

**FEATURE / BANGLADESH**

# Haunted by unification: A Bangladeshi view of partition

by Afsan Chowdhury

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In Bangladesh, 1947 is a distant memory, erased by the much fresher bloody ones of 1971 [File: AP Photo]

**Correction: 14/08/2017:** *The Jogisu attack happened in May 1971, not in June, as stated in the earlier version of the story. Also the Hindu parties were not part of the official United Front.*

It was May 16, 1971, when soldiers from the Pakistan army rounded up all the Hindu men in Jogisu village in the Rajshahi district, about 300km from Dhaka, the capital of what was then East Pakistan and is now Bangladesh. There were 42 in total. They were all shot dead and the Muslim villagers were ordered to dig a hole in which their bodies would be dumped. Nine widows in white saris recounted the scene for a show I was filming on the atrocities committed during the Bangladesh war of independence, fought between Pakistan, then known as West Pakistan, and East Pakistan and India.

"The soldiers then urinated on the grave," one of the widows, 60-year-old Sri Shundar, recalled.

Jogisu was one of the thousands of villages that faced such a fate.

But were the events of that year the product solely of the war of independence or could they be traced back to 1947 and the partition of British India?

In Bangladesh, 1947 is a distant memory, erased by the much fresher bloody ones of 1971. The partition was experienced by India and Pakistan, but for Bangladesh, it is both partition and unification - of Punjab in the West and Bengal in the East to make Pakistan - that haunts its national consciousness. It is Pakistan's birth that pains us.

## **Marginalised Bengalis**

My father grew up in Kolkata but in 1948 found work in Dhaka, then the capital of East Pakistan.

He was contemporaries with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who led the Bangladeshi nationalist movement and went on to become the first president of independent Bangladesh, and Abu Sayeed Chowdhury, the country's second president. They all stayed at the Baker hostel for Muslim graduate students in Kolkata in the early 1940s and all came from the rising Muslim middle class, which resented, but also respected, the Hindu elite against whom they had become competitors for jobs.

During the holidays, they would return to their East Bengal villages, where the peasants waited for the day when the British colonial rulers would go away and with them the zamindars (landlords). The peasant and the aspirant middle class shared a common dream: an end to British and Kolkata-Hindu domination in jobs and trade. This was not an issue of Hindu or Muslim identity but of economics.

After the Lahore resolution in 1940, which called for the creation of "two states" in the two majority clusters of Muslims (Punjab and Bengal) the future seemed better for my father. But the political future would not be controlled by Bengali Muslims. It was in the hands of the elite, Urdu-speaking North Indian politicians of the Muslim League and led by Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan.

There were no Bengalis, who were already being marginalised within India's Muslim politics, in Jinnah's circle of political friends.

## **The roots of 1971**

If 1947 was a great tragedy for many as the partition, the unification of Punjab in the west and Bengal in the east to become one Pakistan was an even bigger one for Bengalis. Suddenly, the majority Bengalis - East Pakistan was home to 55 percent of Pakistan's population - were to be ruled by a distant minority in West Pakistan.

When the two "states" became one Pakistan, resistance began to grow among young Bengali Muslim leaders. In 1947, the Bengal Muslim League leader Abul Hashem proposed the United Bengal Movement, the first independent state of Bengal for both Muslims and Hindus. They received support from Bengal Congress leaders but the powerful Congress party showed no interest.



In Bangladesh, 1947 is a distant memory, erased by the much fresher bloody ones of 1971 [File: AP Photo]

If India was being partitioned, it was argued, Bengal had to be.

The Kolkata-based Hindu elites, who didn't intend to live under the Muslims in Bengal, also supported partition in 1947, according to historians Joya Chatterjee, Sheela Sen and others. Nor did ordinary Hindus wish for a united Bengal, having seen so much Hindu-Muslim violence, particularly during the riots of 1946.

The United Bengal Movement collapsed under the burden of unshared history.

## **The murdered milkman and the wounded polisher**

My mother would often tell us about how she witnessed a Muslim mob killing a Hindu milkman in Kolkata in 1946. "He is a milkman, not a Hindu, don't kill him," young housewives screamed from their balconies, she said. His identity was his occupation, not his religion.

"The police recovered his body from the drain the next day. It was bleached white. I wanted to escape Kolkata," my mother recalled.

