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# *Roads that connect more than villages in Rajasthan*

Since 2004, the World Bank has been helping connect remote villages of Rajasthan through roads. This is part of the World Bank's wider support for the nation-wide Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY). In Rajasthan, a series of rural road projects have helped bring hitherto unconnected habitations onto the country's road grid. These roads have given people access to schools, hospitals and a chance at better livelihoods

Most men in habitations around Sikar district in Rajasthan have been cattle-herders for generations. The sandy and rocky terrain in the area is not ideal for farming, so they focus instead on raising cattle and then selling the animals for profit.

Until a few years ago, negotiating the dirt road near Kalakhet village was a nightmare for cattle-herders such as Baldev Gurjar as they headed out daily to find forage for their cattle. “Covering even short distances of three to four kilometers would take hours,” Baldev says. “We had to cross bushes and sand, and during the monsoons, the unpaved roads were clogged with rainwater as well as water from farms.”

All that changed with the construction of an all-weather road in 2013. Now, as Baldev prepares to take his cattle out in the morning, his face fills with pride as he loads the animals into his new pick-up van.

### *Access to schools and hospitals*

School teacher Shikha Rani in Mandha Majra village of Alwar district exemplifies how the new roads have changed lives. Rani, who holds a Master’s degree in Arts, remembers

the difficulties she and others like her faced in getting an education when the unpaved road to her village would fill up with rainwater. “Girls especially did not go to school in my village,” she says of the situation eight years ago.

Earlier, children had to walk several kilometers to get to the nearest school and needed an escort to accompany them for safety reasons. Now, school buses come right up to the village; girls cycle to school independently or in groups, and access to colleges in nearby Alwar or Sikar city is no more a distant dream.





stretch across more than 10,000 km and benefit 3,677 habitations.

### *World Bank standards in design and implementation*

World Bank support for India's Rural Roads Program has set global standards in project design, planning and implementation, strengthened overall systems and introduced several innovations.

Bhaguri Devi of Bhagwa village is the proud mother of two sons, both of whom go to college in Sikar and in Udaipurvati. She herself is an Aanganwadi worker and is also studying for her Class 10 exams. She remembers how, earlier, women in labour had to be carried on cots or on camel carts to the nearest hospital, often resulting in their death. Now one can call for an ambulance or a private car to transport the sick. Medicines, vaccinations and other medical help for women and children now reach the village easily.

For instance, before the path for the road was chalked out, communities were consulted extensively, with community members even choosing the route of the road through a process called the 'Transect Walk'. Women, minority communities, and others affected by the project were involved. Villagers donated the land for road construction voluntarily.

Local communities, including women's self-help groups, also monitored the construction and maintenance of the roads with the help of

"Our village is now moving forward. Our children are able to go to school; their future is bright," she says.

These are beneficiaries of the World Bank's Rural Roads Project-II which supports the central government's flagship program Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY RRP-II). In Rajasthan, World Bank funding of over Rs 2,800 crore for this project has helped in the construction of over 3,600 roads, which







pecially-devised toolkits. Performance-based contracts were introduced. It has been found that when citizens monitor road construction at multiple stages, accountability is enhanced, issues are identified early on, and the quality of the road improves.

Keeping in mind depleting natural resources, the program mandates that 15 percent of the length of any sanctioned road be constructed using waste and recyclable materials. An online monitoring, management and accounting system made the procurement of construction materials more transparent and efficient, bringing down the time taken from up to three months earlier to between 45 and 60 days.

### *Increased options for livelihood*

Budhram Gurjar owns the sole roadside tea shop—Guru Kripa Hotel—on the 15-km Sangarwa stretch. A truck driver earlier, Budhram says he got tired of being away from home and driving across the country, from

Tamil Nadu to West Bengal. He decided to come back to his village and converted his tea shop into a permanent structure in 2013. Over the last five years, he has also added four guest rooms for travellers. He says he now earns Rs 300-500 a day from his roadside tea shop, which goes up to Rs 1,500 a day on festival days when people throng to visit the nearby Shakambhari Mata temple.

He married-off his eldest daughter two years back, explaining how difficult it was to get marriage proposals from nearby villages earlier. “People would refuse to send their daughters or marry our sons because there was no access to our village.”

In Kayasthpura village of Jhunjhunu district in Rajasthan, milkman Ram Niwas Saini has seen his sales rise ten-fold, from 20-30 litres a day to about 300 litres a day today, thanks to the newly constructed road. “Before the road was built, we had to carry supplies on our back and it would take hours to cover the smallest of distances,” he recalls. His





earnings have helped him to build a large house with toilet facilities. Most people in the village now own motorcycles and some even own four-wheelers.

His daughter, Kanchan, studies in a college in Bagad about four kilometers away. “I go on my scooty to college,” she says, showing off her two-wheeler. “There are no restrictions from our parents as far as going out with friends is concerned.” Kanchan says she would like to study further or find a job. Her father has the same aspirations for her, and when asked if he would like to get her married, he brushes off the suggestion saying, getting a job is a priority.

All told, Rajasthan’s rural roads have not only led to better access to education, healthcare and increased options for livelihoods, villagers also shared a sense that the roads have put their previously nondescript villages on the map. Self-reliance and a feeling of being part of India’s development story is a narrative one hears in every house one visits in these villages today.

### *Snapshot of the Rural Roads Project*

- Since 2004, the \$41-billion PMGSY program has benefited about 323,000 habitations across India by building new roads and upgrading old ones.\*
- The World Bank has supported the program with a total loan of \$1,800 million under the Rural Roads Project. Another \$500 million has also been approved as additional funding till the year 2020.
- So far, 36,000 kms of roads have been completed under the World Bank financed Rural Roads Projects and have opened for traffic.
- These roads connect almost 50,000 habitations.

\*Source: [omms.nic.in](http://omms.nic.in)



# *Real-time data can help India's water crisis*

*Despite limited water resources, India as a whole, is not a water-scarce country. Using accurate real-time data, it can develop an effective water management plan that can help harness its water resources and its use judiciously.*



In 2018, Cape Town made headlines as the world's first major city to approach 'Day Zero' when the city would run out of water.

Shortly thereafter, an acute water crisis brought Shimla to a halt. Those were one-off events, we thought. Until this summer, when Chennai had to bring water by train from more than 200 km away.

On the flip side, unprecedented floods ravaged Kerala last year. This year, large parts of India were devastated by the deluge.

Droughts and floods are not new in India. For centuries, they have stalked the vast Indian landmass, often in rapid succession.

Two-thirds of India is prone to drought, affecting some 150 million people. And floods afflict another 32 million, robbing the economy of a whopping Rs 6,000 crore (\$10 billion) on average a year.

Today, however, the challenge is of a different magnitude altogether. With rapid urbanization, the expansion of irrigation, and rising demand from the industrial, domestic, and power sectors, India's limited water resources are being stretched to the limit.

To make matters worse, climate change is playing out in ways we don't yet fully understand.

The country is now reaching a tipping point. Groundwater resources in more than half of India's districts are critical or overexploited, and some rivers are not reaching the sea.

India, as a whole, is not a water-scarce country. Even though the availability of water per person has fallen from 4,000 cubic meters in 1950 to around 1,000 cubic meters today, India still has far more water per person than Israel, for instance.

