by the implementing agency (CCDB), were captured by using a simple check list. The documents of CCDB were reviewed. Six FGDs and eight in-depth interviews were conducted with selected staff of the implementing agencies. The data were collected during February-March 2000.

## **Findings**

### **Entitlement and disbursement**

The construction of the bridge directly affected 192 households and 405 SMEs who were eligible to receive compensation according to the Social Action Plan (Table 2). In addition, 36 households and 272 SMEs were expected to experience some secondary impacts. The total member of directly affected persons was 938 (Halcrow 1999).

Table 2 Number of directly affected households, SMEs and population

Type and population	Project site		All
	Bhairab	Ashuganj	
Type			
Households	47	145	192
SMEs	27	378	405
Total	74	523	597
Population			
Male	145	321	466
Female	137	335	472
Total	282	656	938

Source: Halcrow 1999



The SAP also estimated a total of 2,760 affected persons in both sites when secondary impact areas (SIAs) were also considered (Halcrow 1999). CCDB identified 2,374 PAPs for compensation at the time of monitoring. Most of them were located in Ashuganj (Table 3).

Table 3 Compensation status of the project affected persons by project site

Compensation from CCDB	Project site		All
	Bhairab	Ashuganj	
No. of PAPs identified	480	1894	2374
No. of PAPs compensated	102	154	256
% Compensated	21.3	8.1	10.8
Type of compensation			
SME	38	21	59
Employee	22	89	111
Female (chatal) labourer	--	44	44
Others*	42	--	42
No. of cases ready for clearance	20	200	220
No. of cases in process	54	94	144

\* Shifting from Bangladesh Railway land, illegal occupation, wage labourers, etc.

For the monitoring purpose, the affected persons were classified into four categories:

- a. Owners or occupants of land or residential structures;
- b. Owners or permanent employees of SMEs;
- c. Leaseholders or occupants of SMEs and mobile vendors; and
- d. Vulnerable groups such as women and children working in the project sites.

According to the latest information received from CCDB offices in the project sites, 102 compensations were already paid in Bhairab (Table 3). In Ashuganj, however, no payment was made but 154 payments were ready for disbursement. If we consider these as disbursed, the total number of PAPs compensated was 256 in both sides. According to this estimate, nearly 10.8% affected persons received compensation including 154 not yet disbursed as of the date of data collection.

The status of compensation payments was much better in Bhairab (21.3%) than Ashuganj (8.1%). In Bhairab site, CCDB compensated 38 SMEs, 22 employees of these SMEs. Although no female (chatal) labourers were identified in Bhairab, there were 15 affected households among others

most of whom used to live in Bangladesh Railway staff quarters on rental or sub-leased agreements. The railway staff, affected by the demolition, were yet to be completely rehabilitated by the Bangladesh Railway in the remaining rail quarters. In addition, 25 wage labourers also received their dues. On the other hand, compensation payments were disbursed or ready to disburse for 21 SMEs, 89 employees and 44 female wage labourers in Ashuganj. In addition, 220 claims were ready for clearance from Dhaka office and 144 were in the process.

CCDB experienced difficulties in convincing PAPs to take photographs and prepare ID cards particularly in Ashuganj. In Bhairab site, 150 ID cards were prepared and 250 more were in the process. On the other hand, no card was issued in Ashuganj although nearly 400 were under process.

### **Assessment of deductions**

The Social Action Plan (SAP) for Implementation correctly identified a variety of losses of the affected households and SMEs (Halcrow 1999). The opportunity cost of the PAPs to receive payments and other indirect expenditures such as fees to manage certificate, etc. were not considered in designing the SAP. During this monitoring, no indication of inconsistency between the official and actual payments was detected and no incidence of deduction from compensation payments was found. However, all project-affected persons had to pay extra-money in various forms and in many occasions.