I would mentally compare the fatal wounds on the milkman to the deep scars on the skull of Kalo Chahcha, the male nanny who raised us.

He was also knifed and left for dead in front of the jewellery shop where he worked as a gold polisher. But he survived the attack and escaped to Dhaka.

We would run our fingers across the deep scars on his head, his memento of partition.

When Bengali Muslims voted overwhelmingly for the Muslim League in 1946, they were not voting for Pakistan but for a life free from zamindari rule and famines. Bengali Muslims were mostly peasants, sharing many traditions with their Hindu and Buddhist counterparts. But most of the landlords were Hindus.

Before 1947, Bengal leaders from both communities tried to forge joint political activities and a ruling coalition, including the United Bengal state. It never materialised. But the middle class from both communities, willing to work together politically, had built a tradition. After 1947, it became a major political factor as the large Hindu community of East Pakistan joined the Bangladesh nationalist movement.

When the United Bengal Movement failed, the young radicals of the Bengal Muslim League secretly formed a group to establish an independent Bengal. The man they thought should lead the movement was the popular firebrand Sheikh Mujibur.

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# **How the birth of Pakistan delayed the birth of Bangladesh**

Almost immediately after its birth, Pakistan tried to weaken the power of its majority through exclusionary employment policies that used language as a tool. East Pakistan, where the majority of Pakistanis lived, was told that Urdu, which no one spoke there but which was widely spoken in West Pakistan, was the sole national language. That meant that Bengalis would have no access to jobs, the media or policymaking.

The language movement began almost immediately in response, and Dhaka observed its first day-long strike in the summer of 1948. The middle class, being the most anxious about jobs, led the movement. It intensified in 1952, when police fired on agitating Dhaka University students, killing four. The fallen students were hailed as martyrs and language took centre stage in the politics of East Pakistan.

In 1949, Bengali Muslim league leaders had formed the Awami Muslim League and in the provincial elections of 1954, a United Front (UF), led by the Awami League and made up of four Muslim parties swept away all the pro-Pakistan parties. The Hindu parties, though supported independence, were not part of the official UF.

The Hindus and Muslims of East Pakistan had voted together. But for some, it would be a death sentence, as the Pakistan army, which was then running Pakistan, instead of handing power to the Awami League, began to crack down on Bengalis, in general, and Hindus, in particular. Hindus were treated as Indian proxies and, therefore, as fair game. And members of the Awami League were not considered much different.

By 1958, when Ayub Khan, Pakistan's army chief imposed martial law on the country, Pakistan was on life support in East Pakistan.

## **The rise and fall of the secular middle class**

In early March 1971, my father, who was the East Pakistan chief of the National Bank of Pakistan, was told he was being transferred to Karachi, in West Pakistan, and was

accused of being disloyal. But he went on leave instead, until the Bangladesh war of independence ended in December that year. He would sit for long hours on an unlit balcony, waiting for the dreams he had first dreamed in Kolkata long before 1947 to become reality. Those dreams were never of Pakistan but of Bengal.

But my father the banker didn't see a professional middle class reign supreme in Bangladesh after 1971. A section of the middle class quickly became a wealthy hyper elite, their alienation from the reality of most Bangladeshis as real as their exclusive upper-class neighbourhoods. Ready-made garments and labour exports have played the biggest role in creating this moneyed class, which was largely based on cheap labour from the villages.

But the villages have changed, too. A new middle class has emerged in the rural areas funded by the remittance economy and positive agro-policies. Their socioeconomic clout can no longer be denied by the political parties, including the current ruling party, the Awami League.

The middle class of the 1940s held many ideals dear, including secularism and socialism, but times have changed and neither has any ideological clout now. Perhaps the curtains fell on this liberal class most symbolically in 2013, when hundreds of thousands of people gathered at Shahbag, next to the iconic Dhaka University campus, to demand the execution of those accused of committing atrocities during the 1971 War of Independence. The majority of the accused belonged to the Jamaat-e-Islami party, which had supported Pakistan in 1971.

It was the largest display of force by a class who swore by the "values of 1971" - secularism, a touch of liberalism laced with socialism and Bengali nationalism. But it was weakened by a counter-campaign, which accused those in the Shahbag movement, as it became known, of being atheists.

