

## Impacts of Padma Multipurpose Bridge Mega-Project on People's Lives and Livelihoods in Bangladesh

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The Padma Multipurpose Bridge Project (PMBP) is a major infrastructural development in Bangladesh, expected to significantly enhance socio-economic growth in a region with over 30 million residents. This research aimed to assess the socio-economic, demographic, and psychological impacts of the project on displaced populations. A purposive sampling method was employed to select representative households from the affected population. Data were collected from a sample of households in affected areas, using a mixed-method approach along with sentiment analysis of media data to capture public opinion. The findings revealed that the settlement households had an average income of Tk. 23,493, while the non-settlement households earned Tk. 24,054 showing no significant difference in income between the two populations. Education access was high, with 98% of settlement households having nearby schools, but the dropout rate, particularly among girls in secondary school, was a matter of concern. Settlement households experienced a 69% loss in fish cultivation and a 51% loss of cultivable land due to displacement. The Padma Bridge brought economic opportunities although there were administrative lapses that caused inadequate compensations. While the bridge caused environmental damages and the destruction of homes and infrastructure, some households were benefitted by getting modern facilities and better infrastructure facilities and public services such as health care. This research highlighted the need for improved service delivery and long-term support for populations displaced by such mega-projects. Recommendations included the need for the development of alternative livelihood opportunities, enhanced healthcare access, and not permitting any gaps in compensation improving community resilience.

**Keywords:** Bangladesh, Infrastructure Development Padma Multipurpose Bridge, Displaced populations