The affected persons, who received compensation from the government offices, reported to have paid roughly 10% of their entitlements as bribes. CCDB never demanded extra-money from the affected persons but asked to submit supporting documents such as photocopies of the legal document in support of their claims, certificate from the Chairman of the local Municipality or Union Parishad and bank account number along with the identity card. The Union Parishad and Municipality were reported to charge Tk. 50 for each certificate as fees. Opening a bank account required another Tk. 200 to 300. The illiterate and poor affected persons (mostly female wage labourers in Ashuganj) had difficulties in opening bank account. The bank manager was not very willing to open bank account for illiterate and poor persons. Some of the PAPs had to pay Tk. 50 as unauthorised fees to local agents to help open a bank account. They will probably have to pay again while closing their account as they do not need a bank account operational in future. As estimate shows that a wage labourer or an employee has to pay and deposit around Tk. 450 to receive Tk. 2,400 as compensation.

### **The method of calculation**

The *Project Compensation Policy* (PCP) was designed to meet DAC-OECD requirements to cover compensation for lost assets and restore the livelihood of all project-affected persons. It was decided

that the PAPs would receive cash compensation at the market price along with shifting allowance or cash assistance to re-establish businesses. The Deputy Commissioners (DC) of the relevant districts were given power to permanently acquire necessary land for constructing the bridge. Also, in determining the value of land and property, the DC had the authority to review the transaction of land and property in the locality over the last one year. The DC's offices reviewed the land transaction in the respective locality to determine the market rate. A premium of 50% of the assessed value of the property was added as per the ordinance amended in 1993 for compulsory acquisition of the property. In other words, the Project Compensation Policy had generally been followed in calculating the compensation amount as defined in the SAP implementation policy.

However, PAPs expressed their unhappiness about the calculation procedure of the Social Action Plan. They felt that the value of land calculated by the DC's office was heavily under-estimated and under-priced. Traditionally, the official price (as registered in legal documents) is always been shown deflated than the actual price during the transfer of land or property. The purpose is to reduce the transfer fees and other dues payable to the government. The PAPs, therefore, demanded that the actual market value, instead of official transaction price, should be the basis in calculating the compensation of land.

The method of assessing compensation was not clearly stated in the *LAR Entitlement Policy* (Halcrow 1999) in some cases that has caused problems. For example, assessing compensation for trees based on age of tree and value of fruits was unclear that created confusion even among the workers of the implementing agency. Similarly, house construction grant up to Tk. 4,000 or 5% of *Cash Compensation by Law (CCL)* was found severely under estimated in many cases. The provision of paying Tk. 2,400 each for losing job regardless of the position or salary of the employees also frustrated most of the PAPs who lost their jobs. This has created a negative image of the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) and CCDB.

### **IEC activities**

The public consultation process in the project sites began in mid 1995 with a series of meetings with primary and secondary stakeholders in Bhairab and Ashuganj to discuss the project impacts and appropriate mitigation measures for the affected persons. The affected persons in both communities showed very favourable attitudes towards the SAP. According to that plan, CCDB had given the responsibility in mid 1999 to implement SAP. CCDB opened two field offices in September and October 1999.

According to the Social Action Plan, CCDB was expected to publish brochure and leaflets explaining the impact of the bridge project, compensation policies for the project affected persons,

resettlement options and tentative implementation schedule of the SAP. CCDB was also expected to keep the affected people informed about land acquisition plan and compensation policy and payments. Nearly five months after beginning the implementation of SAP when the demolition of houses and SMEs was completed, most of the PAPs knew very little about where to go and what to do to receive compensation. Till this monitoring, no information campaign such as public announcements, distributing posters and leaflets, etc. was organised in the project sites. As a result, the community in general and the affected persons in particular had very little knowledge about the entitlements and the procedure to receive compensation. Our data indicate that only of the 16.3% PAPs were aware about the role of Grievance Redress Committees (GRCs). Of them, 8.4% PAPs knew only that GRCs were formed to collect their complains and send these to RHD in Dhaka. Only 6.4% were aware of the actual role of GRCs. So far, only 1.6% PAPs formally raised complains in GRCs. Although CCDB had conducted some FGDs in both sites but the performance of such meetings was unsatisfactory.

Table 4 Awareness about GRC and its role by the project site

GRC issues	Project site		All
	Bhairab	Ashuganj	
Awareness about GRC	13.3	18.3	16.3
Role of GRC			
Collect grievances	9.3	7.8	8.4
Dispute resolution	12.0	2.6	6.3
% Raised complains	0	2.6	1.6
% Satisfied with GRC*	NA	NA	NA
N	75	116	191

\* Not applicable because no GRC meetings were held.