Yet, despite its arid climate, Israel has increased water security with just around 90 cubic meters of water per capita.

It's not so much a water crisis, therefore, as a water management crisis, calling for a paradigm shift in the way we manage things. The key to managing water efficiently is having accurate, real-time data. As the saying goes, if you can't measure it, you can't manage it.

For a start, we need to know how much water the country has, where it has it, when it has it, and how this water is being used. Only then will we be able to assess the demand from various sectors, harness water from every possible source, and plan its use judiciously.

The online platform [indiawris.gov.in](http://indiawris.gov.in) launched in August has made this easier. Users can now access the entire country's water data – both historic and real-time – on a state and basin-wide basis.

The importance of consistent, transparent, and easily accessible water data cannot be

overemphasized, especially in India where more than 5,000 medium and large dams are spread across the country.

Because, when dealing with such large volumes of water, even the smallest mistake can have devastating consequences downstream.

Although collecting water data is not new for India, it has often been difficult to use it, either because various water agencies used different formats to store their data or were reluctant to share it with each other.

But now, reservoir operators will be able to employ this data to run different models on a real-time basis and use decision support systems to determine which reservoir to release water from, how much to release, and when. This

will allow them to maximize water storage while preventing flooding downstream.

In a few years, it will be possible to accurately determine which villages will be flooded when river levels rise.

Key to managing water efficiency is having accurate, real-time data. Although collecting water data is not new for India, it has often been difficult to use it, either because various water agencies used different formats to store their data or were reluctant to share it with each other.



This will enable urban planners to avoid development in flood-prone areas and remove encroachments from places where communities might be at risk.

More importantly, planners will be able to take a basin-wide approach to better manage the fragile ecology of river basins.

This will also allow them to adjudicate fairly in river water disputes, as the digitization of water data will make the system more transparent, and hopefully increase trust among stakeholders.

Agriculture departments too will be able to give farmers customized advice such as which crop to plant, where, and when, depending on the volume of water in the reservoirs and ponds in their area. Until now, this has been a big challenge.

Decisions about where and what kind of rain-water harvesting structures, such as check dams, to build can also be made more transparently.

What's more, it will now be possible to assess the impact these structures will have downstream, as many a time the construction of upstream structures dries out areas downstream. (This practice is already being followed in the World Bank-supported West Bengal Accelerated Development of Minor Irrigation project).

And this is just the beginning.

In the years to come, information about the quality of surface and groundwater will help map the areas where water is unsuitable for drinking or other purposes.

Artificial intelligence will also be able to put this voluminous data to use to better understand the impact of climate extremes and help devise appropriate solutions.

An online platform [indiawris.gov.in](http://indiawris.gov.in) launched in August allows users access to the entire country's water data – both historic and real-time – on a state and basin-wide basis. Reservoir operators, agriculture departments and urban planners will be able to better advise stakeholders on crucial interventions.

Today, however, these interventions are crucial. For the need of the hour is efficient and sustainable water management that can meet the needs of the present without compromising the future for coming generations.



# ICR Update

**T**his is a short summary of the Implementation Completion Report (ICR) of a recently-closed World Bank project. The full text of the ICR is available on the Bank's website. To access this document, go to [www.worldbank.org/reference/](http://www.worldbank.org/reference/) and then opt for the Documents & Reports section.

## *Second Technical Engineering Educational Quality Improvement Project (TEQIP II)*



### **Context**

In the early 2010s, India was a leading player in information technology, telecom and business outsourcing. The number of engineering institutes in the country was growing – nearly 1000 engineering institutions were added between 2007 and 2009.

However, enrollments in higher education courses was quite low and some of the engineering intensive areas like information technology, infrastructure and power faced a shortage of skills. Studies also indicated that employers were not satisfied with the quality of new hires.

Outdated curricula, inadequate academic infrastructure, shortage of qualified teachers, poor industry interactions and non-participative and over-centralized governance mechanisms characterized the technical education system around that time.

### **Second Technical Engineering Educational Quality Improvement Project (TEQIP II)**

<b>Approval Date:</b>	18 March, 2010
<b>Closing Date:</b>	31 March, 2017
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	\$350 million
<b>Bank Financing:</b>	\$192 million
<b>Implementing Agency:</b>	Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India
<b>Outcome:</b>	Satisfactory
<b>Risk to Development Outcome:</b>	Low
<b>Overall Bank Performance:</b>	Satisfactory

### **Project Development Objectives**

TEQIP II was developed with the objective to improve the quality of engineering education and produce more employable graduates. It aimed to address key challenges facing the sector through a series of academic and non-academic reforms in participating institutions.

Academic reforms would focus on improving the curriculum, the faculty and research, and developing industry linkages and employment-focused activities. Non-academic reforms would focus primarily on governance-oriented reforms, such as strengthening the functioning of the board of governors, greater use of data for decision-making, rewarding merit, emphasizing accreditation, transparency and building mechanisms for accountability and sustainability.

The project beneficiaries included 190 institutions from 23 states and union territories (UTs). Of these, 26 institutions were centrally funded, 126 were public or public-aided and 38 were private.

TEQIP II followed the successful completion of TEQIP I which was the World Bank's first endeavor to strengthen higher education in India. It was designed to meet the Indian government's goal of creating a pool of world class professionals to propel the knowledge economy forward.

### **Achievements**

**Accreditation:** By the end of the project period, the share of accredited programs in project institutions – cleared by the National Board of Accreditation (NBA) – more than doubled, going from 30 percent at baseline to 65 percent in 2014-15. Further, TEQIP II supported programs received higher average accreditation scores (about 30 percentage

points higher) than the national average, further attesting to the quality of institutions under TEQIP.

**Gender and social development:** Institutes made special efforts to provide girl students and students from disadvantaged social groups access to resources and services to help them cope with their education. Thus, transition rates between the first and second year improved substantially among all students including girls and particularly among those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Female students constituted 30 percent of all student beneficiaries in the project and this was slightly higher than the national average of 28 percent.

**Governance:** States like Maharashtra and West Bengal showed proactivity in carrying out reforms in institutions funded under the project. On the other hand, progress on accreditation in Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Telangana was slower. Responses from the tracer study and supervision missions showed that states and institutions built strong linkages with industry with varying degrees of success. States with a considerable industrial base (such as Maharashtra and Karnataka) benefitted from industry linkages but states with little industry such as Rajasthan faced limitations.

**Academic autonomy:** By the end of the project, 70% of project institutions obtained academic autonomy. These institutions were able to make decisions about their leadership, faculty appointments, curriculum, teaching, examinations and research priorities. Institutions restructured or revised curricula – often with the involvement of industry and the country's leading technical institutions.



**Improved quality of Faculty:** As part of project activities, institutes were encouraged to spend 10% of their outlay on faculty and staff development training. As a result, the proportion of faculty with a Masters' in Technology (M.Tech) doubled between 2009 and 2017. By the end of the project period, over 92 percent faculty had an M.Tech degree against an end target of 88 percent.

The faculty to student ratio over the course of the project went-up from 1:17 in 2010 to 1:14 in 2015-16. The number of faculty at TEQIP institutions increased on average by about 40 percent – with some states showing phenomenal progress (Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Odisha) while some states like Bihar, Tripura and Gujarat faced substantial shortages.

