

## SUMMARY POVERTY REDUCTION AND SOCIAL STRATEGY

Country:	India	Project Title:	West Bengal Drinking Water Sector Improvement Project
Lending/Financing Modality:	Sector	Department/Division:	South Asia Department Urban Development and Water Division

### I. POVERTY AND SOCIAL ANALYSIS AND STRATEGY

Poverty targeting: General intervention

#### A. Links to the National Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Growth Strategy and Country Partnership Strategy

Poverty reduction is a priority of the Government of India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The government's 15-year vision, 7-year strategy, and 3-year action agenda prioritize safe drinking water provision in rural areas and provide sustainable solutions for rural drinking water, which are also aligned with ADB's country partnership strategy (CPS), 2018–2022 for India. The proposed West Bengal Drinking Water Sector Improvement Project (WBDWSIP) is consistent with the country's policy priorities and CPS, 2018–2022. The project aims to provide safe, reliable, and continuous drinking water as per government standards to the rural population of about 1.65 million in the selected arsenic, fluoride, and salinity-affected areas of Bankura, East Medinipur, North 24 Parganas, and South 24 Parganas districts of West Bengal. Proposed subprojects stem from district-wide comprehensive water quality and sustainability planning, as prepared and adopted by the Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) of the Government of West Bengal, the executing agency.

#### B. Results from the Poverty and Social Analysis during Project Preparatory Technical Assistance or Due Diligence

1. Key poverty and social issues. The need for access to safe water supply facilities, livelihood skills development, and improved opportunities for employment, including the high incidence of water- and sanitation-related diseases, are some of the key issues that affect the target population, especially the poor.
2. Beneficiaries. The WBDWSIP seeks to provide full water supply coverage within the subproject coverage areas. It will benefit households headed by females and below-poverty-line households in terms of water connections, health benefits, and employment opportunities.
3. Impact channels. The project will contribute to poverty reduction by developing infrastructure, improving quality of life, reducing drudgery of work among women, reducing health morbidity and related health expenditures, and stimulating economic growth. Opportunities for on-the-job training (e.g., leak detection, nonrevenue water reduction, meter reading, and calibration) and employment in the project facilities are expected to facilitate skill building and employability, especially for the poor. Entrepreneurship and skill development in the local community is expected to generate self-employment and sustainable livelihoods.
4. Design features. Special efforts have been made to ensure that the project design is pro-poor, socially inclusive, and gender-responsive. Subprojects aim at safe 24-hour potable piped water supply through household connections to 1.3 million people, including the poor and vulnerable. The project aims to provide 390,000 household connections for piped water, including for 100% of households headed by females and vulnerable households in the project area, with free connections. The project also aims to create 350 additional operation and maintenance (O&M) jobs for the locals, of whom 33% will be women; as well as provide certified trainings to them in technical, financial, and customer management skills. Trainings in utility management skills of at least 200 PHED staff and 100% of female staff in the project management unit (PMU) and project implementation unit (PIU); leadership and livelihood trainings to 300 local entrepreneurs, new water supply staff, and executive members of village water and sanitation committees (33% female) in the project Gram Panchayats; community consultations and public awareness meetings on water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) will be conducted.<sup>1</sup>

### II. PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERING THE POOR

1. Participatory approaches and project activities. A community awareness and participation plan (CAPP) is prepared to ensure widespread, continuous, and meaningful participation of key stakeholders with a focus on the poor and vulnerable groups. Three nongovernment organizations (NGOs) will be recruited to help the PMU and PIUs in skilling

<sup>1</sup> Gram Panchayats are the village-level, first-tier local administrative body of the government.

and capacity building of local stakeholders; and consultations and public awareness during project implementation. Adequate resources and implementation mechanism are provided to ensure effective implementation of CAPP.

2. Civil society organizations. There are several active community-based organizations, self-help groups, and youth and women's groups in project areas, whose participation in project design and implementation is envisaged for information dissemination, collaboration with communities, grievance redress, and community mobilization.

