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Country cooperation frameworks and related matters

Second country cooperation framework for Bangladesh (2001-2005)

Contents

I.   Development situation from a sustainable human development (SHD) perspective

A.   Development goals and priorities

1.   The resumption of democratic governance in 1991 had far-reaching implications for long-term growth, poverty reduction, public participation, economic, social and administrative management, advancement of women, and the protection and regeneration of the environment. The objective of the fifth five year plan (1997-2002) remains poverty reduction within the context of a private-sector export-led growth policy with priorities such as institutional reform, agriculture, human-resource development, employment generation and equity for women. Consistent with these priorities, social development and welfare will require policies and further intervention by the Government.

B.   Current problems and challenges

2.   Poverty reduction dominates the development agenda. The first common country assessment (CCA) highlighted that poverty affects 26 and 51 per cent of the urban and rural population respectively. While the human development index (HDI) marked steady improvements in the 1990s, Bangladesh with a HDI of 0.461 in 1998, ranked 146th out of a total of 174 countries according to the *Human Development Report* (HDR) 2000. The pace of poverty reduction slowed down in the late 1990s to less than one per cent per year; some 60 million people remain below the poverty line. Inequality increased faster in the 1990s than in the 1980s and is more visible in urban areas. Higher levels of poverty are also evident in disaster prone and ecologically vulnerable river and coastal areas. The poorest 20 per cent share 8.7 per cent of income/consumption, in comparison to 42.8 per cent concentrated in the hands of the richest 20 per cent.

3.   Poverty affects women more than men, socially, politically and economically. Households dependent on female earners have a higher incidence of poverty than those dependent on men. The life expectancy of women, slightly above the national average of 58.6 years, now exceeds that of men for the first time on record. In 1998, for 1000 live births, the mortality rate for infants was 79 and for children under five 106, while adult literacy rates were 28.6 per cent (female) and 51.1 per cent (males), according to the HDR 2000.

4.   There is a growing consensus that responsive governance and accelerated poverty reduction are closely interrelated. With local government reforms under way, access to resources at the local level and the responsiveness of local service providers to local communities are expected to have an important bearing on the rate at which poverty is reduced. Both now require sustained attention.

5.   Local governance reform therefore needs greater policy support and institutional coordination. Clear delegation and devolution of administrative and fiscal authority to the lowest unit of government, the union council, is necessary for the proper functioning of local government institutions. Delegation and devolution should eventually extend to all tiers of local governance based on the principle of subsidiarity. With-capacity building and training, including the 13 500 first-time women members of union parishads, elected representatives, will be able to discharge their responsibilities more effectively.

6.   Efforts to induce lasting change face major challenges. The continuing absence of the main opposition parties from parliament undermines stability and continuity in the public domain, including electoral transition. Lack of political consensus hampers democratic evolution at all levels and affects the climate for foreign investment, economic growth and poverty reduction. Increased financial accountability will have a positive impact on socio-economic development. Reform needs sustained high-level backing to maintain the momentum created by the Public Administration Reforms Commission. Similar attention is required to move towards a national programme for human rights.

7.   Women's rights and development issues remain a cause for concern, including violence against women. More effective access to legal recourse can improve this situation. Positive changes can be seen in employment, the education sector, the election of women to a quarter of all seats in union councils and the growing number of micro-finance programmes for women. Policy initiatives and increased resource allocations in key areas have created a positive climate for further change. In the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Government produced a national policy and a national action plan (NAP) for the advancement of women which need sustained and effective implementation to advance the rights of women.

8.   Legal and institutional measures were taken during the 1990s to protect and regenerate natural resources. The 1992 environment policy was followed by the national environmental management action plan, prepared with unprecedented grass-roots involvement. In spite of this and the sustainable environment management programme, natural-resource use remains unsustainable. More participatory resource management for sound environmental governance will benefit the poor and women in particular. Unsustainable use of natural resources leads to a loss of biodiversity, a situation aggravated by inadequate regulation and law enforcement, and sometimes anachronic laws. These trends are worsened by the high susceptibility to natural disasters. Disaster preparedness, management capacity and mitigation remain national priorities and are required to limit the vulnerability of people affected. Food security, aggravated by an overused resource base, is of concern and arsenic penetration was recently began recognized as a serious problem.