**Enrollment for higher studies:** The number of Master and PhD students enrolled in project institutions went from 30,000 at baseline to 45,658, exceeding the end target by nearly 5000 students. About 5% of these students were enrolled in PhD programs.

**Employer satisfaction:** An employer satisfaction survey conducted by the World Bank and FICCI in 2009-10 found that only 33% were satisfied with newly recruited engineers, with soft skills being a key area of discontent. As a result, TEQIP II laid considerable emphasis on building these skills. A repeat survey in 2014-15 found that

75% of employers were very satisfied with newly recruited engineers with the key area of improvement being soft skills.

### **Lessons Learnt**

- **Assessment tools used for measuring student learning.** It is always advisable to use valid and standardized assessment tools, instead of proxies, to measure improvements in student learning and use this to improve performance of institutions.
- **Quality improvement requires behavior change at different levels.** A strong state support and an independent board of governors in colleges is essential for creating autonomous institutions that can bring about essential reforms.
- **Higher education projects can benefit from technical assistance to strengthen country quality assurance systems.** It is important to integrate capacity building of quality assurance systems in higher education projects, where accreditation is an often-used metric for quality.
- **Building successful institute-industry collaboration requires a strategic approach and time.** Institutions should utilize the opportunity of engaging with industries strategically to establish partnerships for mutual benefits. This requires time, effort and patience on the part of institutions.



## *Eat Right India – a food safety and health movement*



**A** new movement is taking shape across the country which promotes a simple philosophy – if it's not safe, it's not food; if it's not healthy, it's not food; and if it's not good for the planet, it's not right to eat it!

The Eat Right India campaign launched by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) could not have come at a better time. Diabetes and heart-related diseases have reached alarming levels in India. Undernutrition and nutritional deficiencies are still highly prevalent, as are food-borne

diseases. Managing diets and lifestyle has now become critical.

### *A 360-degree approach*

The campaign is unique in many ways, as it addresses both demand and supply. On the demand side, it empowers consumers to ask for food that is safe, healthy and holistic. On the supply side, it enables industry to make hard choices to produce and sell healthier food and encourages start-ups to innovate and find solutions in food testing, availability, labelling and recovery of any surplus.

It is teaching young children in schools to inculcate healthy eating habits. It is targeting campuses, workplaces, universities, hospitals and institutions to serve safe and healthy food. It is also training the frontline health workers at Aanganwaadi centres and ASHA on safe and healthy diets.

With growing threats to the environment, Eat Right India also has a strong sustainability



push. Its Repurpose Used Cooking Oil (RUCO) initiative in partnership with oil companies and the Ministry of Petroleum, helps collect and convert used cooking oil to bio-diesel, thus effectively reducing unsafe consumption and at the same time creating a source of sustainable fuel.

### *FSSAI – from food safety regulator to enabler*

Perhaps the most novel aspect of the movement is that for the first time FSSAI – a food regulator - has become an enabler integrating food safety, nutrition and the environment more consciously and visibly into its work.

Donald Macrae, food safety consultant at the World Bank commented on the scale of the program, saying, “I’ve not seen a food safety regulator tackling lifestyle and environment before. And nobody is doing it at the scale that India is attempting.”

But FSSAI cannot mould the food habits and lifestyles of 1.3 billion people alone. And so, it has taken every possible stakeholder along – citizens, artists, restaurants, media, food producers, corporates and development agencies.

“The conversation around food safety has changed. It used to be narrow and based on policing. But due to new ways of dealing with

issues, people’s involvement and a sense of positive competition among the states are the drivers,” said Pawan Agarwal, CEO, FSSAI.

### *Passing the baton to states*

Going forward, the leadership and active participation of states is crucial to the movement’s success. “Now, it’s the state level leadership and implementation at the state and district levels that has to be stepped up. So, learning from each other will be important and critical,” said Ashi Kathuria, Senior Nutrition Specialist, World Bank.

In September 2019, the World-Bank organised a knowledge exchange workshop on the FSSAI-led and Bank-supported Eat Right India initiative that seeks to transform India’s food ecosystem and ensure that 1.3 billion Indians have access to safe and healthy food. Over 200 stakeholders from over 25 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America and some 20 Indian states came together to learn from each other.

The Indian delegates included state commissioners of food safety, representatives from the food industry, academia, consumer interest groups and professional networks like NetProFaN, development partners like WHO and the media. The international participants included food regulators, who brought in vital experience and learning.



## *Fortifying food, reducing trans-fat*

Food fortification is a key focus of the campaign to address micro-nutrient deficiencies. Chandigarh shared how it has used government schemes (ICDS and mid-day meal) to “fortify the staples” through concerted efforts by all line departments, training and by streamlining supply. Resident welfare associations and grassroots outreach has proved crucial to scaling up Eat Right India across schools, hospitals and workplaces.

Kerala shared how it was reducing trans-fat, one of the main causes of cardiovascular diseases, through the “Trans-Fat Free India” program. It is doing so by training food business operators (FBOs), using Information, Education and communication (IEC) campaigns and ensuring support through government policies.

## *Food vendors: All hands on deck*

Street food is a great attraction for city dwellers in many states of India. Small, independent food businesses, whether formal or informal, have an enormous impact on India’s food landscape. Recognizing this, FSSAI actively engaged with the entire spectrum, from street food vendors to those supplying to schools, campuses and institutions and places of worship, which millions of people visit each day.

Gujarat, which set up the country’s first Clean Street Food Hub, shared how it first conducted a gap-analysis in hygiene and sanitation. They then trained and certified street food vendors through FSSAI’s Food Safety Training and Certification (FoSTaC) Program. FoSTaC, a private sector-partnership has helped train more than 1.5 lakh food safety supervisors to ensure that food is handled hygienically, and vendors adhere to cleanliness standards. City municipal corporations in Gujarat also played a critical role in setting up street food clusters.

Maharashtra has similarly trained food providers at almost 250 places of worship under the Blissful Hygienic Offering to God or BHOG initiative. To help scale this up in other

states, it recommended onboarding of Mandir Samitis and establishing standards of hygiene and sanitation, licensing and registration of food providers.

## *Leveraging professional networks, campuses and the digital realm*

So far, the Eat Right India movement appears to be spreading organically across many states. Even so, it needs to grow from states to cities and districts, citizens and professionals.

One of the most promising channel is NetProFaN, a large network of six professional bodies comprising doctors, nutritionists, dietitians, food technologists and scientists, chefs and food analysts across India. A robust and ready platform, it has chapters in 11 states across India.

“FSSAI has launched an ambitious, unique and very inclusive campaign. The movement needs to grow to the interiors of the country. Our convergence with administrative authorities is the only way to get things really moving,” said Jagmeet Madan, President, Indian Dietetic Association (IDA). Madan also stressed that the states need handholding and guidance on structures, getting stakeholders together and flow of work and protocol.

## *Building leaders and champions*

“Capacity building, especially at the district level, is the next big need,” said Vivian Hoffman, IFPRI, Kenya. In line with this, over 350 probationers have already been trained at the IAS training academy in Mussoorie, so they are ready to ‘activate’ Eat Right India from Day 1 in the districts they are posted to. Drawing inspiration to create a similar state-level cadre, states suggested linking-in the state administrative training institutes too.

