

Bangladesh

Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Project Resettlement in JMBP Assessing Process and Outcomes

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1 Project Profile and Japan's ODA Loan

1) Background

One of the three largest rivers in Bangladesh, the Jamuna runs from north to south in the center of the country dividing it into two major parts: the eastern and western regions. At the time of appraisal, ferries were the only means of crossing the river and were operated at two locations, one upstream and the other downstream of the present project site. The operation of ferries, however, is affected by weather conditions and the time required for one-way travel exceeded two hours. Meanwhile, the water level and width of the river varied greatly between the dry and rainy seasons, making it difficult to improve and expand ferry facilities. Accordingly trucks, which account for more than 60% of the vehicular traffic crossing the river, were required to wait an average of 36 hours before being able to board a ferry. Moreover, the volume of traffic crossing the river was expected to grow at an annual rate of more than 6% during the period leading up to 1998 and more than 5% during the period in and after 1999.

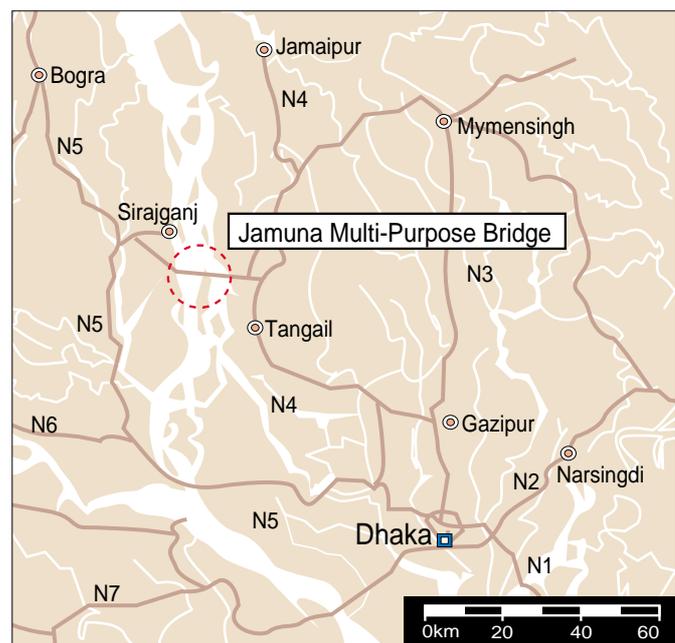
As described above, the Jamuna created a bottleneck for east-west traffic, hindering the transportation of the crops grown in the granaries on the western side to the consuming areas in the east. In addition, the river prevented the western areas from benefiting from the infrastructure, including gas, electric power and communications, which are concentrated in the east, leaving the western areas underdeveloped. For these reasons, building a bridge over the Jamuna had been the strong desire of the nation since Bangladesh became independent in 1971.

2) Objectives

The objectives of the project are to meet the increasing east-west traffic demand and to solve transportation problems by constructing a multipurpose bridge (two lanes each way) over the Jamuna and also to contribute to the economic development of Bangladesh by revitalizing the economy of the western region and thereby reducing the discrepancies between the eastern and western areas. The plan calls for power transmission lines, railways, communications cables and pipelines to be installed along the bridge in the future.

3) Project Scope

The project will consist of construction of a bridge



(approx. 4.8-kilometer-long, two lanes each way), building a 16-kilometer-long approach road on the eastern side and a 14-kilometer-long approach road on the western side, implementing river control measures by constructing two guide bunds on the eastern and western banks of the river, approximately 2.2 kilometers each and providing consulting services in relation to construction supervision, project management, and training of the personnel at the executing agency for operation and maintenance of the project. In order to finance this project, based on the joint finance method, the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and Japan Bank for International Cooperation are each contributing US\$200 million or its equivalent with the remaining US\$96 million provided by the Bangladesh government.

4) Borrower/Executing Agency

People's Republic of Bangladesh/Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Authority (JMBA)

5) Outline of Loan Agreement

Loan Amount/Loan Disbursed	Amount: ¥21.562 billion/¥21.290 billion
Exchange of Notes/Loan	Agreement: March 1994/June 1994
Terms and Conditions	Interest rate:1.0%, Repayment period (grace period):30years (10 years), General Un tied
Final Disbursement Date:	August 2000