9.   Addressing development challenges will require effective development management and administration. The Government has to coordinate and administer assistance to various reaches of public life. Efficiency of development administration, from coordination and execution to the rate and quality of project implementation has to be improved.

II.   Results, and lessons of past cooperation

10.   The first country cooperation framework (CCF) for Bangladesh for the period 1996 to 2000 covered five programme areas: (a) improved public management for good governance; (b) poverty reduction; (c) improved environmental management; (d) advancement of women; and (e) non-formal employment generation. All areas included the empowerment of communities and vulnerable groups; national and sub-national governance and gender; sustainable environmental management and food security; and agriculture productivity. Other areas were HIV/AIDS and safe blood transfusion, disaster mitigation and preparedness and national-execution-management support.

11.   In each of these areas, important progress was achieved, despite delays in formulation, approval and implementation. Most results pursued are therefore only now beginning to emerge.

12.   Major reforms were initiated in governance. In parliamentary reform, guidelines on parliamentary procedures were prepared. Support was provided to the election commission, parliamentary elections in 1996 and local elections in 1997 and 1999. The public administration reform commission submitted 137 recommendations to the Government. Institutional capacity-building for gender mainstreaming progressed with improved linkages between ministries and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for the implementation of the national plan of the NAP for the advancement of women. Steps were taken towards the containment of HIV/AIDS through the formulation of a national policy, strategic plan and plan of action.

13.   Several strategic initiatives have grown from modest beginnings to become national processes of major importance. These include: (a) preparatory work towards a human-rights commission, now part of a national programme for human rights; (b) programming for biodiversity; (c) comprehensive disaster management; (d) establishment of a national policy on integrated pest management; and (e) management of the HIV/AIDS programme and elaboration of a national HIV/AIDS policy. Improved institutional linkages between research and extension, more viable farm systems and the institutionalization of participatory rural appraisals, which were all part of the Thana Cereals Technology Transfer and Identification Project (TCTTI) have been taken up and replicated by the Government with its own resources. UNDP-supported initiatives attracted other donors through cost-sharing

or parallel funding for the 1996 parliamentary elections, human rights, parliamentary democracy and disaster management.

14.   Results indicate that empowerment of communities, combined with democratization, decentralization of decision making and mobilization of resources can make anti-poverty efforts more effective. The pro-poor community empowerment programme has achieved impressive results. Over 2 100 community-based organizations with over 72 000 members were formed, of which approximately 60 per cent were women. The volume of savings mobilized from their own resources exceeded US$1.3 million. Credit disbursed from group savings was over US$1.7 million, with UNDP credit grants amounting to US$0.8 million. A World Bank preliminary impact-assessment micro-study suggested that the rate of poverty reduction in the Kishorganj district was three per cent a year, or three times the national average. Further study of the results will ensue to elicit more lessons from these experiences.

15.   The strategy of poverty reduction through social mobilization and empowerment of local communities needs to be reinforced by building for local government, both in terms of institutions and policy support. Efforts to empower local communities and galvanise local governance need focused cooperation between the Government and UNDP in a number of related areas. These include continued support for (a) an enabling environment for sustainable human development (SHD), particularly institution building and reform; (b) environment and food security; (c) gender mainstreaming and advancement of women; (d) disaster management, HIV/AIDS and other emerging issues and (e) globalization.

16.   Annual and country reviews and project reviews and evaluations pointed to certain conclusions. First, the intended impact of community-empowerment interventions requires long-term commitment, sustained focus and deeper connectivity at operational levels. This commitment can draw on the lessons learnt from the community empowerment programme, the Kishorganj poverty programme and new initiatives such as the Sirajganj local development fund (LDF). Second, participatory local-level planning (PLLP) is necessary to provide a mechanism that reinforces local-level poverty-reduction efforts. It can integrate community-level development plans into sub-national and national plans. PLLP also helps to establish mechanisms for budgetary support and local resource mobilisation to augment resource availability at local levels. Third local governance needs further articulation to accelerate poverty reduction. The impact of poverty reduction is significantly enhanced if combined with the reform of national economic policies and governing institutions.

