

CIDC3 Update

Introduction

Since 1994, the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) of the Ministry of Communications (MoC) has been supported by a large institutional strengthening programme funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID).

The current phase of this programme known as CIDC3 started in April 2003. It is aimed at consolidating key initiatives and achievements of earlier phases. The project is due to end in April 2005.

In addition to building on its earlier work, CIDC3 works more closely with the MoC and the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA). CIDC3 also seeks to improve efficiencies in the transport sector by introducing the National Land Transport Policy to a broader public, and by actively co-ordinating with other government and donor agencies involved in the transport sector.

This briefing note gives an update of the main activities that are being developed within the CIDC3 programme, in the transport sector in general, and with MoC, RHD and BRTA in particular.

Ministry of Communications

Management Plans

CIDC3 is working closely with the MoC, assisting the Ministry in taking a lead role in co-ordination of the national transport sector. For this and other purposes, CIDC3 assists in the preparation of *management plans* for the MoC. This aims to assist the Ministry in developing a *vision*, formulating *policies*, and giving *strategic guidance* to its departments and agencies.

National Land Transport Policy

A National Land Transport Policy (NLTP) was formulated with IDC3 assistance during 2002. Upon acceptance by the Cabinet, the NLTP will become the policy framework to guide all planning and investment in transport throughout Bangladesh.

Transport Sector Coordination

Against the background of the NLTP, CIDC3 aims to improve the co-ordination between those government departments and agencies which are involved in the land transport sector. This should lead to better planning and management of transport infrastructure in both rural and urban areas. Sector co-ordination will involve working with a common set of planning data, targets and methods of setting priorities.

A “uniform appraisal framework” is now being developed with the concerned agencies. This should harmonise the way in which projects in the sector are being planned and prioritised. Better sector co-ordination will ensure a greater impact of both government and donor-funded projects.

Road Fund

The ever-increasing network of high quality roads in Bangladesh needs a reliable source of funding for adequate maintenance. Without maintenance, this strategic asset will quickly deteriorate in quality and in value.



Road rehabilitation and maintenance requires a source of reliable funding

CIDC3 is assisting with the introduction of a “Road Fund” for Bangladesh as a way to generate revenues specifically for road maintenance.

The principle of a “Road Fund” has been welcomed by the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Communications. Further planning and consultation is now proceeding under the guidance of the Ministry’s steering committee.

Highways Act

The last comprehensive item of legislation that codified the obligations of the agencies in the land transport sector was an Act passed in 1925. Since then there have been various amendments and new regulations, updating the provisions of this 1925 Act.

CIDC3 is now assisting MoC in preparing for a comprehensive and modern Highway Act, consistent with the NLTP, covering essential issues such as asset ownership and responsibility for operation and maintenance. A new Act is also essential as a basis for any future private sector involvement in road network management.

Roads & Highways Department

Re-organisation

During earlier phases of the IDC programme, a fundamental re-organisation of the RHD was proposed and discussed in great detail at all levels. The strategic objective of the re-organisation was the need to re-shape the Department, to strengthen Headquarter Wings and allow RHD to better deal with an increased focus on asset *management* and *maintenance*, rather than just new construction.

In preparation of such a programme, CIDC3 is assisting RHD in the formulation of a “Medium Term Budgetary Framework”, through the work of a Budget Committee appointed by the Chief Engineer.

An important task of this Budget Committee is to prioritise projects, based on sound technical, economic and social assessment criteria. An additional task of the Budget Committee will be to monitor actual expenditures and work completed against budget forecasts.

Maintenance Planning and Management

Considerable effort has been spent on the planning and management of the maintenance of RHD’s key asset, the nation’s network of roads and bridges. At the centre of the maintenance management systems are the databases of the entire road network, together with those for traffic volumes and for the condition of the road and bridges. These require annual updating so that they may be used to accurately prepare investment plans and maintenance budgets. RHD is using the global standard HDM-4 model to analyse these data for the purpose of maintenance planning and prioritisation.

This work has already yielded positive results with the Ministry of Finance giving substantial increases in the revenue budget for Routine Maintenance and increased donor involvement in maintenance funding.

Bridge Management

With the establishment of the Bridge Management Wing, RHD is now putting greater emphasis on the effective planning, design and management of bridges. A number of major modern bridges have been built in recent years, and more are under construction or are in the planning process. Many smaller bridges are being improved or replaced.



Preparation of the maintenance budget commence with quality bridge inspection

An essential component of Bridge Management is the Bridge Maintenance & Management System (BMMS), which is being expanded with CIDC3 assistance. It is known that many of the RHD bridges are old and in need of repair or replacement.

The development of the BMMS will enable the Department to develop bridge rehabilitation and maintenance programmes suitable for funding by Government and donor agencies.

Quality Control

Over the past few years, RHD has introduced essential standards for road and bridge design and construction. The next phase is that systems and procedures are enforced, to ensure that designs and construction standards are being followed.

