Information about Bangladesh
Country name: People's Republic of Bangladesh

- Surface area: 147,630 sq km (2017)
- Population: 161.75 million (2016-17)
- GNI per capita: USD 1,610 (2016-17)
- GDP growth (annual): 7.12% (2016)
- Literacy rate: 72.76% (2016)

Working together worldwide

As a provider of international cooperation services for sustainable development and international education work, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is dedicated to building a future worth living around the world. GIZ has over 50 years of experience in a wide variety of areas, including economic development and employment, energy and the environment, and peace and security. The diverse expertise of our federal enterprise is in demand around the globe, with the German Government, European Union institutions, the United Nations, the private sector and governments of other countries all benefiting from our services. We work with businesses, civil society actors and research institutions, fostering successful interaction between development policy and other policy fields and areas of activity. The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) is our main commissioning party.

All these commissioning parties and cooperation partners place their trust in GIZ by working together with us to generate ideas for political, social and economic change, develop these into concrete plans and implement the envisaged change processes.

The registered offices of GIZ are in Bonn and Eschborn.

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GIZ in Bangladesh

On behalf of the BMZ, GIZ has been collaborating with the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) for more than 40 years, ever since the country’s independence. GIZ Bangladesh (BD) has approximately 220 national personnel, 20 seconded staff and two Development Workers in the country.

It focuses on the following priority areas in Bangladesh:

• Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency;
• Good Governance, Rule of Law, Human Rights; and
• Adaptation to Climate Change in Urban Areas.

Besides these, it is also active in the area of Biodiversity and Resource Protection.

All of its activities support the GoB in gaining middle income status by achieving the Vision 2021, the 7th Five Year Plan, as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Other donors who have co-funded projects in Bangladesh include the UK Government, the European Commission and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Bangladesh. GIZ BD is also collaborating with Energising Development (EnDev) and the French Development Agency (AFD).

Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency

GIZ BD works with the GoB to promote sustainable and reliable energy delivery through different renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies. It collaborates with public and private sector stakeholders and civil society to help people living in rural areas by improving access to modern energy services and livelihood opportunities. The result is reduced fossil fuel usage, indoor pollution and Green House Gas (GHG) emissions.

Initiatives also focus on introducing and promoting energy efficient technologies at the industrial level, along with developing financially feasible models to sustain the transition. This also reduces GHG emissions and improves the competitiveness of small and medium industries.

Support is provided to the GoB to develop conducive sustainable energy strategies, policies and regulations that build the capacity of relevant national public and private agencies, with an aim to sustain the development impact.

Solar Water Pumps are providing freshwater to coastal residents (left)
Energy-efficient Improved Rice Parboiling System in operation (right)

Photo: © GIZ BD/ Ratan Ghosh
Photo: © GIZ BD
Adaptation to Climate Change in Urban Areas

GIZ, on behalf of the BMZ, supports the GoB in its efforts to strengthen the adaptive capacities and climate resilience of Bangladesh’s population, with a special focus on the vulnerable citizens of urban areas. Within the priority area “Adaptation to Climate Change in Urban Areas,” GIZ partners with key governmental actors, selected municipalities and civil society groups. In doing so, GIZ addresses challenges not only on the local but also the national level, resulting from the cross-cutting issue of climate change. For instance, GIZ supports the improvement of basic infrastructure in poor neighborhoods; promotes community based adaptation measures in partner cities; builds capacities of local and national authorities in regard to participatory climate resilient national and urban planning and projects; conducts nation-wide climate vulnerability assessments; supports the update of the national climate change strategy and action plan and supports in accessing international climate finance; assists the mainstreaming of climate change into national and local plans and project development and improves the integration of national, regional and local planning.

Beyond the priority area, support is provided towards biodiversity conservation in Bangladesh, especially the management of the Sundarbans, the biggest mangrove forest in the world. The aim is to increase the technical capacity of the Bangladesh Forest Department, strengthen co-management structures and improve coordination, for a better management of the Sundarbans.

Good Governance, Rule of Law, Human Rights

In this priority area, the focus is on one hand on human rights and social standards in the textile, garment and leather sectors and on the other hand on improvements in the judicial and penal systems. One aim is to improve the quality of the justice system. Initiatives include reducing case backlogs in courts, promoting alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, improving poor and vulnerable prisoners’ access to legal services and their rehabilitation and skills development, and strengthening the capacity of prison administrations. Support is also provided to strengthen corruption prevention mechanisms and enhance national capacity to implement corruption prevention activities.

Another aim is to strengthen competitiveness of the textile, garment and leather sectors by focusing on sustainability in its economic, social and environmental dimensions. The government as well as private sector and civil society actors are involved in the activities to pursue a course of sustainable economic growth. The initiatives focus on compliance with national laws and international guidelines concerning workers’ rights, sustainability standards and inclusion of persons with disabilities. Public and private universities are supported to include topics like ethical management and social dialogue in their curricula. Another initiative supports the government to establish and implement a statutory employment injury protection scheme for workers.
GIZ International Services

GIZ International Services (InS) is an independently operating business area of GIZ. It works on behalf of clients such as international institutions, national governments and private businesses with worldwide operations. InS implements commissions on behalf of these clients with the German Government’s approval, placing at their disposal the strategies and expertise of German international cooperation.

In Bangladesh, InS works on behalf of a large European retailer. It strives to improve working conditions in some of the retailer’s supplier Ready-Made Garments (RMG) factories. This assistance aims to ensure the sustainability of the clients’ supply chain by helping factories adhere to local labour laws in the areas of social compliance; occupational health and safety; fire, electrical and structural safety; and proper chemical and environmental management. Life skills training is provided to selected female workers on health and hygiene, financial literacy and effective communication. InS also trains a group of supplier factories to implement the global Detox campaign’s “Clean Factory Approach,” which aims to reduce toxic water pollution resulting from RMG production. This decreases the usage of chemical products and carbon dioxide emissions, leading to cost reductions.

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Proper safety measures ensured during sample cutting in a supplier factory (left).

Quality Checking Line in a supplier factory (right).