



**Governments of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges  
Road Transport and Highways Division  
Roads and Highways Department**

## **GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM (GRM)**

**Construction of Kewatkhali Bridge at Mymensingh Project**

## Introduction:

Mymensingh city is clearly marked by the old Brahmaputra River. The river flowing along its north divides the city into two sides. The main township has been built in the western side of the river. Shambhuganj is situated on the other side of the Brahmaputra, connected by the Shambhuganj Bridge. Existing Shambhuganj Bridge is the gateway to the north-central district Sherpur, Netrokona, Kishoreganj and a fastest-growing land port-Haluaghat. Dhaka-Mymensingh-India border corridor through Shambhuganj Bridge is strategically important for regional and local connectivity. The length and width of the two-lane Shambhuganj Bridge are 455 m and 11 m respectively. With the increase in vehicles and the expansion of the township in the direction of eastern side of the river Brahmaputra causes congestion and bottlenecks around the crossing point of the existing Shambhuganj Bridge which required improvements in traffic, such as the distribution of traffic and reduction of travel time.

The proposed Kewatkhali Bridge is expected to ease traffic congestion in Mymensingh city by diverting traffic from its busy central area. It will also provide a safe and efficient connectivity link for passengers and freight traffic from Sherpur, Phulpur, Haluaghat, Netrokona, Kishoreganj and Mymensingh with Dhaka using the N3 Highway. It is anticipated that this project will result in greater integration of local markets with national markets and promote higher economic growth in the north-central region.

To achieve this objective the Government of Bangladesh has intended to construct Kewatkhali Bridge over the Brahmaputra. A Project named “Construction of Kewatkhali Bridge at Mymensingh” has been initiated and approved by ECNEC on 24th August 2021 with a cost of Tk. 326363.14 lac. AIIB (Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank) is the lead co-finance of the Project. The Roads and Highways Department (RHD) under the Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges (MoRTB) will implement the Investment Program.

The project components consist of: (i) 1100m long 4-lane bridge including 320 m Steel Arch Bridge over the river Old Brahmaputra; (ii) 240m railway overpass; (iii) 670.80 m Road overpass; (iv) 6.20 km 4-lane approach road with separate SMVT lane; (v) Toll Plaza; (vi) Rest Area etc. A total of 33.02 hectares of land spanning across five mouzas will be acquired to implement project. Two Land Acquisition (LA) Proposals have already been submitted to the Mymensingh Deputy Commissioner’s Office. The first proposal of 5.2919 Hectares was submitted on February 27, 2022; while the second proposal of 27.7282 hectares was shared on March 28, 2022. Following the submission of LA Proposals, the District Land Acquisition Committee (DLAC) meeting was held on July 6 2022, where 3 nos. of LA cases were formulated considering the project traverses through both heavily built-up urban areas and green field.

As an AIIB financed Project, it has been designated as Category-A. ESS1 (Environmental and Social Assessment and Management) and ESS2 (Involuntary Resettlement) of AIIB are applicable for this Project. One of the biggest concerns of Bangladesh is how to make the public service delivery system more citizens centered. An essential prerequisite for this is to have a strong public grievance redress and monitoring mechanism, and in the case of the ongoing “Construction of Kewatkhali Bridge at Mymensingh Project (MKB)” by RHD have a large public interface.

Grievance handling is a very important area of the works of RHD project. Hence, it can play a significant role to monitor about the level of efficiency, accountability and good governance system of the project. It also helps the project to collect direct and logical feedback periodically

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for the management of systematic reform. GR mechanism bridges the communication gap between the Project and the project affected persons (PAPs). Through the GR mechanism PAPs will be aware of their rights and social responsibilities as well. At the same time, the GRM also can play an important role to make the project more responsible and accountable to the PAPs.

The basic principle of a Grievance Redress Mechanism is that if the promised level of service delivery is not achieved or if the rights of PAPs are not honored then PAPs should be able to take recourse to a mechanism to have the grievance redressed. This mechanism should be widely disseminated among the PAPs, beneficiaries and wider public in the project areas, easy to use, accessible and above all, PAPs must have faith that they will get quick and fair redress of grievances.

**Objectives:** The overall objectives of the GRM are to:

- ❖ Provide a transparent process for timely identification and resolution of issues affecting the project and people, including issues related to environmental impact, resettlement and compensation program.
- ❖ Strengthen accountability to beneficiaries, including project affected people.
- ❖ Compensation payment,
- ❖ Failure to fulfill commitments,
- ❖ Poor management of construction activities,
- ❖ Accidents due to inappropriate planning of vehicle,
- ❖ Cultural conflicts between migrant workers and local communities,
- ❖ Disturbance due to excessive noise or other nuisance during construction or operation to unfair treatment of workers or unsafe working conditions.
- ❖ Gender Based Violence (GBV) and gender issues
- ❖ Complain or comment from different public, private and international stakeholders
- ❖ Complain, comments or suggestions from transport workers, labors, contractors, students, teachers, business entrepreneurs etc.
- ❖ Issues related to Land acquisition, displacement and compensation

The prime objectives of the grievance redress mechanism (GRM) is to resolve complaints as quickly as possible and at the local level through a process of conciliation; and, if that is not possible, to provide clear and transparent procedures for appeal. A well-defined grievance redress and resolution mechanism will be established to resolve grievances and complaints in a timely and satisfactory manner. All affected persons will be made fully aware of their rights, and the detailed grievance redress procedures will be publicized through an effective public information campaign.