17.   UNDP also supported aid coordination, particularly in the areas of governance, poverty and gender. The Resident Coordinator organizes the UN country team, which includes representatives of international financial institutions (IFIs). UNDP took the lead in the preparation of the first CCA and UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), which seek to bolster country-level follow-up to

global conferences from a rights and development perspective. The United Nations Disaster Management Team helped to mobilize US$204 million of assistance for the worst floods of the century in 1998.

18.   UNDP was instrumental in coordinating development partners after the government landmark treaty that brought peace to the Chittagong Hill Tracts. UNDP also coordinated initial donor responses to the arsenic issue and assistance to parliamentary elections in 1996, the rural local elections in 1997, urban local elections in 1999 and several by-elections.

19.   UNDP will focus more intensely on aid coordination in governance, poverty and the Chittagong Hill Tracts. To improve partnerships and stimulate greater operational efficiency, the proactive role of UNDP among development partners will be guided by four considerations: results orientation; policy advice and institutional support; effective aid coordination; and brokering knowledge.

III.   Objectives, programme areas and expected results

A.   Objectives

20.   The country's development situation validates the need to continue the goals of the first CCF, which is re-confirmed by the goals, strategic areas of support, outcomes and outputs of the strategic results framework (SRF). The present CCF therefore continues to focus on SHD with the expectation that lasting results will emerge over the CCF period. The overall goal of the CCF is to accelerate poverty reduction by improving governance at the sub-national and national levels. This objective is also premised on the CCA and UNDAF goal, "the progressive fulfillment of human potential by exercising rights and assuming responsibilities".

21.   It is possible to achieve the goal of the CCF by increasing policy support, strengthening institutions, enhancing aid coordination, stepping up cross-programme learning and improving operational arrangements for national execution. It is expected that the results intended for the first CCF will become tangible during the period of the new CCF for the period 2001 to 2005.

B. Programme areas

Decentralized governance for poverty reduction

22. The main goal will be to promote decentralization and thereby support participatory local governance, strengthen local organizations and empower communities, by developing the capacities of local authorities and strengthening the self-organization of the poor and civil-society organizations (CSOs). Outcomes include a transparent and effective local government response to community need, and self-managed community-based organizations, which are empowered to pursue their members' individual and community development priorities.

23. To achieve this, the Government endorses a strategy that builds on the capacity of community empowerment programmes (CEPs) to enhance local planning processes. This is to be accomplished through the Sirajganj LDF, co-financed by UNDP and UNCDF, which will also serve as a hub for the United Nations common programming for decentralization. All initiatives will seek to optimize partnerships and the development of alliances between organized communities, locally elected representatives, local administration, NGOs and the private sector.

24. Community empowerment will be complemented by policy and institutional support to local governance for improved delivery of socio-economic services. The key activities will be: (a) the development and pilot testing of a methodology for devolving activities to local governments; (b) training of elected representatives, local government officials and representatives of community-based organizations (CBOs) and civil-society organizations (CSOs); and (c) enhancing accountability, fiscal management and the capacity of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives to provide coordination and policy guidance.

25. The main outcomes include:

(a) Socially and environmentally sound local-level planning experiences, based on participatory community interaction undertaken and evaluated in three to five CEP areas, including the Sirajaganj LDF;

(b) Policy assessments that address the required institutional arrangements, capacities and resources conducted leading to initial and phased devolution of fiscal and administrative authority;

(c) A functioning system initiated to coordinate, plan, execute, monitor, evaluate and report on donor assistance in support of local government reforms;

(d) Accelerated poverty reduction in CEP areas as measured by human poverty indicators, with increased local resources mobilized to enhance responsive local governance;

(e) Self-sustaining CBO models available for resource mobilization and adaptive replication;

(f)   Government-led nationwide training system, involving NGOs, instated and operational, with basic and refresher training provided to all elected representatives and selected government officials of 4 490 union councils and 219 municipal bodies;

(g)   Fully articulating training needs, including information and communication technology (ICT), for 490 sub-district and 64 district council representatives and government officials, and resource mobilization requirements.