4. The following forms of civil society organization participation are envisaged during project implementation, rated as high (H), medium (M), low (L), or not applicable (NA):

Information gathering and sharing (H)  Consultation (H)  Collaboration (H)  Partnership

5. Participation plan. The CAPP prepared for the project targets the poor and women's participation and inclusion in project benefits. Participatory processes are anticipated to enhance sustainability. Consultations will be documented and reported in the periodic monitoring reports.  Yes  No

The CAPP allocates responsibilities to the PMU, PIUs, and project NGOs, supported by project management consultants (PMC) and design supervision and implementation support consultants (DSISC), for various envisaged activities, with the key responsibility reposed in the project NGOs. A budget of \$1.8 million is allocated for various activities to be carried out by the NGOs.

### III. GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT

Gender mainstreaming category: Gender Equity

A. Key Issues. Summarize the key gender issues relevant to the project, including those identified in the gender analysis carried out during project preparation.

The project is classified as gender equity. Key issues identified in the gender analysis during project preparation include (i) low workforce participation rate of rural women (19.4%) compared to males, which is also way below the national average (30%); (ii) gap between male and female wages, with women's wages at 54% that of men in rural areas; (iii) exacerbation of women's work burdens due to deficiencies in basic water and sanitation (only 11.4% and 46.7% of rural households have access to tap water and sanitation, respectively); and (iv) increasing proportion of households headed by females (11.2%), and lower access to banking services by rural households headed by females (35%).

B. Key Actions

The project will provide household potable water connections to around 390,000 households, thus reducing women's time poverty in fetching water. Extensive capacity building, including trade-certified trainings on technical, financial, and customer management skills will provide skilling to local women, and help them obtain employment.

Gender action plan  Other actions or measures  No action or measure

The gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) action plan has clear targets, responsibilities, and resource allocation. New employment will be generated for over 350 locals in the project gram panchayats, of which 33% will be women. Awareness raising campaigns on water conservation, climate resilience, and WASH will specifically target at least 33% participation of women and girls. Women, comprising at least 33% of the village water and sanitation committees in the gram panchayats, will also receive leadership trainings. The PHED will conduct a gender audit, and develop and adopt a gender strategy. The government has issued an order to cement inclusive service delivery through the agreed Asset Management and Service Delivery Framework in the project gram panchayats.

### IV. ADDRESSING SOCIAL SAFEGUARD ISSUES

A. Involuntary Resettlement

Safeguard Category:  A  B  C  FI

1. Key impacts. Due diligence indicates that the project will involve involuntary resettlement impacts and risks that are not significant PHED has prepared a resettlement framework, three draft resettlement plans, and a due diligence report for sample subproject components, in accordance with the SPS and government and state laws. The assessments in these documents indicate that one encroacher (with three dependents) will be affected by permanent partial (<10%) income loss. Meanwhile, 48 shop owners will be affected by temporary economic impacts during construction. Three uninhabited temporary structures on government right-of-way and one government primary health subcenter building also will be potentially affected. PHED and design-and-build contractors will finalize the draft resettlement plans during detailed engineering design. Resettlement plans for components that will be identified or designed in detail after Board approval of the sector loan will be prepared in accordance with the resettlement framework.

2. Strategy to address the impacts. Based on preliminary design studies of sample bulk water supply and distribution systems, most of the proposed sites (60% of around 3.1 hectares estimated total land required) belong to the government. The remaining land required will be acquired from private owners through negotiated settlement. In line with the Government of West Bengal and Safeguard Policy Statement (SPS) requirements, livelihood impacts on non-titleholders, tenants, leaseholders, and sharecroppers will be compensated. For limited temporary impacts during civil works, the project will ensure that affected households or businesses will be minimized and/or compensated. The project will screen subproject components to avoid or minimize impacts, and exclude those that entail significant involuntary resettlement. The resettlement framework and draft resettlement plans and due diligence report include provisions for meaningful consultation, grievance redress, compensation at replacement cost, monitoring, budget, and capacity building in accordance with the SPS.