CCDB, however, formed the *Resettlement Advisory Committees (RACs)* in November 1999 in both sites. The committee formation and member selection in Bhairab seemed appropriate. In Ashuganj, one member of the four-member committee was reported to permanently live in Dhaka. Although three RAC meetings were held in each site, the committee in Ashuganj could not to ensure community participation in implementing SAP. This was reflected in the organised opposition from the affected persons particularly in Ashuganj.

The progress in implementing SAP was very slow. One of the reasons was inadequate presence of CCDB in the project sites. CCDB in Ashuganj had full time *Field Co-ordinator* but the *Field Co-ordinator* in Bhairab was rarely available to co-ordinate the activities planned and to provide necessary guidance for his team. Only one instead of two *Land Surveyors* had to cover both Bhairab and Ashuganj. Similarly, only three *Re-settlement Workers* were found to work in the project sites. CCDB field offices had no work plan and no target for its field staff. Thus, it was not possible to monitor their achievement against targets. The workers in both the field offices, including the *Field Co-ordinators*, were uncertain about the required time to complete this phase (payment of compensation to the PAPs) of their assignments.

### **Grievance Redress Committee (GRC) and the outcome**

According to the *Land Acquisition and Requisition Ordinance II of 1982* and as decided in the SAP for Implementation, two *Grievance Redress Committees (GRCs)* were formed in Bhairab and Ashuganj. The purpose of these committees was to resolve resettlement related disputes such as disagreement regarding the amount of benefits, the place of relocation, etc. The GRC included the *Sub-Divisional Engineer (SDE)* of the *Roads and Highways Department (RHD)* as Chair, three members of the Union Parishad as the local government representatives, one representative of the affected persons and the *Field Co-ordinator* of CCDB in each site. Although GRCs were formed in November 1999, only three meetings, two for Bhairab and one for Ashuganj PAPs, were held in Bhairab. CCDB received hundreds of complains to be discussed and resolved in GRCs. Although three GRC meetings were held, the committee members had little time to discuss any case and, thus, no dispute was resolved through GRCs.

The causes of poor performance of GRCs were investigated by discussing with CCDB officials and the selected members of the committees. A number of reasons were identified. First, the Chairman of both the GRCs happened to be a junior official of the RHD who had limited authority to decide on important issues. Second, the Chairman had little time to attend GRCs. He was stationed in Dhaka and had rare opportunity to visit the project sites. During his visits, he used to meet PAPs of both Bhairab and Ashuganj sites at the same time. It was observed that the Chairman, in one of such visits, reached Bhairab at 2 p.m. and spent his initial hours in signing on the vouchers and compensation cheques. He, then, had a meeting with the members of GRCs and explained the policy of the government as outlined in SAP and the GRC procedures to the members of the GRCs. This indicated that CCDB was not able to inform the GRC members about the role and responsibilities of its members. Although a number of complaints was scheduled to be discussed and decided in that GRC meetings, the meeting ended at 9 p.m. without any discussion at all.

There were confusions about the eligibility of wage labourers to receive compensation. Rural Development Movement (RDM), during its survey, prepared a list of eligible employees most of whom were temporary workers. When the development of SAP was in the final stage, it was found that many temporary workers were replaced by new recruits who also began to claim for the compensation. The new recruits were then advised by CCDB to file complaints in GRCs. In GRC meetings in February, the Chairman announced that the employers would be requested to provide the final list of their workers to be eligible to receive compensation. This decision was expected to create more confusion among the PAPs and encourage more application to be filed to the GRCs.

The implementation of SAP clearly stated that any grievances submitted to the GRC should be resolved within a period of 2 to 3 weeks. Unfortunately, this was never been the case. The delay in resolving their grievances may affect the credibility of CCDB, RHD and the donors. Given the possibility of mass agitation and opposition from the community in Ashuganj, CCDB should consider grievance mitigation as a priority. The Chairman of the committee should make himself available for a series of days in both Bhairab and Ashuganj project sites to attend GRC meetings and resolve most of the disputes as soon as possible.