The Shahbag movement had an urban support base and little influence in the rural areas of a country where nearly half of the population is rural. And with no organisation to match its ideals, it didn't last long.

But it was the second gathering of 2013 that was to have a greater impact. Hifazat-e-Islam, the largest organisation of rural madrassa and mosque leaders, came to Dhaka with demands for an indefinite sit-in. They were backed by Jammat and its ally the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP).

Much to the dismay of their political enemies, the Awami League leader Sheikh Hasina dispersed them without bloodshed. She had found a new ally, an emerging middle class, much larger and more deeply rooted in the soil than the urban middle class that had shown itself incapable of holding the Shahbag movement together, despite her reluctant patronage.

The rural middle class could no longer be ignored.

**SOURCE: AL JAZEERA NEWS**

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## ***Finding Social, Demographic, and Economic Indicators in Bangladesh*** (answers highlighted in yellow)

Today you are going to use two sources to find information about social, demographic, and economic indicators in Bangladesh.

1. First, please use the World Bank website to find the most recent data for each of these indicators. Type the exact words into the search bar on the World Bank Website to find the appropriate information.

<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator>

\*\*If data for either country does not appear in the main list, please click on the country to find the information from the most recent year available.

1.A.

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Bangladesh</b>	<b>United States</b>
Population, Total	162,951.56	323,127.51
Rural Population (% of total population)	65%	18%
Fertility rate, total (births per woman)	2.1	1.8
Life expectancy at birth, total (years)	72	79
Mortality rate, infant (per 1000 live births)	28	6
GNI per capita, PPP (Current International \$)	3,790	58,030
Unemployment, total (% of total labor force)(Modeled ILO estimate)	4.0%	4.9%
Agricultural Land (% of land area)	69.9%	44.6%
Access to Electricity (% of population)	62.4	100.0
Population living in areas where elevation is below 5 meters (% of total population)	8.9%	2.5%
Exports of goods and series (% of GDP)	16.6%	12.6%
Military expenditure (% of GDP)	1.4%	3.3%

1.B. Write a brief description of your findings. What interesting or notable things do you observe in your data? Interpret and offer explanations for your findings.

(Flip over to the second page)

## Student Handouts-Module 1B

2. Second, please use the population pyramid website to learn about the age and gender distribution of Bangladesh and the United States

<https://www.populationpyramid.net/bangladesh/2017/>

<https://www.populationpyramid.net/united-states-of-america/2017/>

2.A. Please describe the shape of the population pyramid of Bangladesh. What does the blue represent? What does the pink represent? What is the y-axis?

2.B For the year 2017, what age category (or categories) has the largest percent of the population? What does this mean? What implications could there be?

Answer: age category 15-19.

2.C. Please change the year, so that you find the population pyramid for Bangladesh in 1960. What is the shape? How is this different from 2017?

2.D. Please find the population pyramid of the United States. How is the shape of the population pyramid of the United States 2017 different from Bangladesh 2017?

2.E. What are the implications of population composition for social and environmental issues? Offer your best guess for the ways that the size, age, and gender composition of a country over time could impact its social relations and environmental impacts. Be sure to include responses for both Bangladesh and the United States.

## Student Handouts-Module 3

Pre-class Activity

### ***Winners and Losers: Policy Applications***

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Honor Pledge \_\_\_\_\_ (*sign*)

Policy makers are considering solutions for protecting people from yearly floods and improving the ability of deltaic populations around the world to adapt to the effects of climate change. Sea levels are rising over 4x faster along the coastal edges of deltas than the rate of global mean sea level rise, and drought-flood cycles are becoming more unpredictable, putting the food and water security of over 500 billion people living on deltas at risk. This poses an expensive and complex problem, particularly in the global south, where countries located on low-lying deltas may not be able to afford the building of large-scale infrastructure needed for climate change resiliency.

Development banks are financial organizations that provide long-term capital loans to low-income countries for initiating projects that safeguard resources and foster technological, industrial and economic development. In this activity we will explore the role of a development bank as a stakeholder in negotiating a contract loan to the Bangladesh government for funding a large-scale infrastructure improvement project. The activity will encourage us to consider how development funding plays a role in sustainability policy, and how policy decisions may result in unintended feedbacks in social-environmental systems.