Even as FSSAI is busy planning for multiple Eat Right events ahead, CEO Pawan Agarwal concluded that the workshop “has helped to enhance the commitment of various stakeholders to the movement, reaffirm their faith and belief that they are on the right path and celebrate the success so far.”

## Face to Face

# *‘Despite looming water scarcity, India remains one of the largest water users per unit of GDP’*

*India is among the world’s most water-stressed countries. Yet, it is believed that India does not so much face a water crisis as a water management crisis. IJsbrand H de Jong, Lead Water Resources Specialist at the World Bank, weighs in.*



*What are the challenges that India faces with water management, especially given that we often have too little or too much water?*

India is home to 18 percent of the global population but has only 4 percent of the global water resources. Its per capita water availability is around 1,100 cubic meter (m<sup>3</sup>), well below the internationally recognized threshold of water stress of 1,700 m<sup>3</sup> per person, and dangerously close to the threshold for water scarcity of 1,000 m<sup>3</sup> per person.

Population growth and economic development put further pressure on water resources. Climate change is expected to increase variability and to bring more extreme weather events.

Paradoxically, India is also the largest net exporter of virtual water (the amount of water required to produce the products that India exports) and has one of the most water-intensive economies. Despite looming water scarcity, India is one of the largest water users per unit of gross domestic product (GDP). This suggests that the way in which India manages its scarce water resources accounts for much of its water woes.

Government capacities are lacking as far as improving water management is concerned, while policies and incentives often favour inefficient and unproductive use of water. This is coupled with weak or absent institutions (e.g. for water regulation) and poor data collection and assessment.

### *What important lessons in water management can India learn from other countries?*

We don't have to go overseas to see good examples of water resources management. The Maharashtra Water Resources Regulatory Authority, established under a World Bank project, is putting in place policies, regulations, institutions and incentives that promote more efficient and more productive use of water, e.g., by ensuring the equitable distribution of water among users, and by establishing water tariffs.

Efforts to establish effective authorities are also underway in other states, and Maharashtra is disseminating the lessons learned from its experience.

In India, experience with improving water service delivery has been mixed as, only in rare cases, have efforts been embedded in a favourable policy and regulatory environment. When it comes to improving water service delivery, India can learn from Brazil, Colombia, Mozambique and New South Wales (Australia), among others.

Poor or absent water management policies also exacerbate the effects of climate change on water. On the other hand, sound water management can neutralize many of the water-related impacts of climate change. Vietnam, for instance, has implemented a comprehensive program to manage water-related risks and build resilience. Nigeria has helped prevent erosion, reclaim valuable land and focused on sustainable livelihoods to reduce the vulnerability of people, infrastructure, assets, natural capital, and livelihoods to land degradation. And the Philippines is implementing comprehensive urban drainage works to improve water management.

### *How is the World Bank supporting this issue?*

The World Bank's Country Partnership Framework for India recognizes the importance of the efficient use of natural resources, including water, in support of the country's ambitious growth targets. A number of World Bank projects support India's efforts in the water sector:

Through the National Mission for Clean Ganga, the World Bank is helping the Government of India build institutional capacity for the management and clean-up of the Ganga and investing to reduce pollution. The \$1-billion operation has financed investments in wastewater and effluent treatment, solid waste management and river front development.

Another World Bank project, the Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project, has improved the safety and performance of 223 dams in the country through rehabilitation, capacity-strengthening and measures to enhance legal and institutional frameworks.

The National Hydrology Project is providing significant support to strengthen capacities, improve data monitoring and analysis, and laying the foundations for benchmarking and performance-based water management.

The Shimla Water Supply and Sewerage Service Delivery Reform Development Policy Loan supports the Government of Himachal Pradesh in its policy and institutional development program for improving water supply and sewerage services that are financially sustainable and managed by an accountable institution responsive to its customers.

The West Bengal Accelerated Development of Minor Irrigation supports farmer-led irrigation by improving service delivery to farming communities and linking these to agricultural markets.

Innovative instruments are being deployed to finance these operations, such as the development policy loan in Shimla, the program-for-results financing in the Swachh Bharat Mission Support Operation and the National Groundwater Management and Improvement Project, and the use of disbursement-linked indicators in Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project-II.

Analytical work at the World Bank focuses, among others, on irrigation and water and sanitation service delivery. The results will be incorporated into future lending operations.

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## Recent Project Signing

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### Uttar Pradesh Core Road Network Development Project

**T**he Government of India, Government of Uttar Pradesh and the World Bank have signed a \$400 million loan agreement to help the state of Uttar Pradesh strengthen, upgrade and maintain about 500 kms of the state's core road network of state highways, including measures to reduce crashes and fatalities.

The Uttar Pradesh Core Road Network Development Project will help the state's Public Works Department to design and build green highways which are resilient to the effects of climate change. It will also strengthen the PWD's capacity to identify

issues on road safety, improve traffic flows and reduce fatalities on congested district and state highways.

Employment opportunities for women are expected to increase as all civil works contracts drawn-up under the project will require contractors to hire females for at least 30 percent of the routine maintenance works.

Contractors working under the project will be encouraged to recycle and use local materials in construction, grow plantations along the corridor, practice soil and water conservation and use energy-efficient lighting.

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## Recent Project Approval

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### Odisha Integrated Irrigation Project for Climate Resilient Agriculture

**T**he World Bank Board of Executive Directors has approved a US\$165 million project to support smallholder farmers in the state of Odisha.

The Odisha Integrated Irrigation Project for Climate Resilient Agriculture will be implemented in rural areas vulnerable to droughts and largely dependent on rainfed agriculture. It will benefit about 125,000 smallholder farmer households from 15

districts of Odisha managing 128,000 ha of agricultural land.

The project will strengthen the resilience of smallholder farmers against adverse climate by improving access to resilient seed varieties and production technologies, diversifying towards more climate-resilient crops, and improving access to better water management and irrigation services.

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## Partnership Agreement

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### J P Morgan to Invest in New World Bank Fund for Skill Development of India's Workforce

**J**P Morgan has announced a \$10 million investment in a new World Bank Multi-Donor Trust Fund focused on improving the quality of skills development for young people in India.

The program – School to Work: Skilling India's Youth – will improve access to quality and market-relevant training for youth in select states of India.

The program will support innovative models in curriculum development; provide appropriate training for teachers as well as career counselling for students; develop and match skills development programs to emerging demand in the future of work; foster inclusion of marginalized communities; and reduce gender gaps in accessing skills development programs. Pilot projects will be launched in Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

**T**his is a select listing of recent World Bank publications, working papers, operational documents and other information resources that are now available at the New Delhi Office Public Information Center. Policy Research Working Papers, Project Appraisal Documents, Project Information Documents and other reports can be downloaded in pdf format from 'Documents and Reports' at [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)

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The Hindustan Times House (Press Block)  
18-20, Kasturba Gandhi Marg  
New Delhi – 110 001, India  
Tel: +91-11-4294 7000, Ext. 753  
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## India Publications

from EVIDENCE to POLICY: Can microloans increase toilet ownership and use?



Available On-Line  
Published: August 2019  
4 pages  
English Version,  
Paperback  
Report No.: 140569

Without access to a hygienic toilet, and the motivation to use one, people usually defecate in the open, and fecal matter makes its way into homes, food, and drinking water sources. In places such as rural India where open defecation is very common, finding effective and affordable approaches to increase sanitation coverage is a major public health challenge.

from EVIDENCE to POLICY: Can TB patients help successfully identify others for testing?