### Impact on women and children

The socio-economic survey report, prepared by RDM, was used as baseline data in identifying various categories of project affected persons and possible impacts on them by the project. According to that report, more than 1,100 workers were employed in SMEs. The dislocation of such businesses would affect them and it was estimated that a significant proportion of workers would loss their employment (RDM 1999).

Table 5 Background information of employees and labours of SMEs

Background information	Project site		All
	Bhairab	Ashuganj	
Mean employees per SME	8.27	12.6	10.5
% Female headed households	4.0	6.9	5.8
Mean <5 children per household	2.05	1.8	1.9
% Demolished	100.0	58.8	61.2
N	75	116	191

The survey indicates that 11 persons, on average, were employed in each small and medium enterprise that were demolished or shifted to other locations (Table 5). The proportion of employees per SME was significantly higher in Ashuganj (12.6%) than Bhairab (8.3%). Of the affected households, only 5.8 were headed by women most of whom were divorced or widowed. Again the proportion was higher in Ashuganj than Bhairab site. Each household had about 2 (<5 year-old) children. About 58.8% of the SMEs were demolished in Ashuganj while demolition was complete in Bhairab site.

Table 6 Resettlement status by the type of affected persons

Resettlement status	Type of PAPs		
	Labourers	SMEs	All PAPs
Unemployed	47 (38)	61 (66)	55 (104)
New job/business	44 (36)	39 (42)	41 (78)
Re-employed	9 (7)	--	4 (7)
N	81	108	189

Frequencies are shown in the parentheses.

Nearly 55% affected persons remained unsettled while 41% were able to start a new venture (Table 6). Among the labourers, 47% remained out of work while 44% were able to find a new job. About 9% were re-employed by the same employers in other locations. Among the affected SMEs surveyed, 61% were unable to re-open their businesses while only 39% were able to re-open their shops.

The occupational change and relevant problems as a result of the loss of employment, at least for a short period, seemed obvious as relocated SMEs were not expected to go into operation immediately and as many workers were unlikely to get similar job in the nearby areas. The findings of the study (in Table 7) support this assumption as about 29% employees and labourers lost their job. The pattern of occupational change clearly shows that a significant proportion of employees such as store manager, accountant and salesman lost their job or forced to accept other less prestigious jobs.

Table 7 Change of occupation among the employees of SMEs

Type of occupation	Before	After
Unemployed	---	29.3
Store Manager	6.8	4.2
Accountant/Cashier	4.6	0.8
Salesman	24.2	17.0
Petty Trader	3.8	2.3
Day Labourer	58.9	44.9
All others	1.6	1.6
N	263	263

RDM survey estimated that 907 women of different age would be affected by this project representing nearly half of all affected persons. Some of them had their own businesses while about 38% were employed as wage earners at other SMEs mainly in rice mills (RDM 1999). When monitoring of the implementation of SAP was conducted, most of the rice mills (or chatals) were demolished and the wage labourers were not available for interviews since their residence were also demolished by the project. Many of them moved to other rice mills in the neighbourhood. Some of them had to change their occupation. The monitoring team, however, was able to locate some of the affected women working in other rice husking facilities. A series of FGDs with them revealed that they were the most affected persons of the Bhairab-Ashuganj bridge project. Most of them were of mid age with mean age of 30 years. Of the surveyed women, 23% were either divorced or widowed. On average, they had 3 (<5 year-old) children. They constituted the most vulnerable group among the project-affected persons.



Table 8 Assistance desired for resettlement by the affected persons

Type of assistance	Type of PAPs		
	Labourers	SMEs	All PAPs
Accommodation/land	24 (19)	53 (66)	42 (85)
Business opportunity	4 (3)	29 (36)	19 (39)
Job creation	42 (33)	--	16 (33)
Increase compensation	19 (15)	13 (16)	15 (31)
Providing loan	2 (2)	5 (7)	5 (9)
No idea	9 (7)	--	3 (7)
N	79	125	204

Frequencies are shown in the parentheses.