Assignment:

You are to find details regarding a recent development bank funding project (via internet search, news report, etc.). Provide a brief statement explaining the stakeholders involved and the social-environmental problem that the funding is intended to alleviate. Examples of funding projects may include (*but not limited to*) flood control, hydropower production, irrigation, wetland conservation, natural disaster response, agricultural development, etc.

Source: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Winners and Losers: policy applications*

### **Background**

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‘Global warming is resulting in rising sea levels, causing vulnerable low-lying delta regions to disappear each year’ – is a common narrative regarding the impacts of climate change in Bangladesh. However, a recent (2015) study conducted by researchers at Vanderbilt University suggests that the construction of embankments in the 1960s, which have led to lower land elevations in the Ganga-Brahmaputra (Bengal) Delta in Bangladesh, creates a greater flood risk for people living near embankments than sea-level rise.

Federal policy makers and international funding agencies such as the World Bank are considering solutions for protecting people from yearly floods and to improve the ability of deltaic populations to adapt to the effects of climate change. They are considering a proposal to raise the height of existing embankment structures in the region, which will protect people in the near future, but would increase the risk of flooding in the far future. Similarly, the proposal does not include a provision for repairing broken sluice gates on the wide-spread embankment system, which in their current state are enhancing water logging in fields and in-filling of irrigation canals and channels with silt.

The World Bank has called a round table meeting of stakeholders and stakeholder representatives to present their perspectives regarding the funding of a project to rehabilitate the embankment system. The bank has \$500 million available to fund repairs, which can be spent wholly on raising the height of the existing dikes across the entire delta, distributing funds to raise the height of dikes in some areas, and repair sluice gates in others, or the money can be divided further to provide the most vulnerable communities with site-specific flood-control measures. Each of these proposed plans will result in tradeoffs that create ‘winners’ in some areas and ‘losers’ in others across the delta. Ultimately, the entire coastal area—not just local areas—will be impacted by the funding decision, as there may be feedbacks from embankment repair that transcend individual district boundaries.

Dedicating all the funds to raising embankment heights would on one hand provide immediate, short-term protection to homesteads and farmland from flooding, but may not be effective in providing longer term protection from worst-case scenario sea level rise. Furthermore, allocating all funds towards embankment modification would preclude funding for the repair of malfunctioning sluice gates. Sluice gates must be operational in order to regulate the movement of sediment and water onto the delta’s surface. Broken sluice gates currently restrict sediment from being delivered to the delta’s surface, which impedes the delta’s ability to naturally sustain a surface elevation above that of rising coastal water levels. Regular sediment delivery by river and tidal flooding of fields also fertilizes cropland such that expensive fertilizer use can be reduced. Sluice gates must likewise be operational in order to ensure that monsoon rainwater can be drained off of fields each summer.

The scenario in the simulation game we will work through today is far from trite. Several noted scholars have claimed that a critical component of protecting global food security from the impacts of climate change includes enhancing flood protection in the world’s densely populated Asian deltas, which are considered the “rice and protein bowls of the world”. On the other hand, large scale infrastructure projects are causing unintended

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feedbacks such as sediment starvation on delta surfaces that may be serving as a greater risk to delta sustainability than climate change.

#### Scenario

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**Time:** Present

**Situation:** Global sea level is rising at a rate of 1.8 mm per year and Earth's warming atmosphere is causing precipitation patterns to fluctuate in river basins. As a result, low-lying, densely populated river deltas are experiencing unpredictable shifts in flooding. In response to devastating floods, global development banks are loaning money to developing delta nations for the construction of large-scale infrastructure in order to protect agricultural land and to enhance food security. The World Bank is reviewing options for loaning the Government of Bangladesh \$500 million dollars to improve an existing, yet ill-maintained and malfunctioning, coastal embankment system in Bangladesh, which is the world's most densely populated nation situated upon the world's largest river delta. The World Bank is considering several different approaches for repairing the 139 embankments in coastal Bangladesh, and has selected representative stakeholders to present their perspectives at a round table meeting at their offices in the capital city of Dhaka. The stakeholders must present their arguments for how the funding should be allocated.

