

ADB provides \$106 million to improve water management and agricultural productivity in BD

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Online Desk: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of Bangladesh on Sunday signed a loan agreement for \$106 million to improve water resources management and agricultural productivity in rural Bangladesh.

An agreement for a grant of \$17.80 million from the Government of the Netherlands was also signed. ADB will administer the grant, which will finance innovative pilot works and consulting services focusing on innovation.

Sharifa Khan, secretary of Economic Relations Division, and Edimon Ginting, ADB country director for Bangladesh signed the agreements on behalf of Bangladesh and ADB, respectively.

“The Climate and Disaster Resilient Small-Scale Water Resources Management Project will provide accelerated support to address climate impacts and food security by raising and strengthening flood embankments, deepening channels to increase water retention, providing efficient electric pump-pipe irrigation, providing training, developing capacity, and supporting climate-smart agriculture, agribusinesses, and fishery development,” said ADB country director Edimon Ginting.

“The project will help increase crop production with enhanced agricultural marketing, and fisheries and aquaculture production expansion to support the livelihoods of 380,000 households, especially women and vulnerable persons.”

“Crop production benefits include higher cropping intensity, increased crop yields, improved produce quality, and greater crop diversification,” Ginting added.

The project builds on the success and lessons from three prior ADB-financed participatory small-scale water resources management projects in Bangladesh.

It will scale up investment while intensifying support for climate and disaster resilience and food security through new and improved water resources infrastructures and services for flood and drought risk management, drainage improvement, and irrigation systems modernisation.

It will significantly increase agricultural productivity and profitability through effective, participatory, and sustainable water resources management over more than 220,000 hectares in 42 districts, home to 77 per cent of the rural poor.

To be implemented by the Local Government Engineering Department, it will establish 150 new water management cooperative associations and strengthen 230 existing ones; support emergency reconstruction and modernization of the Bakkhali rubber dam scheme; construct 110 kilometers of farm and village roads with all-weather features; and increase participation of women, youth, and small ethnic communities.

The innovative and climate resilience features of the project have attracted \$42.98 million loan cofinancing from the International Fund for Agricultural Development and \$17.80 million grant from the Government of the Netherlands. The Government of Bangladesh provides \$58.22 million of counterpart funds.