While most of the affected persons, regardless of their status, sought assistance for their resettlement, resettlement on the land owned by them, either for accommodation or business was their major demand (Table 8). This demand was higher among the SMEs (53%) than the labourers (24%). While about 29% of the SMEs desired assistance to re-open their own business, about 42% of the labourers/employees demanded job as nearly 47% (in Table 6) of them were unemployed. A significant proportion (15%) of the PAPs was unhappy about the compensation rates and demanded increase in compensation rates. Only 5% affected persons requested for credit facilities to open their own business. As expected, the proportion who sought credit was smaller among the labourers as they had little opportunity to open businesses of their own.

Table 9 Use of compensation money by the affected persons

Type of the use	Type of PAPs		
	Labourers	SMEs	All PAPs
Not used	54 (43)	50 (60)	51 (103)
Household expenditure	21 (17)	19 (23)	20 (40)
Invest in business and house	--	18 (22)	11 (22)
Repaid loan	5 (4)	13 (15)	10 (19)
Not received money	20 (16)	--	8 (16)
	80	120	200

Frequencies are shown in the parentheses.

Table 9 indicates that about 51% of the affected persons did not spend the compensation money. Nearly 20% spent that money for household expenditure while only 11% have invested in businesses. Among the labourers, 20% were yet to receive the compensation. A significant proportion (18%) of the owners of SMEs re-invested the compensation money and 13% used to repay their loan.

The FGDs and in-depth interviews with them revealed that they were still trying to find work in the rice mills near the ferry ghat in Ashuganj as most of them were either unemployed or under-employed. As most of them used to live near their previous workplaces already demolished, they lost their accommodations as well. Some of them took temporary shelter made by polythene and plastic sheets inside the rice mill compounds. Most of them had no kitchen facilities, safe drinking water supply and sanitary toilet facilities. As many SMEs in the area were closed, the demand and the wage rate of these women in the labour market fell. Most of the poor women had to live on their savings or compensation money and many of them had to take loans from the local moneylenders. Their income has reduced by 50%.

It seems that compensating the poor and affected women received less attention by the SAP implementing agency. One of the complaints was that the poor and affected women had to spend many workdays to collect necessary documents and nearly Tk. 300 to receive the compensation benefit. They expressed their dissatisfaction about the performance of CCDB. '*CCDB always demanded documents -- photograph, certificate, bank account -- one after another but never helped to get those*', they complained. They had bitter experience in getting those documents from the Union Parishad

Chairman and the bank. They had to spend many workdays and about Tk. 450 to receive the compensation.

## **Recommendations and Options**

### **Remedial measures**

The affected persons preferred in favour of self-relocation within the vicinity of their demolished structures for access to business and to maintain their economic activities and kinship ties. Since most of the affected persons had no place to live, providing opportunities to stay and live in a permanent basis are expected to reduce most of their problems. As one affected woman requested, '*Tell the government to provide us a piece of land for accommodation. We will pay the price in installments.*' Accommodation was the prime demand of most affected women. Access to credit facilities and an increased amount of compensation money would help them in investing in business of their own. In addition, monitoring team identified several other measures that the implementing agencies should consider.

#### *Information campaign will reduce misinformation*

Very little has been done so far to inform the objectives and benefits of the Social Action Plan and procedure that should be followed to implement it. As a result, the PAPs, particularly the poor and women, have remained confused and expressed their unhappiness about the project. CCDB thought that an information campaign would unduly raise the expectation about the benefit package that the RHD and other partners might find them difficult to provide. Thus, maintaining a low profile in the project sites was considered a better implementation strategy. It is now clear that this strategy created considerable negative images about RHD and CCDB among the affected persons that might have substantially reduced the credibility of the partners of the bridge project. It is recommended that CCDB will increase its information campaign efforts in the community.

#### *A comprehensive implementation plan would help CCDB*

CCDB did not have a work plan for its field staff in the project. Thus, the project workers did not know exactly what should be the expected output at the end of the day or week. It is recommended that they should have detail work plan for each worker based on which their performance should be reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis.

*CCDB should involve local, not Dhaka-based RHD official in GRCs*

Under the current system, the GRC meetings are required to be chaired by a Dhaka-based RHD official. The compensation cheques are also required to be signed by him. Lack of availability of the RHD official in the project sites created problems for both CCDB and the affected persons. RHD has its own establishment in Bhairab with officials in residence. One local RHD official might be given the responsibility to chair the GRC meetings and supervise the implementation of SAP.