Drawing on what you learned from your casual loop diagramming exercises, each stakeholder group must consider the following:

- How far do all impacted stakeholders live from the embankment walls? Those living closest are a greatest risk of flooding, while those living near the center are at greatest risk of water logging.
- What does your stakeholder group have to lose under each plausible option for spending the funds? This includes social, economic and physical consequences. Consider lag times, unintended feedbacks, and long-term sustainability.
- What does your stakeholder group have to gain under each plausible option? This includes social, economic and physical consequences. Consider lag times, unintended feedbacks, and long-term sustainability.
- What other tradeoffs may arise from how the money is spent repairing Bangladesh's flood control infrastructure, and who will be most negatively/positively impacted?

Divide into groups of 2-3; each group will serve as one of the stakeholders or stakeholder representatives in the discussion. Each stakeholder group will receive a brief description detailing characteristics such as social position, agency, proximity to embankment, and other traits. As part of the introduction, your group will be expected to create a name for

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the district you are representing (except for the World Bank and climate scientists) and be prepared to summarize your stakeholder concerns to the other groups.

Time line:

- Exercise overview (5 minutes)
- Stakeholder assignment, review, and district naming (15 minutes)
- Strategy session (10 minutes)
- Meeting opening statements (15 minutes, 3 minutes per stakeholder)
- Meeting recess (5 minutes)
- Meeting debate (15 minutes)
- Strategy session II (5 minutes)
- Decision writing (10 minutes)
- Presentation of decision to group (15 minutes, 3 minutes per stakeholder)
- World Bank representatives make decision
- Follow-up writing

Strategy sessions will take place at your lab tables with the other members of your stakeholder group. During your stakeholder review, you will decide on a representative who will speak on your behalf at the meeting.

In between each meeting and writing session representative will have time to confer with the other members of their stakeholder group. Some issues you will want to discuss and agree upon as a stakeholder group are:

- Where your stakeholder group stands on each of the four questions
- Your group's priorities (i.e. what is the most important aspect of each item? Are there areas that are non-negotiable?)
- What the stakeholder group is willing to give up in order to compromise and reach an agreement.

Below is information about the stakeholders and stakeholder representatives that will attend the round table meeting. Each stakeholder will be given more detailed information and may choose to expand on that.

As you read through the general descriptions of the stakeholders, recall that the following must be considered in the meeting discussion and negotiations:

- How far do all impacted stakeholders live from the embankment walls? Those living closest are a greatest risk of flooding, while those living near the center are at greatest risk of water logging.
- What does each stakeholder group have to lose under each plausible option for spending the funds? This includes social, economic and physical consequences. Consider lag times, unintended feedbacks, and long-term sustainability.

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- What does each stakeholder group have to gain under each plausible option? This includes social, economic and physical consequences. Consider lag times, unintended feedbacks, and long-term sustainability.
- What other tradeoffs may arise from how the money is spent repairing Bangladesh's flood control infrastructure, and who will be most negatively/positively impacted?

## Student Handouts-Module 3

### Stakeholder #1:

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**World Bank Official:** The World Bank wants to fund the project, though they are concerned that the proposed “new” embankment heights initially designed by their engineers may not be high enough to withstand the level of sea level rise that has been projected by numerical models for the next 50 years. They have invited experts on sea level rise and local stakeholders to the World Bank offices in Dhaka to debate the merits of the model predictions to help them determine if it is worth spending the money to heighten embankment walls. The models also contain a high level of uncertainty, therefore the Bank must decide whether to trust the model outputs and fund the raising of embankment walls, or reallocate the money to repair broken sluice gates, design a sustainable mechanism for allowing sediment to pass onto polder interiors, or run more studies-- which would take several years, within which another large cyclone may strike Bangladesh.

### Stakeholder(s) #2

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**Rice Farmer Association Representative:** Paddy farmers are concerned that their land is not receiving new sediment every year during the monsoon floods, due to the presence of the embankments. They are also contending with waterlogging because the poorly maintained sluice gates do not allow for proper field drainage. Because of the drop in soil fertility due to sediment restriction, they have resorted to using large quantities of costly fertilizer to increase their yields. However, they are often not instructed on how much fertilizer to apply, and therefore overuse their fertilizer, resulting in a decrease of productivity and an increase in pests. They also feel vulnerable to flooding by sea level rise, as well as storm surges, that can breach or overtop embankment walls if they are not high enough. They would benefit from an improved embankment system that will allow sediment to be deposited on their farmland, allow for drainage of monsoon water after the floods, yet is high enough to protect them from increased coastal water levels.