Enabling environment for SHD

26.   UNDP will continue its lead role in the area of governance with a comprehensive range of interventions designed to create an enabling environment for SHD by making key public institutions transparent, effective and accountable. The main goal is to strengthen the capacity of key government institutions for people-centred development and to foster social cohesion. This will be achieved by: (a) developing of institutional capacities for parliamentary structures, systems and processes; (b) strengthening the institutional capacity of the electoral commission, systems and processes; (c) implementing public administration reform; (d) promoting respect for human rights; and (e) enhancing the professionalism of auditing practices, financial accountability assessments and national-planning capacity for SHD. Policy advice, institutional development, and coordination and knowledge management are some of the initiatives that will increasingly become important aspects of UNDP support in these areas and for which cost-sharing is expected.

27.   The main outcomes include:

(a)   A SHD-oriented, national, sixth, five-year plan and SHD capacity for national planning based on the national human development reports (NHDRs), SHD models and indicators;

(b)   A more responsive, effective and transparent parliament through: (a) the establishment of the Institute of Parliamentary Studies and the Legislative Information Center; and (b) revised and improved rules and procedures to reform committee functions and the parliament, leading to an effective and efficient functioning of parliamentary committees;

(c)   Having elections that civil society, the media and independent observers consider efficient and transparent. UNDP assistance will work to strengthen the managerial and planning capacity of the electoral commission, increase civic awareness of elections by introducing it into school curricula, and train election officials;

(d)   Improved financial and administrative accountability of the Government , enhanced professionalism of the Controller and Auditor General and better parliamentary oversight;

(e)   Effective legal and institutional framework for the protection and promotion of human rights and a functioning human-rights commission that actively cooperates with CSOs.

Environment and food security

28. Sustainable environmental management and productive and regenerative practices will remain a core aspect of UNDP assistance. The main goals will be to: (a) promote the integration of sound environmental management with national development policies and programmes; (b) protect and regenerate the environment and promote access to natural resources on which the poor can depend; and (c) foster equity and burden sharing in international cooperation to protect and enhance the global and regional environment.

29. Good practices, such as pioneering an 'eco-village', under the Sustainable Environment Management Programme (SEMP), and pest management will be integrated into the community empowerment programme. Pilot initiatives to enhance community skills in resource-management will be complemented by increased policy support for sound environmental governance and resource mobilization in several areas, including biodiversity. SEMP will develop natural-resource management opportunities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and address emerging environmental issues.

30. The main outcomes include:

(a) Establishing national environmental policy that promotes a participatory approach in environment and natural-resources management, enhancing the capacity for environmental policy formulation and effective implementation.; creating a database of national agro-ecological zones and graphic information systems (GIS) for public and private use;

(b) Mainstreaming environmental concerns in the activities of nine line ministries, assigning environmental focal points in ministries and departments and institutionalizing environmental screening mechanisms;

(c) Making information and statistics on environmental issues available and using them for policy planning and public awareness;

(d) Increasing the number of alternative and environment-friendly livelihood options; establishing the use of participatory environmental management practices in urban and rural areas through eco-villages, the creation of common-property resource areas and local and national planning which will include local disaster action plans, ecologically critical areas (ECA) and waste management; increasing awareness through advocacy, education and training;

(e) Setting up national policy and multi-donor comprehensive disaster management programme promoting compliance with international environmental treaties, conventions and agreements through effective policy implementation and enhanced environmental management capacity at national, regional and local levels;

(f) Establishing global, regional and national ICT networks for the development and exchange of sustainable environmental best practices, e.g.,

Sustainable Development Network (SDN), Asia-Pacific Development Information Programme (APDIP); setting up automated monitoring and evaluation systems in environment and food security initiatives to bring about policy reform;

(g)   Enhancing household food security three to five CEP areas, including LDF, through good practices in agriculture and environmental management.