*Rehabilitation of women and children should get priority*

The women and children were identified as the most vulnerable groups among all the project affected persons. It is unlikely that most of them will be able to come forward to claim their compensation for their losses. Thus, CCDB should move forward to identify them, help them re-employed as part of resettlement, and arrange makeshift accommodations for them.

*GRCs should also be held in Ashuganj*

The Grievance Redress Committee (GRC) meetings were never held in Ashuganj although two meetings were scheduled (one for each site) to be held in Bhairab. If GRC meetings for both sides are held in Bhairab only, most of the PAPs of Ashuganj, particularly the poor and women, will not be able to participate. It is, therefore, recommended that GRC meetings should be held in Ashuganj as well.

**Next monitoring**

The implementation of SAP has just begun and it is too early to suggest the method and time of conducting another monitoring of the project. The next monitoring should focus on the quality, coverage and weaknesses of the project. Thus, the compensation for the primary affected persons must be completed before the second monitoring. Also, it is expected that the problems and constraints experienced in the next phase of SAP particularly the resettlement for women and poor should also be monitored.

**Conclusions**

The Social Action Plan (SAP) has been designed to reduce adverse impact of acquisition of land and small and medium enterprises on affected persons. The monitoring of the implementation of SAP had

covered various parameters for entitlement and grievance resolution mechanism. A combination of approaches such as PAP survey, rapid appraisal and in-depth interviews were used.

The achievement of the project was minimum and insignificant at the time of monitoring. The progress in implementing SAP was very slow. A very small proportion of the affected persons has received compensation and many project activities such as mitigation of grievances, etc. had never taken place. The status of compensation payment was better in Bhairab than Ashuganj. While no indication of inconsistency between the official and actual payments was found, all project-affected persons had to pay extra-money in various forms and in many occasions. Thus, although the Project Compensation Policy (PCP) was followed in calculating the compensation amount, PAPs expressed their unhappiness about the procedure and demanded actual market value for the acquired property. Women and children were the most severely affected persons who need special attention.

The compensation for the primary affected persons must be completed and experiences of the problems and constraints in implementing SAP should be considered in designing next monitoring.

## References

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2. RDM 1999. *Bhairab Bridge Project. Socio-economic Survey and Video Filming. Final Report*. Bhairab Bridge Project. Dhaka: Polli Unnayon Andolon (RDM).
3. DFID 1999. *Terms of References for Bhairab-Ashuganj Bridge: Independent Monitoring of Social Action Plan Implementation*. Dhaka: DFID Bangladesh.
4. OECD (?). *Guidelines for AID Agencies on Involuntary Displacement and Resettlement in Development Projects*.
5. Minutes of the Meeting on Social Action Plan dated 5<sup>th</sup> January 2000.
6. Memorandum submitted to the Project Director, Bhairab Bridge Project, Roads and Highways Department, Dhaka by the Bangladesh Fertiliser Association, Brahmanbaria District Unit on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2000.
7. Memorandum submitted to the Project Director, Bhairab Bridge Project, Roads and Highways Department, Dhaka by the Union of Affected Business, Land Owners and Workers on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2000.
8. Memorandum submitted to the Project Director, Bhairab Bridge Project, Roads and Highways Department, Dhaka by the Union of Affected Business, Land Owners and Workers on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2000.



4. Status of land ownership

- |     |  |                                |
|-----|--|--------------------------------|
| (1) | Legal owner                                | <input type="text" value="1"/> |
| (2) | Leaseholder                                | <input type="text" value="2"/> |
| (3) | Sub-leaseholder                            | <input type="text" value="3"/> |
| (4) | Sub-sub-leaseholder                        | <input type="text" value="4"/> |
| (5) | User only<br>(Not any kind of leaseholder) | <input type="text" value="5"/> |

5. Status of structure ownership

- |     |  |                                |
|-----|--|--------------------------------|
| (1) | Legal owner                                | <input type="text" value="1"/> |
| (2) | Leaseholder                                | <input type="text" value="2"/> |
| (3) | Sub-leaseholder                            | <input type="text" value="3"/> |
| (4) | Sub-sub-leaseholder                        | <input type="text" value="4"/> |
| (5) | User only<br>(Not any kind of leaseholder) | <input type="text" value="5"/> |