### Stakeholder #3

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**Shrimp Farmer Association Representative:** Shrimp cultivators are not as troubled about the embankment heights as rice farmers. Shrimp farmers can still cultivate shrimp and continue to sell them for a high price at the local market, despite the failing embankment system. They are, however, concerned about the need to flush their shrimp pens with saline water from tidal channels in order to prevent the spread of viral diseases within their stock. Some shrimp farmers have remedied their need for saline water by illegally punching holes in current embankment walls and allowing salty tidal water to flow freely into the polders. This creates problems for rice farmers, because many rice farmers do not have access to saline-tolerant rice seedlings, or the salinity is above the threshold of salt tolerant rice varieties. As a result, many rice farmers are forced to convert their paddy fields to shrimp farms. Additionally, punching holes in polder walls renders them more susceptible to catastrophic failure under high tides or strong storm surges. Nonetheless, many community leaders turn a blind eye on these practices, because of the high economic return of shrimp compared to rice.



## Student Handouts-Module 3

### Stakeholder(s) #4

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**Local community leaders (one male, one female):** Community leaders have observed the impacts of the failing infrastructure on their environment and communities. They are concerned about protecting their area's resources and people's livelihoods, and will be allocated funds to repair embankments within their jurisdictions.

One community leader at the stakeholder meeting intends to use the funds as specified by the World Bank, and will hire local workers to manually repair the embankments and/or sluice gates according to the designs of the engineers hired by the World Bank. She realizes this is the most sustainable solution for the people in her community, and also creates jobs. She also wants the World Bank to partition some of the funds for drilling local tube wells that will provide her community with safe drinking water, and will improve the well being of local women by alleviating the need for women to walk several kilometers to fetch water, as is the current situation.

A second community leader at the meeting recognizes that his community would benefit from a fully functioning embankment system, but is financially swayed by shrimp farmers and landowners with whom he has economic and otherwise powerful ties to. He also claims that he wants funding to repair the polders within his jurisdiction, but in fact will not use all the money for embankment repairs, and instead will dole out some of the funds to his landowning pals, and may pocket the rest. Both community leaders are at the meeting, though they do not reveal how they intend to use the World Bank's money, should the project be funded.

### Stakeholder #5

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**Climate researchers studying flood risks and impacts in the area:** The climate scientists have come to the meeting to discuss the short term and long term results of various sea level rise scenarios they have modeled for the Bangladesh coast, which are based on ranges of emissions reductions as reported within the latest IPCC Report. They are there to provide objective feedback on the model results, which indicate that sea level rise may exceed the planned height of the updated embankment walls within 30-50 years.

### Student Handouts-Module 3

#### Winners and Losers

Stakeholder: \_\_\_\_\_

- **Stakeholder assignment, review, and district naming (15 minutes)**
- Strategy session (10 minutes)
- Meeting opening statements (15 minutes, 3 minutes per stakeholder)
- Meeting recess (5 minutes)
- Meeting debate (15 minutes)
- Strategy session II (5 minutes)
- Decision writing (10 minutes)
- Strategy session III (5 minutes)
- Contract signing
- Follow-up writing

Review the information on your assigned stakeholder and in the space below give any additional information your stakeholder would like to add about themselves to this sheet, including a name and characteristics of the district within which they live. During this initial review please also decide on who will serve as the representative to the meeting and speak on behalf of your group. Also during this time create a nameplate on a piece of notebook paper to identify which stakeholder you represent at the meeting.

- **Strategy session (10 minutes)**
- Meeting opening statements (15 minutes, 3 minutes per stakeholder)
- Meeting recess (5 minutes)
- Meeting debate (15 minutes)
- Strategy session II (5 minutes)
- Decision writing (10 minutes)
- Strategy session III (5 minutes)
- Contract signing
- Follow-up writing

Use this first strategy session to discuss among your stakeholder group where you stand on the 4 main topics listed above. Discuss the topics first and when you have come to an agreement, fill in your stance on each of the 5 issues below. Following the strategy session, your representative will have 3 minutes to share these stances with the rest of the meeting attendees. While discussing, keep in mind your stakeholder and their best interest.

- How far do all impacted stakeholders live from the embankment walls? Those living closest are a greatest risk of flooding, while those living near the center are at greatest risk of water logging.