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1) INTRODUCTION

1. The physical implementation of the Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge (Bridge) was completed and the Bridge opened on June 23, 1998. Although no land acquisition was necessary for construction of the Bridge itself, east and west guide bunds, approach roads and flood embankments, east hard point and east resettlement site together required about 2860 ha. of land for which a Resettlement Action Plan was prepared (revised subsequently in 1993 as the REVISED RESETTLEMENT ACTION PLAN (RRAP) for providing resettlement and compensation to Project Affected Persons (PAPs). Besides this, resettlement and compensation was also required for project-induced Erosion and Flood Affected Persons (EFAP), for which a compensation guideline was prepared in 1997.
2. Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Authority (JMBA) has been implementing the said RRAP and EFAP since 1992-93. The activities under the two Plans are expected to continue till 2001. Given that both RRAP and EFAP programmes are still on-going, initial plan for an impact study was subsequently revised to allow for a qualitative study at this stage (March-June, 2000). By its very nature, the qualitative study is not expected to provide a full quantitative accounting of resettlement impact but focus rather on assessment of process and outcomes within the limits of available documents and a rapid field survey. Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC) was contracted to carry out this qualitative study.
3. Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Project (JMBP) is a project of national significance linking up the eastern and western part of the country. It is expected to bring about long-term economic benefits for the northern districts in particular and the country as a whole. The introduction of a resettlement policy in the form of the RRAP and EFAP also marked a major innovation in the traditional process of land acquisition and development projects as a whole.

Subsequent large-scale projects have built on the experience of resettlement in JMBP and the changes in the land acquisition policy of the country stands to benefit significantly from the experience ushered in by RRAP and EFAP policies of JMBP.

4. Traditionally, land acquisition in Bangladesh has been guided by a relatively narrow policy focus on official rates of compensation for asset-losing households. JMBP provided the first major instance in the country where a larger policy focus was initiated involving both a market-based rate of compensation as well as rehabilitation of affected population groups who were not recognised under the traditional legal principle of compensation. The shift to this larger focus entailed both the promulgation of new policy tools i.e. the RRAP and EFAP Policies, and, the opening of a project-based additional channel for compensation/rehabilitation over and beyond the traditional channel implemented through the office of the Deputy Commissioner (DC). The main conceptual source for the new policy tools was the World Bank's Operational Directives OD 4.30 with appropriate modification to suit the project location and its context.
5. JMBP adopted a four-pronged institutional strategy for implementing RRAP and EFAP policies:
 - Appointment of Special Land Acquisition Officers (LAO) in the respective DC offices to deal exclusively with land acquisition needs of JMBP as against the normal practice of LAOs handling a variety of administrative tasks.
 - Creation of a Resettlement Unit within the Project office to deal with overall monitoring and payment of entitlements.
 - Contracting of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) to assist in the processing of formalities including surveys for PAPs to be able to receive their entitlements as well as in post-project support programmes on health, training, afforestation and fisheries.
 - A Management Consultancy for advisory and management support.

2) RESETTLEMENT TARGET ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Resettlement targets in JMBP fell into two basic categories: unconditional and conditional targets.

Unconditional targets include:

- Cash Compensation under the law (CCL) payment to all PAPs losing land and/or structures
- 50% premium on CCL value for land-losing PAPs
- One Time Cash Grant (OTCG) for various entitled persons such as cultivators, labourers, homestead-losing PAPs
- House transfer grant and house construction grant for PAPs losing structures

Conditional targets include:

- Maximum Allowable Replacement Value (MARV) payments for those PAPs who purchase replacement land
- Stamp duty refund for those PAPs who purchase replacement land
- Community facilities for those PAPs who self-relocate to host villages
- Allotment in Resettlement Site for those homestead losing PAPs who apply
- EFAP allowances for those who submit claims of being affected by erosion and flooding.

2. Tables 1 and 2 provide a summary overview of target achievements under the RRAP and EFAP programmes. While the exact magnitudes of resettlement outcomes will have to await the completion of the resettlement process in 2001 and its in-depth investigation, the present qualitative survey already indicates some fairly impressive achievements: three-quarters of PAPs entitled to CCL have been paid so and 100% of these have received the premium to make up for the difference between official and market land rates. 100% of EFAP claims for the 1996 and 1997 seasons have been paid and on-going payments for the 1998 and 1999 seasons have already crossed the 64% mark. However,

within these broad parameters, there have also been less than positive outcomes for specific sub-groups of PAPs. In part, such negative outcomes have to do not with JMBP as such but with the pre-existing weaknesses of the land acquisition process in Bangladesh.

TABLE 1 RRAP TARGET ACHIEVEMENTS

Category	Item	Achievement (as from Progress Report)
UNCONDITIONAL TARGETS	• CCL Payments	• Not less than 74%
	• Grant to cover 50% premium	• 100% of all those who have received CCL
	• OTCG	• 100%
	• House construction grant	• 92%
	• House Transfer grant	• 100%
CONDITIONAL TARGETS	• MARV payments	• 48%; not clear how planned total arrived at
	• Stamp duty refund	• 48%
	• Host village relocation	• 93%, not clear how planned total arrived at
	• Resettlement Site relocation	• 85%, not clear how planned total arrived at
	• Training on Human Resource Development (HRD)	• 50%, planned total determined through survey
	• Skill training	• 48%, planned total determined through survey

