



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



BANGLADESH

COUNTRY PROFILE

Bangladesh is a key U.S. strategic partner in South Asia and shares a strong friendship driven by common interests. Yet, with nearly one in three people living in poverty, the country faces immense development challenges and faces an important crossroads in its democratic evolution. USAID is helping Bangladesh address development challenges that threaten to undermine its economic potential and stability.

USAID has partnered with Bangladesh since its 1971 independence and is committed to helping achieve its goal of becoming a middle-income country by 2021 – its 50th year of independence.

OUR WORK

With a population of 165 million in a low-lying, riverine area the size of Iowa, Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated and environmentally vulnerable countries in the world. However, the country's economy has grown robustly, even as development challenges persist. Today, USAID partners to support Bangladesh's democracy, food security and environmental resilience.

DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

The space for open, democratic dialogue in Bangladesh has diminished due to a combination of government action and targeted, extremist attacks. USAID programs support open democratic processes, human rights, and a holistic approach to counter violent extremism (CVE). USAID's new CVE program seeks to identify the most effective approaches to CVE in the Bangladeshi context and create a community of practice to expand successful efforts.

This program sits at the center of a broader effort to promote democratic institutions and practices, combat gender-based violence and human trafficking, and empower workers in Bangladesh’s ready-made garment industry to advocate for safer working conditions.

AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

With USAID support, Bangladesh has nearly tripled rice production over the past 20 years. Thanks to new technologies introduced by USAID, 2.4 million farmers adopted improved agriculture and aquaculture techniques in 2016 resulting in \$315.4 million in incremental sales – a 103 percent increase from the prior year. However, high population density, gradual loss of arable land and degradation in biodiverse areas have put such extreme pressure on natural resources that Bangladesh now has one of the world’s lowest percentages of national forest cover. For this reason, USAID promotes biodiversity conservation and natural resource management in more than 2.5 million acres of wetlands and forests.

GLOBAL HEALTH AND EDUCATION

Over the past two decades, USAID has helped Bangladesh reduce maternal and child mortality by two-thirds. During the same period, USAID helped to significantly reduce malnutrition from 60 percent to 36 percent. Despite this success, 60 percent of child deaths still occur during the first month of life, 36 percent of children under-5 are stunted, and Bangladesh has the seventh highest burden of tuberculosis in the world. Last year, USAID was instrumental in saving the lives of 185,000 children and 8,000 mothers. In education, more than 40 percent of Bangladeshis are under the age of 24 and two out of five Bangladeshis cannot read. Recognizing the risk and opportunity inherent in this “youth bulge,” USAID is expanding efforts to teach early grade reading and workforce skills development. USAID supports reading during the first three years of primary school to curb high drop-out rates. USAID also intends to begin a work force program for Bangladeshi youth aged 15-29 that aims to increase their employability and productivity, preparing them to contribute to Bangladesh’s growing economy.



To improve nutrition in rural areas, USAID trained more than 45,000 Bangladeshi families to grow their own homestead gardens.

PHOTO CREDIT: AHSAN KHAN/USAID



In 2016, USAID childhood education programs reached more than 388,000 children and measurably improved their reading skills.

PHOTO CREDIT: ADNAN WAHID/DRIK/USAID

CONTACTS

MISSION

Janina Jaruzelski, Mission Director
U.S. Embassy, Madani Avenue, Baridhara
Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh
Phone: (880-2) 5566-2000
E-mail: indhaka@usaid.gov

HEADQUARTERS

George Zarycky, Desk Officer
U.S. Agency for International Development
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC, USA 20523
Phone: 202-712-0224; E-mail: gzarycky@usaid.gov