Available On-Line  
Published: September 2019,  
4 pages  
English Version,  
Paperback  
Report No.: 141949

Tuberculosis is an infectious airborne bacterial disease that can lead to death when left untreated. The disease killed some 1.6 million people in 2017, according to the World Health Organization, making it one of the top ten causes of death worldwide. Treatment often is free of charge, but many cases of TB aren't even diagnosed, particularly in low-income countries. TB patients themselves might have better information than health workers about who is at risk of TB, because others in their social networks might share the same risk factors for the disease.

## India: Policy Research Working Papers

### WPS9011

#### Can Women's Self-Help Groups Contribute to Sustainable Development? Evidence of Capability Changes from Northern India

By Paul Anand, Swati Saxena, Rolando Gonzalez and Hai-Anh H. Dang

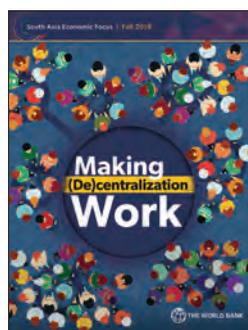
This paper investigates a women's self-help group program with more than 1.5 million participants in one of the poorest rural areas of Northern India. The program has four streams of activity in micro-savings, agricultural enterprise training, health and nutrition education, and political participation.

The paper considers whether there is any evidence that program membership is associated with quality of life improvement. Using new data on a variety of self-reported capability indicators from members and non-members, the paper estimates propensity score matching models and reports evidence of differences in some dimensions as well as significant benefits to those from the most disadvantaged groups—scheduled castes and tribes.

The paper considers robustness and concludes that for some dimensions, there is evidence that the program has contributed to sustainable development through improvements in the quality of life.

## South Asia Publications

### South Asia Economic Focus: Making (De)centralization Work



By World Bank

Available On-Line

Published: October 2019,  
88 pages

English Version, Paperback  
ISBN (electronic): 978-1-  
4648-1515-7

Global GDP growth is decelerating, while trade and industrial production

are stagnating. The slowdown has been severe in South Asia, which in recent quarters was no longer the fastest growing region in the world. In most South Asian countries, growth is expected to be below long-run averages this year but there is significant diversity evident in the high frequency data of industrial production. Current account deficits have declined, as is often the case during economic downturns. Inflation remains near target in most countries, but food price inflation is picking up. Growth forecasts for South Asia are revised downward considerably as uncertainty in global markets and a worsening global outlook have become more

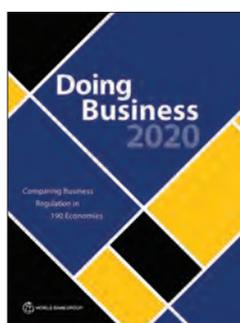
important drivers of the forecast. The expected modest recovery to 6.3 percent in 2020 and 6.7 percent in 2021 is tentative as forecasts under current circumstances, particularly for investment, are highly uncertain.

In many countries across the region, further decentralization is a high policy priority. These policies are part of a global decentralization trend, which aims to improve local service delivery. Empirical evidence of the effectiveness of decentralization is mixed, a result which is often attributed to partial decentralization.

Successful development requires both decentralization and centralization at the same time. In the interplay between central and local governments, the allocation of resources plays a crucial role. In South Asia, a lack of geospatial data on expenditure and development outcomes remains a major constraint.

## Other Publications

### Doing Business 2020: Comparing Business Regulation in 190 Economies



By World Bank

Available On-Line

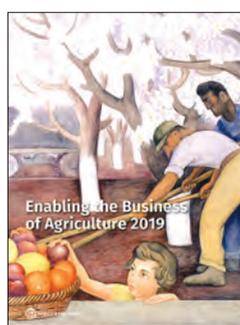
Published: October 2019,  
149 pages English Version,  
Paperback  
ISBN (paper): 978-1-4648-  
1440-2

ISBN (electronic): 978-1-  
4648-1441-9

*Doing Business 2020* is

the 17th in a series of annual studies investigating the regulations that enhance business activity and those that constrain it. It provides quantitative indicators covering 12 areas of the business environment in 190 economies. The goal of the *Doing Business* series is to provide objective data for use by governments in designing sound business regulatory policies and to encourage research on the important dimensions of the regulatory.

### Enabling the Business of Agriculture 2019



By World Bank Group

Available On-Line

Published October 2019,  
140 pages

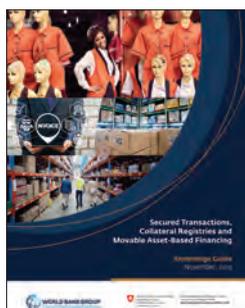
English Version,  
Paperback ISBN (paper):  
978-1-4648-1387-0  
ISBN (electronic): 978-1-  
4648-1388-7

*Enabling the Business of*

*Agriculture 2019* presents indicators that measure the laws, regulations and bureaucratic processes that affect farmers in 101 countries.

The study covers eight thematic areas: supplying seed, registering fertilizer, securing water, registering machinery, sustaining livestock, protecting plant health, trading food and accessing finance. The report highlights global best performers and countries that made the most significant regulatory improvements in support of farmers.

### Secured Transactions, Collateral Registries and Movable Asset-Based Financing: Knowledge Guide



By World Bank  
Available On-Line  
Published: October 2019  
118 pages  
English Version, Paperback  
Conference Edition  
Report No.: 142346

The main objective of this Knowledge Guide is to provide guidance to

the World Bank Group (WBG) staff, donor institutions, government officials and other practitioners on the objectives and implementation of secured transactions reforms, as well as the factors that affect the implementation.

*The Knowledge Guide* considers the experiences learned in various secured transactions reform projects implemented not only by the WBG, but also by other organizations, especially the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

On the legislative side, it references the provisions of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) instruments, especially the 2016 Model Law. Significant space has been dedicated to regulatory aspects, particularly those relating to prudential regulation and their intersection with security rights in movable assets. Finally, a detailed description of various credit products that translate the legal provisions into action has been included.

### Ending Learning Poverty : What Will It Take?



By World Bank  
Available On-Line  
Published: October 2019,  
50 pages  
English Version, Paperback  
Conference Edition Report  
No.: 142659

In recent years, it has become clear that many children around the world are not learning to read

proficiently. As a major contributor to human capital deficits, the learning crisis undermines sustainable growth and poverty reduction. To spotlight this crisis,

we are introducing the concept of Learning Poverty, drawing on new data developed in coordination with the UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

### Annual Report 2019: Ending Poverty. Investing in Opportunity



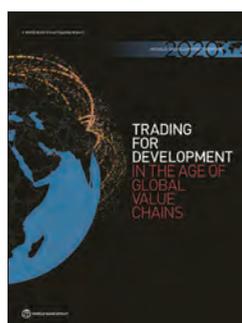
By World Bank Group  
Available On-Line  
Published: September 2019,  
187 pages  
English Version, Paperback

The Annual Report is prepared by the Executive Directors of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Development Association (IDA)—

collectively known as the World Bank—in accordance with the by-laws of the two institutions.