TABLE 2 EFAP TARGET ACHIEVEMENTS

Period	Expected claims	Received and finalised	Payment achievement
1996 & 1997 seasons	10,499	9,337	100%
1998 & 1999 seasons	4,536	2,790	63.5%

3) AREA-LEVEL TRENDS

- Two broad-brush trends are indicated by the rapid field survey:
 - PAP-level outcomes for the project area as a whole has seen a slight increase in household income levels, but
 - The outcomes are clearly divergent on the two sides of the Jamuna river with east bank PAPs coping much better with the effects of displacement than their west bank counterparts.
- Indicators of local economy show sharp rise in land prices and wage rates within the reference period but a divergent tendency of increased land transfer in the west bank and static trends in the east bank. Accessibility too has shown marked improvement with average travel time from any of the union headquarters to the respective district headquarters dropping significantly, by nearly two-thirds on the eastern side and nearly half in the western side.
- Indicators of social trends reinforce the notion of a divergent outcome on the east and west banks. Perception survey results point towards an increase in social conflicts and consequent insecurity in the west bank relative to the east bank though there are also some variation within each of these broad area categories. Dowry appears to be on the increase on both sides but for differing reasons.
- Preliminary explanations for a relatively better outcome in the east bank compared to the west bank points towards the importance of better initial conditions, earlier start of the construction work and the compensation process, a more positive and effective role by local leadership and the markedly excess land acquisition on the west approach road.

4) PROCESS INSIGHTS

1. Land acquisition

JMBP has marked a threefold innovation in the area of land acquisition and associated compensation process:

- the introduction of the idea of a category of benefits for PAPs which are over and beyond the traditional cash compensation under the law (CCL);
- the introduction of the principle of compensation in a context where no land acquisition is occurring i.e. the EFAP policy for eroded char lands;
- Posing the issue of compensation in a larger policy framework of a resettlement action plan.

As against these positive developments, however, the traditional problem of excess land acquisition associated with development projects in Bangladesh could not be overcome, though the braiding character of the Jamuna river made planning a rather difficult exercise and hence some excess acquisition was anticipated in any case.

2. Resettlement Site

With regard to resettlement sites, the overall PAP preference appears to be for self-relocation in part because there are very few real-life examples of successful resettlement planning. However, a fortuitous combination of circumstances have made the resettlement site on the eastern bank something of a success. Bulk of the settlers moved from a single village and they found it convenient to relocate in the face of continuing erosion. The disruption to their economic life too was minimal. In contrast, on the western bank, the resettlement site appears to combine negative features both of patronage politics and of narrowly bureaucratic planning. Most of the settlers were selected not from the JMBP PAPs but from squatters on the Sirajganj Town Protection Embankment. The location of the site has meant a major disruption in the economic lives of the settlers and they have responded by voting with their feet with retention rate down to 60%.

3. Fraudulent claims

The land acquisition process in Bangladesh has traditionally been associated with some degree of fraud. The JMBP case showed both the brazen heights to which such fraud process could reach but also how firm application of corrective measures could eventually put a stop to the fraud process. Till the time the fraud process prevailed, the field survey revealed that the process was facilitated by two factors: the piecemeal approach to acquisition and the opportunity this afforded to the development of some nexus between elements within the land acquisition offices and a category of local middlemen who organized the setting up of fake structures on advance receipt of knowledge on the land acquisition plans. The process was countered by the promulgation of a project-specific legal provision (special regulatory ordinance SRO number 218 of December 18, 1995) which sought to provide stricter cut-off dates for eligible claims and delegated powers to the district authority to exercise their discretion for preventing fraudulent claims.

4. Local leadership

An important actor in determining the outcome of major development initiatives in Bangladesh is the informal roles played by local leaders at various stages of the project. Some of these roles are of a middlemen nature, some more as friends of PAPs while some are simply as unwritten partners of authorities. The case of the JMBP has been no exception. Without going into the details of this informal process, one striking feature which emerges from the field reports is the relatively successful role of the informal leadership of the east bank in managing the conflicting demands and opportunities of the implementation process. In contrast, the informal leadership on the west bank proved far less capable of producing mutually beneficial outcomes.

5. The Role of NGOs

NGOs were an important element in the implementation of the RRAP and EFAP programmes. There have, however,

been no systematic evaluation of NGO performance in the JMBP in their various roles. NGOs have played a clear and positive role in EFAP and MARV compensation. Their performance in various post-project support programmes remain to be adequately evaluated.

A general impression which emerges from the qualitative survey is that the role of the NGOs have been more of a technical partner nature than a social mobilizational one. While some of the PAPs voiced the issue of accessibility of the NGOs to common PAPs, NGOs like BRAC on their part explained that their distance from the PAPs was necessary to avoid getting embroiled in local politics particularly in the sensitive issue of listing of PAPs for EFAP payments.



Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge



A Community Center Built in the Resettlement Site



Settlers in the Resettlement Site