Gender mainstreaming and the advancement of women

31.   Ongoing programmes in gender mainstreaming and the advancement of women will continue. The main goals will be to: (a) enhance women's equal access to and control over economic and social assets and resources; (b) ensure full enjoyment and exercise of human rights, including security and freedom from violence; and (c) foster gender mainstreaming and develop methodologies that will strengthen the capacity to track and measure improvement in the status of women. This will be achieved by: (a) strengthening women's entrepreneurial and technical skills and capacities; (b) building capacity to prevent trafficking in women and children and providing support to its victims; (c) promoting recognition of and supporting the role of women in crisis situations; and (d) building capacity for gender mainstreaming in policies, plans and programmes.

32.   The outcomes focus on policy support and institutional strengthening for gender mainstreaming. This will be accompanied by specific pilot initiatives to demonstrate the effectiveness of policies and successful entrepreneurship models among low-income and disadvantaged women and their dependents. These include:

(a)   Developing replicable model for women's entrepreneurship that would directly benefit 7,000 women;

(b)   Addressing women's concerns in the policies and programmes of all line ministries and agencies: integrating gender concerns into sectoral plans of key ministries in two to three instances; Improving the capacity for gender training in key academic institutions and making research information and gender disaggregated data for use in policy-making more available; raising public awareness on women's human rights;

(c)   Providing social (education and health) and legal services to commercial sex workers and their children in four brothel communities;

(d)   Protecting street children according to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, through empowerment, skills training, counseling and access to safe shelter, with special attention for girls.

Complementary pro-poor interventions

33.   UNDP will also support efforts to empower the poor and promote their rights. Specifically, this includes integrating village disaster management and the

improvement of agricultural productivity and diversification into local planning and thereby empower communities. Other areas include the increased use of ICT for improved access to information, nationwide HIV/AIDS education and support for policy and programme development (SPPD) studies on the implication of globalization and labour migration for the poor and appropriate responses.

34.   The main outcomes include:

(a)   Identifying policies that can maximize the social benefits impacts of globalization, through policy advice and recommendations;

(b)   Minimize socio-economic impact of HIV/AIDS and establish a national framework for a multi-sectoral and multi-partner programme to help keep HIV/AIDS prevalence low;

(c)   Improve household food security and raise awareness on nutrition in three to five CEP areas, including LDF (in more than 800 village organizations), by introducing integrated pest management, crop diversification and sustainable farming systems.

IV.   Management arrangements

A.   Management of the country cooperation framework

Execution and implementation

35.   Alongside a programme strategy that promotes decentralized governance for accelerated poverty reduction, the CCF adopts an operational strategy for improved performance under national execution. With national ownership key to the sustainability of reform initiatives, national execution will continue as the main execution modality and will be realized through a national execution promotion strategy with two mutually reinforcing aspects.

36.   The first, the national execution management support programme, will improve on the national execution (NEX) operational guidelines, provide training on NEX and improve monitoring and evaluation arrangements. Other initiatives underway or to be considered include: (a) review of the implementation capacity for more systematic strengthening of national implementation capacities and (b) training of national project directors and government staff on thematic SHD areas and project management and direct UNDP country office support and appropriate use of United Nations agencies for the implementation of some components.

37.   The second part of the national execution promotion strategy involves a longer-term approach. NGOs may be considered for execution in cases where efficient delivery of services, transparency and accountability, can be assured. All execution arrangements will

be based on prior assessment of capacities and the goals of intervention. An exit strategy will be developed that will underpin the coordination of national execution.

38.   The implementation of the CCF will give a high priority to the role of central and local government institutions, and that of community-based organizations, CSOs and NGOs at the grassroots level, being the main driving forces for change. SPPD and support for technical services (STS) will be used for technical backstopping by United Nations agencies to enhance the quality of programme implementation. A national volunteers scheme will also be introduced.

