



Asian Development Bank

# Gender in Road Infrastructure

Shireen Lateef  
18 July 2005

**The views expressed in this paper are the views of the author/s and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Asian Development Bank Institute nor the Asian Development Bank. Names of countries or economies mentioned are chosen by the author/s, in the exercise of his/her/their academic freedom, and the Institute is in no way responsible for such usage.**

Transport Infrastructure and  
Poverty Reduction Workshop, 18-  
22 July 2005



ADB

# Improved Connectivity Benefits for Women

- Transport services increase, travel is faster and more convenient and women and girls can travel safely further from home.
- The quality of rural health, education and other services such as agricultural extension improve.
- Urban health education, financial and other services become more accessible to rural women.
- Girls have more chance to attend high schools and colleges.
- Markets are easier to reach and trading opportunities for women increase.
- More customers come to the locality, opportunities to expand small enterprise operated by women will improve.
- Women are able to enjoy greater social travel to maintain family ties.
- Employment opportunities generated for local labour including women, especially rural roads with labor intensive construction, sometime national highways. Provides much needed cash income for women and the poor.

# Potential Negative Impacts on Gender

- Opening up previously remote or isolated inhabited regions increases the spread of HIV/AIDS.
- Trafficking of girls and women increases, especially in localities near major highways and cross-border corridors. The risk is greatest in areas where women have low status and where there is widespread poverty.
- In gender-segregated societies women are unable to travel or trade unless they are women only sections and facilities in buses, trains boats waiting rooms and at markets.
- Opening up remote rural areas may have negative influence on the culture, property rights and way of life of already disadvantage ethnic minorities. Indigenous women are often exploited to promote tourism.
- When roads open forested areas, deforestation affects the livelihoods of women. There is more intensive land use with increased use of fertilizers and pesticides increases health risks to women and men.

# Potential Negative Impacts on Gender

- An increased volume of commercial and private traffic may disproportionately affect the health, security and safety of women and children.
- Resettlement has disproportionately negative effects on women and there are least likely to benefit from compensation.
- Increase rural-to-urban and labor migration may have negative impacts on rural women, for example, more poor, disadvantaged, female-headed households.
- Labor migration increases the risk that returning male workers will transmit HIV/AIDS to rural women and children.
- Expressways may divide a community impacting on kin and social networks and areas to services and economic activities.
- Establishments of constructions --- and influx of outside workers can lead to cultural influences, new diseases and negative social impact.

# Cambodia – Rural Infrastructure Improvement Project

- Thousands of poor women, especially female headed households, benefited through provisions for local contracting, labor recruitment, and local maintenance contracts.
- Minimized health and safety problems for women because the project avoided the use of large contingents of outsider labor.
- Contractors and laborer were engaged at the local level for constructions and subsequent maintenance.
- Labor-intensive construction methods, small-scale local contracting and decentralized implementation arrangements provided employment for 9,500 women and men, using 209 small contractors, to build roads, markets, and other civil works.
- Pro-poor approach, to improved the rural road network throughout Cambodia, demonstrated that labor-based constructions methods can be technically and economically efficient and can be applied to large scale investment projects.

# India National Highway Corridor (Sector 1) Project

## Gender Assessment

- Communities highly vulnerable – connectivity to major cities, making junction and surrounding areas at risk
- Project areas share typical profiles of trafficking source areas:
  - gender discrimination
  - pockets of scheduled tribe communities
  - drought affected
  - loss of traditional livelihoods
  - current practice of child labor and engaging women and children in prostitution in *dhabas*, indicating cases of trafficking
- High risk groups: truck drivers, women and children especially from scheduled tribes and poor households, migrant laborer; construction workers

# India National Highway Corridor (Sector 1) Project

## HIV/AIDS Component

- Awareness raising for contractors and construction workers (covenanted)
- Public awareness campaign and behavioral change of high risk groups
- Referral for early treatment
- Condom promotion
- Capacity building for sustenance of services

## Anti Trafficking Component

- Public awareness raising and safe migration message
- Linking up with government's targeted programs for women and children empowerment (e.g., Integrated Child Development Services, rescue-rehabilitation for trafficking scheme, women empowerment program, skills upgradation program)

# Bangladesh Road Network Improvement Project II

Components	Activities
1. Strengthen the Capacity of Key Stakeholders	<p>Organize trainings for grassroot partners on HIV/AIDS and women trafficking in the cross-border areas of Bangladesh, India, and Myanmar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• law enforcement agencies</li> <li>• border security personnel</li> <li>• community based organizations</li> <li>• local government/Upazilas staff</li> <li>• judicial officers</li> <li>• ward commissioners, and</li> <li>• local leaders in three districts</li> </ul>
2. Public Awareness Campaign	<p>Provide mass awareness programs with targeted beneficiaries (e.g., truck and bus drivers, construction workers, sex workers) through radio, brochures, flyers, town hall meetings, public consultations, one day workshops, etc.</p>
3. Strengthen Resource Center for HIV/AIDS and Trafficking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grant of USD40,000 for each local NGO in three district of Dinajpur, Phanchagar and Cox's Bazar</li> <li>• Center to provide communication, publication and awareness campaign, legal aid, training and equipment</li> <li>• Booths at bus shelters/train stations</li> </ul>



# Bangladesh Third Rural Infrastructure Development Project

Project Components	Gender Action Plan Elements
Feeder Roads	Women laborers recruited (target 3000) Pay equity
200 Women Market Sections	Shops allotted to women/facilities Training in shop management; Women sit on MMCs
Growth Center Markets with areas allocated to women (289)	Space allocated to women/facilities – 200 markets Women participate in management
Tree Plantation and Routine Maintenance (1250 km) with employment for destitute women	Labor Contracting Societies (LCS) formed/ savings/ skills training; train 250 LCS Women responsible for 5 km road maintenance
Bridges, Culverts, Ghats (39), flood refuge centers (30)	Women UP members consulted in design Specific physical design features for women
Union Parishad Complexes (105) (physical design)	Separate room and toilets for women UP members Women laborers recruited, waiting rooms and toilets for women at ghats
Training – 400 Ups, 50 local contractors	GAD training for all stakeholders GAD integrated into UP training