The President of the IBRD and IDA and the Chairman of the Board of Executive Directors submits the Report, together with the accompanying administrative budgets and audited financial statements, to the Board of Governors.

### World Development Report 2020: Trading for Development in the Age of Global Value Chains



By World Bank Group  
Available On-Line  
Published: October 2019,  
293 pages  
English Version, Paperback  
ISSN: 0163-5085  
ISBN: 978-1-4648-1457-0  
e-ISBN: 978-1-4648-1495-2

Global value chains (GVCs) powered the

surge of international trade after 1990 and now account for almost half of all trade. This shift enabled an unprecedented economic convergence: poor countries grew rapidly and began to catch up with richer countries. Since the 2008 global financial crisis, however, the growth of trade has been sluggish and the expansion of GVCs has stalled. Meanwhile, serious threats have emerged to the model of trade-led growth. New technologies could draw production closer to the consumer and reduce the demand for labor. And conflicts among large countries could lead to a retrenchment or a segmentation of GVCs.

This book examines whether there is still a path to development through GVCs and trade. It concludes that technological change is, at this stage, more a boon than a curse. GVCs can continue to boost growth, create better jobs, and reduce poverty provided that

developing countries implement deeper reforms to promote GVC participation; industrial countries pursue open, predictable policies; and all countries revive multilateral cooperation.

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### Trade Integration as a Pathway to Development?



By World Bank Group  
**Available On-Line**  
Published: October 2019,  
187 pages  
**English Version, Paperback**

After a period of rapid economic growth associated with high commodity prices, the Latin America and

Caribbean region has again entered a phase of lackluster performance. Overall this slowdown seems more self-inflicted than imported, and the outlook for the region is not encouraging either. A tepid export response constrains the prospect of growing through external demand whereas limited fiscal space leaves little room to stimulate domestic demand. The outlook could deteriorate further if the international environment became less conducive.

This report explores whether inward-looking development strategies could be one of the reasons for slow growth in Latin America and the Caribbean. Trade barriers are higher than in other developing regions, and while numerous preferential trade agreements have been signed, many of them are intra-regional.

The report shows that South-North agreements are associated with increases in economic complexity and faster economic growth than South-South agreements. It illustrates the point by assessing the economic, social, spatial and environmental impacts of two major: South-North agreements signed over the last year.

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### International Debt Statistics 2020



By World Bank Group  
**Available On-Line**  
Published: September 2019, 187 pages  
**English Version, Paperback**  
ISBN (paper): 978-1-4648-1461-7  
ISBN (electronic): 978-1-4648-1462-4

International Debt Statistics (IDS) is a longstanding annual publication of the World Bank featuring external debt statistics and analysis for the 122 low- and middle-income countries that report to the World Bank Debt Reporting System (DRS).

The content coverage of this IDS includes:

- a user guide describing the IDS tables and content, definitions and rationale for country and income groupings, data notes, and description of the additional resources and comprehensive datasets available to users online,
- a brief overview analyzing global trends in debt stocks and debt flows to low- and middle-income countries within the framework of aggregate capital flows (debt and equity),
- a feature story on lending by the World Bank in recognition of the institution's 75th anniversary,
- tables and charts detailing debtor and creditor composition of debt stock and flows, terms volume and terms of new commitments, maturity structure of future debt service payments and debt burdens, measured in relation to GNI and export earnings for each country, and
- one-page summaries per country, plus global, regional and income-group aggregates showing debt stocks and flows, relevant debt indicators and metadata for 5 years (2014-2018).

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### China's High-Speed Rail Development



By Martha Lawrence,  
Richard Bullock, and Ziming Liu  
**Available On-Line**  
Published: October 2019,  
101 pages  
**English Version, Paperback**  
ISBN: 978-1-4648-1425-9

Over the past decade, China has built 25,000

km of dedicated high-speed railway—more than the rest of the world combined. What can we learn from this remarkable experience? China's High-Speed Rail Development examines the Chinese experience to draw lessons for countries considering investing in high-speed rail.

The report scrutinizes the planning and delivery mechanisms that enabled the rapid construction of the high-speed rail system. It highlights the role of long-term planning, consistent plan execution, and a joint venture structure that ensures active participation of provincial and local governments in project planning and financing. Traffic on China's high-speed trains has grown to 1.7 billion passengers a year.

The study examines the characteristics of the markets for which high-speed rail is competitive in China. It discusses the pricing and service design considerations that go into making high-speed rail services competitive with other modes and factors such as good urban connectivity that make the service attractive to customers. One of the most remarkable aspects of the

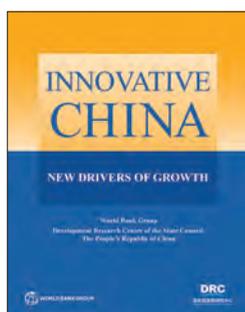
Chinese experience is the rapid pace of high-quality construction.

The report looks at the role of strong capacity development within and cooperation among China Railway Corporation, rail manufacturers, universities, research institutions, laboratories, and engineering centers that allowed for rapid technological advancement and localization of technology. It describes the project delivery structures and incentives for delivering quality and timely results.

Finally, the report analyzes the financial and economic sustainability of the investment in high-speed rail. It finds that a developing country can price high-speed rail services affordably and still achieve financial viability, but this requires very high passenger density. Economic viability similarly depends on high passenger density.

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### Innovative China: New Drivers of Growth



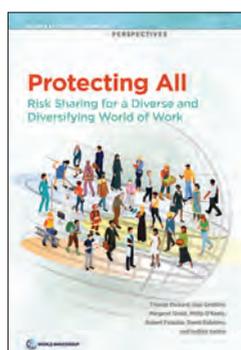
By World Bank Group and DRC  
**Available On-Line**  
Published: September 2019, 186 pages  
**English Version, Paperback**  
ISBN (paper): 978-1-4648-1335-1  
ISBN (electronic): 978-1-4648-1420-4

After more than three decades of average annual growth close to 10 percent, China's economy is transitioning to a 'new normal' of slower but more balanced and sustainable growth. Its old drivers of growth – a growing labor force, the migration from rural areas to cities, high levels of investments, and expanding exports – are waning or having less impact. China's policymakers are well aware that the country needs new drivers of growth.

This report proposes a reform agenda that emphasizes productivity and innovation to help policymakers promote China's future growth and achieve their vision of a modern and innovative China. The reform agenda is based on the three D's:

- removing Distortions to strengthen market competition and enhance the efficient allocation of resources in the economy;
- accelerating Diffusion of advanced technologies and management practices in China's economy, taking advantage of the large remaining potential for catch-up growth; and
- fostering Discovery and nurturing China's competitive and innovative capacity as China approaches OECD incomes in the decades ahead and extends the global innovation and technology frontier.

### Protecting All: Risk Sharing for a Diverse and Diversifying World of Work



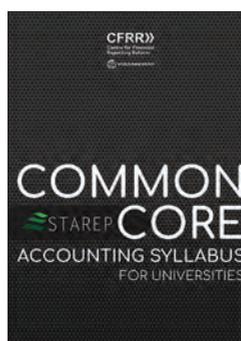
By Truman Packard, Ugo Gentilini, Margaret Grosh, Philip O'Keefe  
**Available On-Line**  
Published: September 2019, 293 pages  
**English Version, Paperback**  
ISBN (paper): 978-1-4648-1427-3  
ISBN (electronic): 978-1-4648-1428-0

This white paper focusses on the policy interventions made to help people manage risk, uncertainty and the losses from events whose impacts are channeled primarily through the labor market. The objectives of the white paper are:

- to scrutinize the relevance and effects of prevailing risk-sharing policies in low- and middle-income countries;
- take account of how global drivers of disruption shape and diversify how people work;
- propose alternative risk-sharing policies; and
- map a reasonable transition path from the current to an alternative policy approach that substantially extends protection to a greater portion of working people and their families.

