

TA for Char Development and Settlement Project Phase IV, Bangladesh

Project director	Hero Heering
Assignment	The project involves technical assistance to the Char Development and Settlement Project Phase IV (CDSP IV). The project aims to support the livelihoods of settlers in recently emerged chars (newly accreted land).
Client	Government of Bangladesh
Financing Agency	International Fund for Agricultural Development
Partners	Socioconsult, BETS
Composition of Team	<i>Euroconsult Mott MacDonald</i> : Team leader <i>Partner(s)</i> : Deputy Team Leader, Infrastructure Expert; Deputy Team Leader, NGO and Livelihoods Expert; Land Settlement Adviser; Quality Control - Design Engineer; M&E and Knowledge Management Adviser; Gender and Social Adviser; Agricultural Adviser; Social Forestry Adviser; Financial Adviser
Period of Assignment	From March 2011 to March 2017 Staff months: Euroconsult Mott MacDonald: 84; Partner(s): 2172
Contract value	Euroconsult Mott MacDonald: € 2,150,000 Partner(s): € 8,606,000
Background	<p>The project aims to support the livelihoods of settlers in recently emerged chars (newly accreted land). They migrated to these new lands for a variety of reasons, the main one being (probably for 80-90% of the households) that people lost their original land and homesteads because of erosion. When a new char becomes fit for cultivation, the river-eroded families from adjacent areas start migrating into the newly formed land for shelter and livelihood. A power broker, in many cases with ancestral links to newly accreted char land, tends to extend support and patronage to settlers. This type of autonomous settlement leads to a situation in which the official process of land settlement cannot start with a clean slate. Settlers are already present in new chars with active control over land before the official process has even started. Powerful people, commonly known as jotdar, and the settlers controlled by them, occupy the land.</p> <p>The immigration is illegal, because the land is under control of the Forest Department (for a period of 20 years after the start of the first forestation activities). The land is subject to regular flooding. There is no access to drinking water, especially in winter and no system of communication. For food, the settlers are dependent on a low-yielding rice aman crop, some rabi crop and a few fish farmed in ponds or caught in open waters. Some income is derived from tending cattle. People have no official title on the land they occupy. They are vulnerable to a set of risks such as flooding, storms and salinity intrusion.</p>

Description of project

The fourth Char Development and Settlement Project (CDSP-IV) is to continue the work of char development and settlement which has been supported by the Netherlands since the 1980s. The overall objective of the project is to reduce poverty and hunger for people living on newly accreted coastal chars. Security for people and livelihoods is to be provided via a climate resilient infrastructure and by providing poor households with a legal title to land. To productively utilise these char lands, it is necessary to:

- (i) provide protection from salt water intrusion and flooding via embankments, sluice gates and drainage channels;
- (ii) protect people and property from periodic cyclones and the effects of climate change with climate resilient rural infrastructure;
- (iii) ensure access to potable water;
- (iv) introduce and disseminate appropriate agricultural technologies and practices (taking account of possible seasonal salinity); and
- (v) build communications infrastructure within the char and to connect it to external markets and population centres.

Services provided

The tasks and activities of the technical assistance team can be grouped under four headings:

Coordination:

Participation in Inter Ministerial Steering Committee, Project Management Committee; support to the Project Coordinating Director; NGO coordination; links with Local Government Institutions (LGIs) and with other development projects; liaison with Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and with IFAD; input in Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) programme.

Planning:

Inception report; annual work plans and budgets; screening of potential areas for char development, followed by feasibility studies; assistance to integrated coastal development programs.

Implementation:

Project implementation manual as part of inception report; selecting, contracting, supervising NGOs; advice and support to participating agencies in implementing their part of the project interventions according to their respective Development Project Proformas; gender action plans for implementing agencies; training plan, undertaking of training and support to training by agencies and NGOs; institutional development at agency, NGO and field level institutions level; monitoring of quality control of civil works and other interventions financed out of the IFAD loan (following the concerned guidelines); recommendations on withdrawal applications for the IFAD loan; six-monthly project progress reports; assist agencies in account keeping of project expenditures and generate consolidated financial statements.

Monitoring, lesson learning and knowledge management: establishing and maintaining an M&E system for outcome and process monitoring; impact surveys; relevant elements for internalization into six implementing

agencies; strategy for dissemination, including website; technical reports and mission reports; progress monitoring.