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- What does each stakeholder group have to lose under each plausible option for spending the funds? This includes social, economic and physical consequences. Consider lag times, unintended feedbacks, and long-term sustainability.
  
- What does each stakeholder group have to gain under each plausible option? This includes social, economic and physical consequences. Consider lag times, unintended feedbacks, and long-term sustainability.
  
- What other tradeoffs may arise from how the money is spent repairing Bangladesh's flood control infrastructure, and who will be most negatively/positively impacted?

### Student Handouts-Module 3

- **Meeting opening statements (15 minutes, 3 minutes per stakeholder)**
- **Meeting recess (5 minutes)**
- **Meeting debate (15 minutes)**
  
- **Strategy session II (5 minutes)**
- Decision writing (10 minutes)
- Strategy session III (5 minutes)
- Contract signing
- Follow-up writing

After you have heard the other 4 stakeholder groups state their positions, and have heard the representatives debate them, you will reconvene with your group to continue discussing the four points, and any other points that were raised in the first round of presentations. Use this time to talk about which (if any) you need to or are willing to compromise on and which are most important to you. Space is provided below to take notes on this strategy session.

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- **Decision making/writing (10 minutes)**
- Strategy session III (5 minutes)
- Contract signing
- Follow-up writing

The meeting will reconvene to design a contract that allows the construction of embankment repair to begin as is determined by the group, based on the needs of each stakeholder.

If an agreement cannot be reached on a particular portion of the contract, a vote must be taken and the majority will rule. Representatives will have a chance to discuss with their group whether or not they will be signing the contract. Your instructor or another student will keep written record of the treaty on the front whiteboard as it is written.

- **Strategy session III (5 minutes)**
- Contract signing
- Follow-up writing

Stakeholders must decide how they think funds should be prioritized for infrastructure repair, or if the money should be invested in other capacity-building strategies.

- **Contract signing**

The World Bank representatives will draw up a contract stating their ultimate funding decision, and how the \$500 million will be allocated.

### **Student Handouts-Module 3**

- **Follow-up writing**

After the round table meeting has concluded please respond to the following questions. While you may consult with your stakeholder group, your response is your own. As always take your time and be thorough.

What was your stakeholder's final position on how the funds and repairs should be allocated? Why did you choose this position? What would have made you choose an alternative strategy?

What compromises (if any) did your stakeholders decide to make throughout the process? Do you feel these are realistic? If you chose not to compromise, why?

During your discussions, how did your stakeholders decide to prioritize which issues were important to them? For example, was it most important to your stakeholder to maximize its protection locally, or was it more important to come to an overall agreement that would ensure the coastal region would be safer overall? Why were these particular priorities chosen?

### Student Handouts-Module 3

During the exercise you assumed the role of a stakeholder that may have been quite different from anyone you know, or have ever met. Putting yourself in the position of the stakeholder role that you portrayed in the exercise, would you have argued for another strategy? Why or why not?

How do you think other stakeholders who were not represented at the meeting will be impacted by the final decision by the World Bank? Why?

During the meeting, what do you feel was the most difficult or frustrating part of the process of negotiating with other stakeholders? Why?

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**Grading: Participation (\_\_\_/5) + written exercise (\_\_\_/15) = (\_\_\_/20)**

## ***Winners and Losers: policy applications Stakeholder descriptions***

### **Stakeholder #1:**

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**World Bank Official:** The World Bank wants to fund the project, though they are concerned that the proposed “new” embankment heights initially designed by their engineers may not be high enough to withstand the level of sea level rise that has been projected by numerical models for the next 50 years. They have invited experts on sea level rise and local stakeholders to the World Bank offices in Dhaka to debate the merits of the model predictions to help them determine if it is worth spending the money to heighten embankment walls. The models also contain a high level of uncertainty, therefore the Bank must decide whether to trust the model outputs and fund the raising of embankment walls, or reallocate the money to repair broken sluice gates, design a sustainable mechanism for allowing sediment to pass onto polder interiors, or run more studies-- which would take several years, within which another large cyclone may strike Bangladesh.