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### Common Core Accounting Syllabus for Universities



By World Bank Group, Centre for Financial Reporting Reform  
**Available On-Line**  
Published: September 2019, 108 pages  
**English Version, Paperback**

Strengthening Auditing and Reporting in the Countries of the Eastern Partnership (STAREP) is a regional program of the Centre for Financial Reporting Reform (CFRR). The program aims to create a transparent policy environment and effective institutional framework for corporate reporting within the countries that make up the European Union's Eastern Partnership: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

STAREP's focus is on the improvement of corporate financial reporting frameworks and their effective implementation. As many countries move towards the adoption of international and regional standards in accounting and auditing, there is a need to ensure high quality, relevant education both for those entering the profession and for ongoing professional development

throughout their career.

The World Bank's Accounting and Auditing Education Community of Practice (EduCoP) has enabled shared and peer learning, supporting national efforts to develop accounting and auditing education capacity.

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### Financing Climate Futures: Rethinking Infrastructure



By OECD, UN Environment and World Bank Group  
**Available On-Line**  
Published: October 2019,  
136 pages,  
English Version, Paperback  
ISBN 978-92-64-30810-7  
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ISBN 978-92-64-30910-4

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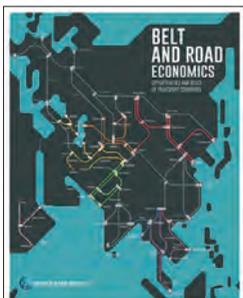
Infrastructure worldwide has suffered from chronic under-investment for decades and currently makes up more than 60 of greenhouse gas emissions. A deep transformation of existing infrastructure systems is needed for both climate and development, one that includes systemic conceptual and behavioral changes in the ways in which we manage and govern our societies and economies.

This report is a joint effort by the OECD, UN Environment and the World Bank Group, supported by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety. It focuses on how governments can move beyond the current incremental approach to climate action and more effectively align financial flows with climate and development priorities.

The report explores six key transformative areas that will be critical to align financial flows with low-emission and resilient societies (planning, innovation, public budgeting, financial systems, development finance, and cities) and looks at how rapid socio-economic and technological developments, such as digitalization, can open new pathways to low-emission, resilient futures.

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### Belt and Road Economics: Opportunities and Risks of Transport Corridors



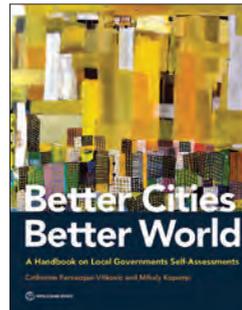
By World Bank Group  
**Available On-Line**  
Published: June 2019,  
159 pages  
English Version, Paperback  
ISBN (paper): 978-1-4648-1392-4  
ISBN (electronic): 978-1-4648-1465-5

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) aims to strengthen infrastructure, trade, and investment links between China and some 70 other countries.

This study analyzes the economics of this endeavor with a particular focus on connectivity. Its authors assess connectivity gaps in the BRI region, examine economic effects of proposed BRI infrastructure improvements, and identify policy reforms and institutions supporting welfare maximization and risk mitigation for BRI economies.

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### Better Cities, Better World: A Handbook on Local Governments Self-Assessment



By Catherine Farvacque-Vitkovic and Mihaly Kopanyi  
**Available On-Line**  
Published July 2019,  
344 pages  
English Version, Paperback  
ISBN: 978-1-4648-1336-8

In a context of skewed financial resources and complex urban challenges,

more cities are searching for more effective and innovative ways to deal with new and old problems. *Better Cities, Better World: A Handbook on Local Governments Self-Assessments* is at the heart of this debate.

It recognizes the complex past, current, and future challenges that cities face, outlining a bottom-line, no-nonsense framework for data-based policy dialogue and action; a common language that, for the first time, bridges public investments programming (Urban Audit/Self-Assessment) and financing (Municipal Finances Self-Assessment). It addresses two key, often overlooked questions:

- Are we doing the right things?
- Are we doing things right?

This text offers pragmatic, purposeful tools to central governments, city leaders and policy makers, municipal staff, and cities' partners.

## India Project Documents

### Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project

Date 19 September 2019  
 Project ID P155617  
 Report No. RES38134 (Project Paper)

### Assam Inland Water Transport Project

Date 03 October 2019  
 Project ID P157929  
 Report No. PIDISDSA23164 (Project Information and Integrated Safeguards Data Sheet)

### Andhra Pradesh Rural Inclusive Growth Project

Date 13 September 2019  
 Project ID P152210  
 Report No. RES37410 (Project Paper)

### Chhattisgarh Inclusive Rural and Accelerated Agriculture Growth

Date 30 August 2019  
 Project ID P170645  
 Report No. PIDC27227 (Project Information Document – Concept Stage)  
 ESRSC00790 (Environment and Social Review Summary)

### Coal-Fired Generation Rehabilitation Project

Date 07 October 2019  
 Project ID P100101  
 Report No. ICR0004323 (Implementation Completion Report Review)

### Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project

Date 30 August 2019  
 Project ID P170873  
 Report No. PIDC27520 (Project Information Document – Concept Stage)  
 ESRSC00769 (Environment and Social Review Summary)

### Efficient Sustainable City Bus Services Project

Date 30 September 2019  
 Project ID P132418  
 Report No. RES38264 (Project Paper)

### Enhancing Coastal and Ocean Resource Efficiency Project

Date 01 October 2019  
 Project ID P167804  
 Report No. SFG5607 (Environmental Assessment, 3 Vol.)

### Low-Income Housing Finance Project

Date 03 October 2019  
 Project ID P119039  
 Report No. ICR4655 (Implementation Completion and Results Report)

### National Cyclone Risk Mitigation Project

Date 22 August 2019  
 Project ID P092217  
 Report No. ICR4745 (Implementation Completion and Results Report)

### Tamil Nadu Irrigated Agriculture Modernization and Water-Bodies Restoration and Management Project

Date 22 August 2019  
 Project ID P090768  
 Report No. 140642 (Project Performance Assessment Report)

### Maharashtra Agricultural Competitiveness Project

Date 07 October 2019  
 Project ID P120836  
 Report No. ICRR0021765 (Implementation Completion Report Review)

### MSME Growth Innovation and Inclusive Finance Project

Date 24 September 2019  
 Project ID P151544  
 Report No. ICR4943 (Implementation Completion and Results Report)

### National Ganga River Basin Project

Date 04 October 2019  
 Project ID P119085  
 Report No. RES38466, RES33540 (Project Paper)

**Neeranchal National Watershed Project**

Date 10 August 2019  
Project ID P132739  
Report No. RES32826 (Project Paper)

**North East Rural Livelihoods Project**

Date 25 September 2019  
Project ID P102330  
Report No. RES38618 (Project Paper)