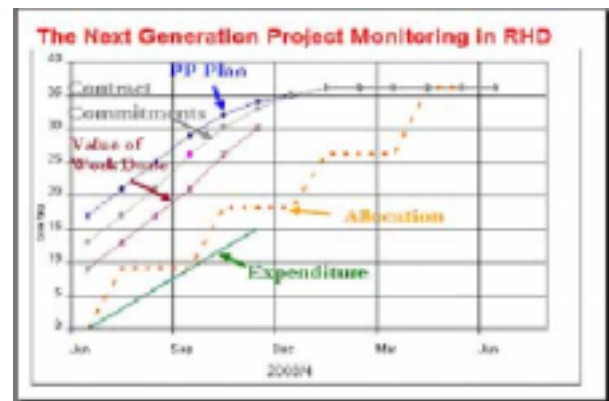
The process of quality control will focus on the field inspection of projects by the RHD field officers, backed up by a network of seven Regional Laboratories. RHD’s Bangladesh Road Research Laboratory (BRRL) in Dhaka will function as the national reference laboratory.

Staff of BRRL and of the RHD Field zones will be trained by the RHD TC in quality control concepts and procedures, to gradually improve the quality of completed works.

Project Monitoring and Evaluation

The re-organisation of the RHD included the creation of a Monitoring Circle comprising a Monitoring and an Evaluation Division.

The Monitoring Division is responsible for running the improved Project Monitoring System, which has significantly expanded the scope of project monitoring. The main elements of this change are (i) computerised



The new RHD monitoring system allows comparison of forecast against real physical progress and expenditure

project monitoring, with monthly information being entered at field level; (ii) financial monitoring, based on payments actually made (iii) physical monitoring, as a quantitative measure of work actually completed.

The Evaluation Division is responsible for a new set of activities, which are yet to be fully developed. The evaluation of projects and the assessment of the socio-economic impact of projects once completed are concepts which are largely new to RHD. CIDC3 is now introducing these concepts, and conducting training in support.

Environment and Resettlement

Another result of the RHD re-organisation was the establishment of an Environment Circle, with two Divisions, for Environment and Resettlement, respectively.

Procedures for Environmental Impact Assessment at RHD are practiced as part of the project preparation of



Uniform resettlement procedures for RHD are required for equitability and efficiency

foreign aided projects. With IDC3 assistance, RHD guidelines for Environmental Management were drafted and endorsed by RHD and MoC. A companion volume, the “Environment Manual”, is being completed, and forms the basis of ongoing training.

RHD does not have its own policy or procedures for resettlement. Compensation for any losses incurred through resettlement is only regulated by requirements of international funding agencies. As a result, people affected by locally financed projects do not receive compensation for losses incurred through involuntary resettlement.

With assistance from CIDC3 and in co-ordination with the Asian Development Bank, RHD is now formulating its own guidelines for land acquisition and resettlement. This is aimed at bringing greater consistency and equitability in the resettlement process.

Foreign Aided Projects

For many years, Foreign Aided Projects (FAPs) in RHD have been planned and implemented as stand-alone activities, through their Project Management Units (PMUs).

However, RHD has now introduced a broad array of technical standards and management procedures, and a comprehensive MIS, comprising all data on the road network and its condition. Many staff have received considerable training in the application of new techniques and procedures. Most of the traditional reasons and justifications for the separation of FAPs are therefore no longer valid.

RHD senior management has therefore decided to integrate FAPs into its mainstream activities. This will benefit the professional development of a greater number of RHD staff, and will reduce dependency on international technical assistance. Donor agencies recognise that reducing “ring-fencing” of FAPs at RHD will support the development objectives of sustainable capacity building, and have agreed to modify implementation arrangements on future loan programmes.

Bangladesh Road Transport Authority

Re-organisation

The BRTA is responsible for activities such as vehicle inspection and licensing, and driver licenses. In this capacity, it has a central role in improving road safety.

CIDC3 is supporting BRTA in modernising its organisation, to encourage the privatisation of some of its essential services. A comprehensive re-organisation report has been drafted by a BRTA Board sub-committee, for review. In parallel, CIDC3 is assisting with drawing up the Road Transport and Traffic Act 2003, as a critical element in defining the legal basis for a new structure for BRTA.

Road Safety

Reducing the large number of casualties on Bangladesh’ roads has been a central objective of the IDC programme. The National Road Safety Council (NRSC) was established, followed by the Road Safety Cell (RSC) under BRTA in 2001. A second two-year National Road Safety Strategic Action Plan for 2002 – 2004 was prepared by the NRSC with assistance from IDC3.



Road Safety flipcharts aimed at teaching children about the dangers of the road

CIDC3’s road safety activities seek to strengthen the functioning of the RSC, and assist with making accident reporting systems more consistent, with publicity campaigns for road safety and improving the local District Safety Committees.