3. Plan or other actions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resettlement plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resettlement framework
<b>B. Indigenous Peoples</b> <b>Safeguard Category:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> FI
1. Key impacts. The 2011 Census of India indicates that scheduled tribes comprise 6% of the rural population of West Bengal, 11% in Bankura, 5.3% in North 24 Parganas, and 0.6% in South 24 Parganas. Transect walks and surveys confirm the presence of the Munda tribe in the sample subproject in Bankura District.. The Munda community speak both Mundani and the mainstream languages, and is not considered to be made vulnerable by the project. The community will benefit from improved access to safe drinking water. No adverse impacts on scheduled tribes such as physical displacement is anticipated as the project will exclude land acquisition or use of ancestral lands.
Is broad community support triggered? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
2. Strategy to address the impacts. PHED has prepared an IPPF to guide the design and implementation of subprojects to be appraised after Board approval of the project. The IPPF includes measures to ensure that subprojects with impacts on scheduled tribes will include culturally appropriate benefits, consultation, grievance redress, and monitoring. Screening of subprojects components will ensure that those with adverse impacts on scheduled tribes will not be eligible for financing under the project.
3. Plan or other actions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Indigenous peoples planning framework
<b>V. ADDRESSING OTHER SOCIAL RISKS</b>
<b>A. Risks in the Labor Market</b>
1. Relevance to labor market. Relevance of the project for the country, region, or sector's, indicated as high (H), medium (M), and low or not significant (L). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unemployment (M) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Underemployment (M) <input type="checkbox"/> Retrenchment (L) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Core labor standards (H)
2. Labor market impact. Contractors' agreements will have clauses on adherence to core labor standards and preference in project-related construction work (skilled and unskilled), and project operation and maintenance work from the local community. Poor and vulnerable persons including women will be given preference for project-related construction work by contractors, and for operations and maintenance-related work.
<b>B. Affordability</b>
The project's strategy for water charges for operation and maintenance cost recovery is developed, considering affordability for the poor and vulnerable. Water charges will not exceed 5% of mean monthly household income for the lowest consumption slab.
<b>C. Communicable Diseases and Other Social Risks</b>
1. The impact of the following risks are rated as high (H), medium (M), low (L), or not applicable (NA): <input type="checkbox"/> Communicable diseases (L) <input type="checkbox"/> Human trafficking (L) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Others (please specify) Child labor
2. Risks to people in project area. Contractors and construction workers will be made aware of communicable diseases, including HIV/AIDS risks. In collaboration with DSISC, PMU shall raise awareness among contractors and workers. Employment of child labor by contractors will not be permitted, and the contractors' agreement will include a clause to this effect.
<b>VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION</b>
1. Targets and indicators. The Design and Monitoring Framework and GESI Action Plan contain the key targets and indicators.
2. Required human resources. The Safeguard and Gender Cell in PMU will be headed by the Safeguards and Gender Officer (HSGO) who will directly report to the Project Director. The HSGO will have overall responsibility in implementation of the resettlement framework, resettlement plan, indigenous peoples planning framework, GESI action plan, and appropriate monitoring and reporting responsibilities. A social safeguards and gender specialist of PMC and social safeguards and gender experts of DSISCs will support training; capacity building; and development of methodologies for surveys, consultation checklists, monitoring indicators, database management, and periodic monitoring report preparation. Three NGOs will also be engaged, one each for the project districts (common for 24 North and South Parganas district), to support implementation of the GESI action plan, the CAPP for the project, and activities under the Trust Fund (details of Trust Fund proposal are available in linked document, Appendix 2, of the project's report and recommendation to the president).
3. Information in the project administration manual. The Project Administration Manual for WBDWSIP is available as linked document in Appendix 2 of the project's report and recommendation to the president.
4. Monitoring tools. The PMU will be responsible for submitting consolidated semi-annual monitoring reports, including for all activities under the project on safeguards, GESI, CAPP, and the Trust Fund. The PMU (assisted by PMC, DSISCs, and the NGOs) will be responsible for preparing compliance and social safeguards monitoring reports on a semi-annual basis. A midterm review will be undertaken 18 months after loan approval and will cover social development and safeguard issues and midcourse corrections, if required. An evaluation will be undertaken 1 year after project close, and lessons learned will be documented.

Source: Asian Development Bank.