A common GRM will be in place for social, environmental or any other grievances related to the project like resettlement action plan (RAP) and land acquisition plan (LAP). The GRM will provide an accessible and trusted platform for receiving and facilitating resolution of affected persons' grievances related to the project. A two-tier GRM for the project is outlined below. The first tier will be at the Project level and the second tier will be at the local level. Each tier having time-bound schedules and with responsible persons identified to address grievances and seek appropriate person's advice at each stage, as required.

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### Grievance Redress Mechanism:

RHD will establish a grievance redress mechanism (GRM) to voice and resolve social and environmental concerns linked to the project and ensure greater accountability of the project authorities towards all affected persons. This mechanism is not intended to bypass the government's own legal process but is intended to provide a time-bound and transparent mechanism that is readily accessible to all segments of the affected people. The aggrieved party should be free to approach the national legal system at any time. All costs involved in resolving the complaints (meetings, consultations, communication and reporting /information dissemination) will be borne by the Project. The GRM structure is described in **Table** below:

**Table: GRM Committee Structure**

Level	Members of the GRC
Field Level/ Local Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Project Manager (PM), RHD-Convener;</li><li>• Deputy Project Manager (DPM)-Member</li><li>• Area Manager of the RP Implementing NGO-Member Secretary;</li><li>• Public Representative of concerned area (e.g. Mayor/Councilor/Union Parishad Chairman/UP Member)-Member;</li><li>• Representative of the Project Affected People (PAPs)/Woman Member of local Union Parishad/Municipality-Member</li></ul>

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Level	Members of the GRC
Project Level (PIU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Project Director-Convener;</li><li>• Executive Engineer (Resettlement Division), RHD/Representative of Chief Engineer, RHD-Member;</li><li>• Project Manager (PM), RHD-Member;</li><li>• Assistant Project Director (ASPD)-Member;</li><li>• Team Leader of the RP Implementing NGO-Member Secretary;</li></ul>

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Below table highlights the steps involved in redressing grievances. If aggrieved PDPs continue to remain dissatisfied after stage 7, the GRC will forward the cases to the Project Director (PD) for further review. Convener and Member Secretary of GRC will present the case record to the PD and facilitate impartial review of the complaints. Proceedings of such review meetings will be available for review by AIIB. The NGO and RHD will try as much as possible to address grievances locally before these are submitted to the GRM. If grievances are not resolved, the following procedures and timeline will be followed.

**Table: Grievance Redress Procedures**

Step	Tasks	Timeframe
Step 1	The Project Implementing Unit (PIU) informs PDPs (Project Displaced Person) about their losses and entitlements.  If satisfied, the PDPs claim resettlement payments to PIU/INGO. If confused, proceed to step 2.	
Step 2	The PDPs approaches the INGO/IA field level officials for clarification. The INGO/PIU will inform and clarify the PDPs about their losses & entitlements as per RAP Policy/RP Entitlement Matrix.  If resolved, the PDP claims resettlement payments to the INGO/PIU. If not resolved, proceed to Step 3.	
Step 3	The PDP approaches to the GRC. The INGO/PIU staff shall assist the PDPs in producing the complaints and organize hearing within 21 days of receiving the complaints. Both written complaints in the local dialect and verbal complaints are acceptable. PIU/INGO shall assist the PDPs to prepare a written form for succeeding procedures at no cost to PDPs. Then proceed to Step 4.	Twenty One Days (21 days)
Step 4	GRC to scrutinize applications, cases referred to Deputy Commissioner through PIA if the case is under arbitration law and beyond their mandate as per scope of work. If the case is within the mandate of GRC, proceed to Step 5.	
Step 5	The GRC case hearing shall be held in presence of the aggrieved PDPs (if possible), and the minutes will be recorded.  If resolved, the decisions will be informed to the PDPs. The Project Director will also be informed about the decision of the GRC and subsequently will be approved. If not resolved, proceed to Step 6.	
Step 6	If the PDP is not satisfied with the GRC decision, he/she may appeal to the GRC for review of the decision given by GRC within 7 days from the date of receiving appeal/GRC decision. Then proceed to Step 7.	Seven Days
Step 7	After receiving the review petition, GRC will hear the review and make decision within 7 days of receiving the review petition.	Seven Days
Step 8	If PDPs feel aggrieved with the decision in review case, he/she may appeal to the PD, within 7 days from the review decision by GRC.	Seven Days
Step 9	The PD will review the case and give decision within 3 weeks from receiving of the appeal and this decision must be considered as final.	Three Weeks

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