You may include any additional information about your stakeholder here:

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Drawing on what you learned from your casual loop diagramming exercises, your designated stakeholder spokesperson must address the following topics at the roundtable meeting:

- How far do all impacted stakeholders live from the embankment walls? Those living closest are a greatest risk of flooding, while those living near the center are at greatest risk of water logging.
- What does your stakeholder group have to lose under each plausible option for spending the funds? This includes social, economic and physical consequences. Consider lag times, unintended feedbacks, and long-term sustainability.
- What does your stakeholder group have to gain under each plausible option? This includes social, economic and physical consequences. Consider lag times, unintended feedbacks, and long-term sustainability.
- What other tradeoffs may arise from how the money is spent repairing Bangladesh’s flood control infrastructure, and who will be most negatively/positively impacted?



### Student Handouts-Module 3

#### Stakeholder(s) #2

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**Rice Farmer Association Representative:** Paddy farmers are concerned that their land is not receiving new sediment every year during the monsoon floods, due to the presence of the embankments. They are also contending with waterlogging because the poorly maintained sluice gates do not allow for proper field drainage. Because of the drop in soil fertility due to sediment restriction, they have resorted to using large quantities of costly fertilizer to increase their yields. However, they are often not instructed on how much fertilizer to apply, and therefore overuse their fertilizer, resulting in a decrease of productivity and an increase in pests. They also feel vulnerable to flooding by sea level rise, as well as storm surges, that can breach or overtop embankment walls if they are not high enough. They would benefit from an improved embankment system that will allow sediment to be deposited on their farmland, allow for drainage of monsoon water after the floods, yet is high enough to protect them from increased coastal water levels.

You may include any additional information about your stakeholder here:

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## Student Handouts-Module 3

### Stakeholder #3

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**Shrimp Farmer Association Representative:** Shrimp cultivators are not as troubled about the embankment heights as rice farmers. Shrimp farmers can still cultivate shrimp and continue to sell them for a high price at the local market, despite the failing embankment system. They are, however, concerned about the need to flush their shrimp pens with saline water from tidal channels in order to prevent the spread of viral diseases within their stock. Some shrimp farmers have remedied their need for saline water by illegally punching holes in current embankment walls and allowing salty tidal water to flow freely into the polders. This creates problems for rice farmers, because many rice farmers do not have access to saline-tolerant rice seedlings, or the salinity is above the threshold of salt tolerant rice varieties. As a result, many rice farmers are forced to convert their paddy fields to shrimp farms. Additionally, punching holes in polder walls renders them more susceptible to catastrophic failure under high tides or strong storm surges. Nonetheless, many community leaders turn a blind eye on these practices, because of the high economic return of shrimp compared to rice.

You may include any additional information about your stakeholder here:

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### Student Handouts-Module 3

#### Stakeholder(s) #4

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**Local community leaders (one male, one female):** Community leaders have observed the impacts of the failing infrastructure on their environment and communities. They are concerned about protecting their area's resources and people's livelihoods, and will be allocated funds to repair embankments within their jurisdictions.

One community leader at the stakeholder meeting intends to use the funds as specified by the World Bank, and will hire local workers to manually repair the embankments and/or sluice gates according to the designs of the engineers hired by the World Bank. She realizes this is the most sustainable solution for the people in her community, and also creates jobs. She also wants the World Bank to partition some of the funds for drilling local tube wells that will provide her community with safe drinking water, and will improve the well being of local women by alleviating the need for women to walk several kilometers to fetch water, as is the current situation.

A second community leader at the meeting recognizes that his community would benefit from a fully functioning embankment system, but is financially swayed by shrimp farmers and landowners with whom he has economic and otherwise powerful ties to. He also claims that he wants funding to repair the polders within his jurisdiction, but in fact will not use all the money for embankment repairs, and instead will dole out some of the funds to his landowning pals, and may pocket the rest. Both community leaders are at the meeting, though they do not reveal how they intend to use the World Bank's money, should the project be funded.

You may include any additional information about your stakeholder here:

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## Student Handouts-Module 3

### Stakeholder #5

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**Climate researchers studying flood risks and impacts in the area:** The climate scientists have come to the meeting to discuss the short term and long term results of various sea level rise scenarios they have modeled for the Bangladesh coast, which are based on ranges of emissions reductions as reported within the latest IPCC Report. They are there to provide objective feedback on the model results, which indicate that sea level rise may exceed the planned height of the updated embankment walls within 30-50 years.

You may include any additional information about your stakeholder here:

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