



# Summary of DFID's work in Bangladesh 2011-2015

June 2013

## Why we work in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is a country with enormous potential. Since the early 1990s, the economy has grown by five to six percent a year and it has weathered the recent global financial crisis well. Alongside its economic achievements, Bangladesh has made some excellent progress on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), especially in reducing income poverty, getting nearly all girls and boys enrolled in primary schools, and reducing child and maternal mortality.

Bangladesh is poor though, rapidly urbanising and highly vulnerable to natural disasters like floods and cyclones. More than 4 in 10 people live on less than \$1.25 (£ 0.77) per day and over three quarters on less than \$2.00 (£1.24). Basic services like health and education need to expand fast to keep pace with the young population, and the quality of these services needs to improve. One in 19 children die before they reach five years old, and around 120,000 babies die every year in their first month of life. A quarter of women are undernourished and thousands die each year due to complications of pregnancy and childbirth. Contamination of drinking water with arsenic (from natural sources) and sea water are big challenges. The state's ability to finance and deliver services effectively remains weak, and is hampered by unstable politics and high fiduciary risks.



'I feel relieved after opening the store. There was a time when my wife and I would eat just once a day. Now we eat three times.'

Bano Mali, a shop owner.



"Before maternal death was dangerously high. But now, the rate has gone down thanks to facilities offered." Zohra Akhater, a nursing supervisor from the Accelerating Progress on Maternal Health Project.

## What we will achieve

- Lift 1.5 million people out of extreme poverty by providing training or assets like cows to help people set up businesses.
- Provide access to improved water sources for 1.3 million more people and improved sanitation for 2.8 million more people.
- Help at least 15 million people to cope better with the devastating effects of floods, cyclones and climate change, through access to early warning systems.
- Ensure 500,000 girls and boys complete primary education.
- Support 500,000 women to give birth safely with skilled carers and improve the quality of care their babies receive.
- Help the Government to provide better and more efficient basic services to more people, as well as help increase the number of people who pay taxes to fund these kinds of services.

## Who we will work with

The UK has a strong track record of delivering results for poor people in Bangladesh, by working flexibly and in partnership with others. We work closely with the Bangladesh government, international agencies such as the UN, other donors and civil society organisations, and have signed a Joint Cooperation Strategy. We are also expanding work with the private sector. We work closely with other UK government departments to help achieve security and prosperity for Bangladesh.



“We are working for the rights of children all over Bangladesh to help them and their families come out of poverty with UK aid. UCEP is providing ‘good value for money’ to poor, underprivileged children.”  
Brig Gen Aftab Uddin Ahmed (Retd),  
Executive Director, Underprivileged Children’s

## How we will work

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 hard-earned taxpayer pound spent on development.

In Bangladesh we maximise the impact of UK aid by scaling up approaches that we know work well and developing new ways of working in tougher areas. Our top three priorities are:

- Improving provision of basic services and poverty reduction, focusing on excluded groups including women, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities.
- Supporting private sector development, jobs and skills, as the foundation for more sustainable, equitable and higher growth and development over the long term.
- Helping to reduce and manage risks to development, especially those related to governance and security, natural disasters and climate change and the economy.

In all of our work, we pay particular attention to tracking results and ensuring the best possible value for money. Partner organisations share the responsibility for demonstrating that every pound of UK tax payers’ money has been used to achieve real change for Bangladesh.

Transparency is essential to make sure aid resources are used properly and lessons are shared widely. Our initiatives in Bangladesh include:

- Helping the government put in place a new Aid Information Management System, to analyse what resources are available and how they are being used
- Reforms to the government’s public financial management systems, to improve transparency and efficiency of all public spending, not just aid
- Generating more debate between government and citizens about improving services like health, education and legal services, and fighting corruption
- An e-registry of all laws and regulations affecting businesses in Bangladesh

## More information

For a more detailed breakdown of Bangladesh’s Operational Plan, please visit [www.dfid.gov.uk/Bangladesh](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Bangladesh)

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