

Summary of DFID's Regional Work in Asia 2011-2015

May 2011



Flood warning siren Nepal

Why we work across the Asia Region

DFID's Asia Regional Programme covers Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burma, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Vietnam and also Central Asia. Despite reasonable economic growth rates in most of these countries, 40% of their people live on less than \$1.25 a day, and 74% on less than \$2 a day. The region is also very vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

The region faces many complex economic, political, social and environmental problems. Gender inequality and social exclusion are amongst the biggest challenges. While such problems are also addressed in our Country Programmes, the impact of DFID's work can in many cases be improved by taking a regional perspective.

The Asia Regional Programme therefore reflects the need for strategic, well-targeted investments that instigate change at a regional level rather than providing large volumes of funds to fill financing gaps. We will aim, for example, to help to ease restrictions on growth and trade, and attract much larger investments from international organisations such as the World Bank, the private sector, and national governments.



An outreach worker providing advice on family
planning methods in Pakistan.

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What we will achieve

- Prevent 7,400 maternal deaths
- Develop eight national programmes which integrate a multi-sectoral approach to food security and nutrition, and reduce malnutrition
- Prevent trafficking of 60,000 women and girls
- Help 500 million people benefit from better water resource management and reduced climate vulnerability in regional river basins
- Enable 40% time and cost savings through improvements at six key regional border crossings.

Who we will work with

The Asia Regional Programme will be delivered through international partners such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and civil society organisations. We also aim to work with the Commonwealth, the European Union, and other development partners including the United States and Australia, and regional organisations such as the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation and the Association of South East Asian Nations, private sector partners and global foundations including Gates and Nike.

Partners have been chosen based on their strengths. For example, in the case of our South Asia Water Initiative, a World Bank multi-donor Trust Fund has been chosen because the World Bank has significant expertise in supporting regional processes in river management, and is one of the key lenders on water infrastructure and water resource management.



A consultation on family planning in India
© Marie Stopes International / Peter Caton

How we will work

The Asia Regional Programme aims to achieve results that can improve the lives of poor people in a sustainable way. Our regional work will complement our Country Programmes, and enhance progress in key areas such as intra-regional trade, cross-border natural resource management and people trafficking and also on improving maternal health and tackling hunger. Changing the lives of girls and women is a particular priority for our work in Asia, where gender equality indicators are amongst the worst in the world.

More cross-border trade and regional integration will increase growth and create jobs; help address energy constraints, and reduce incentives for cross-border conflict. Better management of shared eco-systems, including rivers that cross into more than one country, will address the critical links between food, water and power generation in the region.

More than ever, in the current financial climate, we have a duty to show that we are achieving value for money in everything we do. Results, transparency and accountability will be our watchwords and we are determined to get value for money for every pound spent on development by us and by our partners.

Some actions we will take on transparency include:

- Publishing clear, concise information on our programme on the DFID website;
- Continuing collaboration with development partners on transparency and accountability; and
- Helping civil society and NGOs to be more transparent themselves and to encourage greater accountability from national governments.

More information

For a more detailed breakdown of The Asia Regional Programme's Operational Plan, please visit www.dfid.gov.uk.

Queries on the Asia Regional Programme should be addressed to: enquiries@dfid.gov.uk

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