**Odisha Integrated Irrigation Project for Climate Resilient Agriculture**

Date 06 September 2019  
Project ID P163533  
Report No. PAD3166 (Project Appraisal Document)

**Punjab Urban Governance and Water Supply Improvement Project**

Date 11 September 2019  
Project ID P170811  
Report No. PIDC196629 (Project Information Document – Concept Stage)

**Rajasthan Agricultural Competitiveness Project**

Date 26 September 2019  
Project ID P124614  
Report No. RES38545 (Project Paper)

**Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project for Low Income States**

Date 30 September 2019  
Project ID P132173  
Report No. ISDSR27755 (Integrated Safeguards Data Sheet)

**State of Maharashtra's Agribusiness Rural Transformation Project**

Date 30 September 2019  
Project ID P168310  
Report No. SFG5755, SFG5747 (Environmental Assessment)  
SFG5767 (Indigenous Peoples Plan)

**Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States Project**

Date 14 October 2019  
Project ID P166868

Report No. PIDISDSA26218 (Integrated Safeguards Data Sheet – Appraisal Stage)  
(Program Information Document)

**Uttar Pradesh Core Road Network Development Project**

Date 10 October 2019  
Project ID P147864  
Report No. RES38695 (Project Paper)

**Uttar Pradesh Health Systems Strengthening Project**

Date 30 September 2019  
Project ID P100304  
Report No. RES38694 (Project Paper)

**Uttar Pradesh Water Sector Restructuring Project Phase 2**

Date 10 September 2019  
Project ID P122770  
Report No. RES38349 (Project Paper)

**Uttarakhand Water Supply Program for Peri Urban Areas**

Date 20 August 2019  
Project ID P158146  
Report No. RES37484 (Project Paper)

**Vishnugad Pipalkoti Hydro Electric Project**

Date 20 August 2019  
Project ID P096124  
Report No. RES37968 (Project Paper)

**West Bengal Electricity Distribution Grid Modernization Project**

Date 08 August 2019  
Project ID P170590  
Report No. ESRSC00736 (Environment and Social Review Summary)  
PIDC27066 (Project Information Document – Concept Stage)

**West Bengal Transport and Logistics Improvement Project**

Date 09 October 2019  
Project ID P166020  
Report No. PIDISDSA23822 (Project Information and Integrated Safeguards Data Sheet)

## From the Blogworld

### South Asia can learn from Indonesia to curb child stunting

By Hera Diani

**A**round 40 percent of the world's stunted age children—meaning they are too short for their age—live in South Asia. The region is also home to more than half of all children who suffer from wasting.

Both conditions stem from undernutrition, which is prevalent across South Asia.

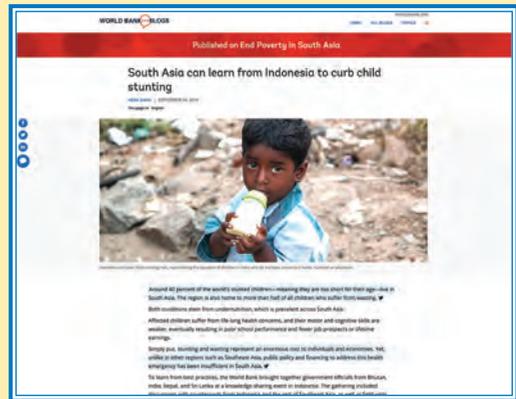
Affected children suffer from life-long health concerns, and their motor and cognitive skills are weaker, eventually resulting in poor school performance and fewer job prospects or lifetime earnings.

Simply put, stunting and wasting represent an enormous cost to individuals and economies. Yet, unlike in other regions such as Southeast Asia, public policy and financing to address this health emergency has been insufficient in South Asia.

To learn from best practices, the World Bank brought together government officials from Bhutan, India,

Nepal, and Sri Lanka at a knowledge-sharing event in Indonesia. The gathering included discussions with counterparts from Indonesia and the rest of Southeast Asia, as well as field visits.

Read more: <https://tinyurl.com/y65czzvr>



### India: In rural Bihar, citizens begin to take pride in local government

By Farah Zahir



**P**alanpur, a small village in Uttar Pradesh, India, is a fascinating example of rural transformation. Renowned economists Himanshu, Peter Lanjouw, and Nicholas Stern have evocatively told the story of this village in their eminently readable 2018 book – ‘How Lives Change’.

The book talks about the important role that institutions, education, human capital and connectivity play in improving the lives of rural people, in a complex web of socio-economic conditions.

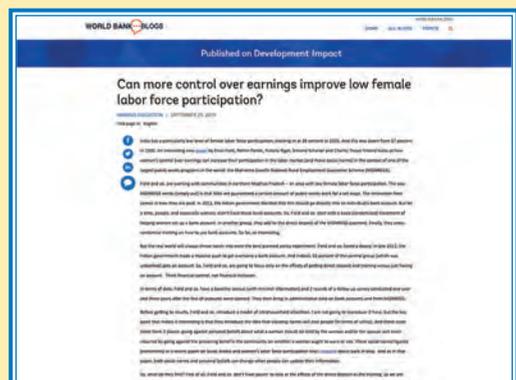
Read more: <https://tinyurl.com/y6brlgw4>

### Can more control over earnings improve low female labor force participation?

By Markus Goldstein

**I**ndia has a particularly low level of female labor force participation, clocking in at 28 percent in 2015. And this was down from 37 percent in 1990. An interesting new paper by Erica Field, Rohini Pande, Natalia Rigol, Simone Schaner and Charity Troyer Moore looks at how women’s control over earnings can increase their participation in the labor market (and move social norms) in the context of one of the largest public works programs in the world: the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS).

Read more: <https://tinyurl.com/y62jyqm9>



## From the Blogworld

### In South Asia, the case for road safety investment is stronger than ever

By Hartwig Schafer and Makhtar Diop

The global road safety crisis has reached epidemic proportions. Every year, according to the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates, some 1.35 million people lose their lives on the road, and millions more sustain serious injuries that often result in permanent disability.

Despite growing awareness, the numbers keep creeping up. The situation is particularly alarming in low and middle-income countries, where economic growth has boosted vehicle ownership and road construction, but road safety action hasn't kept pace.

Read more: <https://tinyurl.com/yy7n3lff>



### Skilling up Bangladesh's youth for a changing job market

By Mustahsin-ul-Aziz

Six years ago, Kamrul Nahar was struggling. She had lost her father. Making ends meet became a challenge in Netrokona, her rural hometown far away from Bangladesh's capital.



One of her teachers noticed her hardships and introduced her to vocational training.

He suggested she learn how to use a computer because IT skills were in demand. She did, and her life changed.

Kamrul has big plans now.

"My dream is to open a programming firm," she says. "I can hire girls who have no fathers, so they may stand on their own feet and do something with their lives."

Kamrul's story is one of many examples of how investing in skills can unlock employment opportunities.

Read more: <https://tinyurl.com/y3y93agb>

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Contact: Sunita Malhotra

### Media Inquiries

The World Bank  
70, Lodi Estate  
New Delhi - 110 003

Contact: Nandita Roy  
Email: [mediaindia@worldbank.org](mailto:mediaindia@worldbank.org)  
Tel: +91-11-4147 9220

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