B.   Linkages with inter-country programmes

39.   Programmes and policy initiatives will continue to build on knowledge local - linkages with regional programmes (such as the South Asian Poverty Alleviation Programme), biodiversity, arsenic mitigation, urban governance initiative and the Local Initiative Facility for the Urban Environment (LIFE) programme. They will also increase networking through governance, the Sub-regional Resource Facility (SURF) and work with the Participatory Action Research to Advance Government Options and Networks (PARAGON) governance programme, the Sustainable Development Networking Programme (SDNP) and the Asia-Pacific Development Information Programme (APDIP).

C.   Monitoring, review and evaluation

40.   Annual reviews, in conjunction with the results-oriented annual report, will review changes in the national context and their implications for the continued relevance, results and sustainability of the CCF. A country review will be conducted at the mid-term of the CCF, in conjunction with the mid-term review of the UNDAF. Regular coordination meetings organized by the Emergency Response Division (ERD) and attended by ministries executing or implementing UNDP programmes, UNDP, United Nations agencies and donors will periodically assess CCF progress. These meetings will oversee the implementation of all UNDP-supported programmes, provide programme coordination and ensure immediate responses to changing national priorities.

41.   SHD indicators of the SRF will be used to track and assess impact. Individual programmes will be subject to annual tripartite reviews. The emphasis of the CCF on local governance requires the establishment of local/community level indicators to measure lower-level change. All programmes will therefore generate trackable baseline data and prepare results-oriented monitoring indicators to measure impact. Participatory monitoring and evaluation systems will be instated and focus on impact. Evaluations will be based on an on-going three-year rolling plan.

D.   Resource mobilization strategy and targets

42.   The use of UNDP resources needs to be optimized so that it will leverage cost-sharing and parallel financing by other donors, CSOs/NGOs and participating communities. Even small-community contributions will enhance the sense of ownership, important for future sustainability.

43.   The resource mobilization strategy will include the use of UNDP resources as seed money to develop high-leverage multi-partner programmes, to mobilize cost-sharing from donors (third party) and the Government, optimizing local and community resources, and to involve the private sector and CSOs.

44.   Cost-effective and efficient use will be made of target for resource assignment from the core (TRAC-3) and SPPD/STS in addition to other resources managed by UNDP such as the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Montreal Protocol, Capacity 21, the UN Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP) and the women in Development Fund of Japan.

Annex

Resource mobilization target table for Bangladesh (2001-2005)

Source	Amount *(In thousands of United States dollars)*	Comments
UNDP regular resources		
Estimated carry-over	50 071	Includes carry-over of TRAC 1, TRAC 2 and the earlier AOS allocations.
TRAC 1.1.1	29 163	Assigned immediately to country.
TRAC 1.1.2	0 to 66.7 per cent of TRAC 1.1.1	This range of percentages is presented for initial planning purposes only. The actual assignment will depend on the availability of high-quality programmes. Any increase in the range of percentages would also be subject to availability of resources.
SPPD/STS	1 608	
Subtotal	**80 842[a]**	
UNDP other resources		
Government cost-sharing	--	
Third party cost-sharing	2 500	
Funds, trust funds and other	19 548	
	of which:	
GEF	10 000	
Montreal Protocol	1 000	
Capacity 21	100	
UNFIP	1 550	
UNCDF	6 600	
WID Fund of Japan	298	
Subtotal	**22 048**	
Grand total	**102 890[a]**	

[a] Not inclusive of TRAC 1.1.2, which is allocated regionally for subsequent country application.
Abbreviations: AOS = administrative and operational services; GEF = Global Environment Facility; SPPD = support for policy and programme development; STS = support for technical services; TRAC = target for resource assignment from the core; UNCDF = United Nations Capital Development Fund; UNFIP = United Nations Fund for International Partnerships; UNIFEM = United Nations Development Fund for Women; UNV = United Nations Volunteers; WID = Women in Development.