6. Ownership of land

- |     |                  |                                |
|-----|------------------|--------------------------------|
| (1) | Private          | <input type="text" value="1"/> |
| (2) | RHD              | <input type="text" value="2"/> |
| (3) | Railway          | <input type="text" value="3"/> |
| (4) | PDB              | <input type="text" value="4"/> |
| (5) | Unknown          | <input type="text" value="5"/> |
| (6) | Others (mention) | <input type="text" value="6"/> |

(If compensated)

7. a) How much money have you received from the DC office ?
- b) How much money (fees and other costs) have you spent to receive that money ?
8. a) How much money have you received from CCDB ?
- b) How much extra-money have you spent to receive that?
9. (If female headed household), how much additional money have you received ?
10. In total, how much money have you received ?



(If the compensation payment was not received)

10. You have not received compensation because

- (a) DC office has not paid
- (b) Necessary documents were not ready
- (c) Amount of compensation may increase
- (d) Local leaders/friends advised not to receive
- (e) No one informed me/Do not know about it
- (f) Amount of compensation is negligible
- (g) CCDB has not paid

1
2
3
4
5
6
7

12. Have you taken photograph for the ID card ?

No  1 Yes  2

13. a. Are you aware about GRC ?

No  1 Yes  2

b. (If yes), What GRC should do for the PAPs ?

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c. Have you ever filed any complaint in GRC ?

No  1 Yes  2

d. Are you happy about the decision made by GRC ?

No  1 Yes  2 GRC never met  3

e. Why not satisfied ?

[Interviewer: Ask to describe the decision making process of GRC]

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f. Describe the decision making process of GRC

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## Appendix - II

### BHAIRAB-ASHUGANJ BRIDGE PROJECT Monitoring of Social Action Plan (SAP) Check List February 2000

1. Opening date of CCDB office:      Bhairab \_\_\_\_\_      Ashuganj \_\_\_\_\_

2. CCDB staff information

Position	Bhairab		Ashuganj	
	Number	Present	Number	Present
Field Co-ordinator				
Field Worker				
Surveyor				
Resettlement Worker				
Peon				
Driver				
Total				

3. Opening date of the BBP of RHD:      Bhairab \_\_\_\_\_      Ashuganj \_\_\_\_\_

4. RHD staff information

Position	Bhairab		Ashuganj	
	Number	Present	Number	Present
Field Co-ordinator				
Field Worker				
Surveyor				
Resettlement Worker				
Peon				
Driver				
Total				

5. (Ask the Field Co-ordinator of CCDB):  
a. How did you inform the PAPs about compensation and resettlement procedure ?

Method	Bhairab		Ashuganj	
	When started	Frequency	When started	Frequency
Miking				
Leaflet				
Poster				
FGD				

6. Ask for the Work Plan of each staff. If not available, ask how do they work without a Work Plan

7. Formation of the *Resettlement Advisory Committee (RAC)* and its performance:

Type of information	Bhairab	Ashuganj
a. Date of formation		
b. Total member		
c. Names		
d. Number of meetings held		
e. Number of cases settled		

8. Formation of the *Grievances Redress Committee (GRC)* and its performance:

Type of information	Bhairab	Ashuganj
a. Date of formation		
b. Total member		
c. Name		
d. Number of meetings held		
e. Number of cases settled		

9. Ask RAC and GRC members (at least one female member from each project site) and verify the information. If there is any discrepancy, please write in detail.

10. How many PAPs were compensated ?

	Bhairab		Ashuganj	
Land				

SME				
Secondary impact (SIA)				
Total				

11. Ask CCDB official about the method of calculation of compensation and describe in detail:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

12. How many claims of compensation are waiting for approval from CCDB, Dhaka ?

Bhairab \_\_\_\_\_ Ashuganj \_\_\_\_\_

13. How many approved claims are ready for payment ?

Bhairab \_\_\_\_\_ Ashuganj \_\_\_\_\_

14. Who signs on debit vouchers and cheques ?

a. SDE of RHD

1
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b. Co-ordinator

2
---

c. Other

3
---

15. Comments of CCDB officials

a. Bhairab:

b. Ashuganj:

Name of investigator:

Date: