

The World Bank
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Abdoulaye Seck
Country Director for Bangladesh and Bhutan

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Secretary Sharifa Khan
Economic Relations Division
Ministry of Finance
Block 8, Room 3
Sher-e-Bangla Nagar
Dhaka

***Bangladesh: National Agricultural Technology Program – Phase II
Response to the Extension Proposal***

Dear Secretary Khan:

Thank you very much for your letter dated December 7, 2022, sent along with the request for the one-year closing date extension of the above-captioned project from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. We also acknowledge receipt of your second letter, sent along with revised proposal on December 22, 2022, with the revised summary cost table and program of activities plan for the proposed extended period.

We are pleased to note that the project has achieved over 98% of its physical targets and on target to achieve the Program Development Objectives (PDO) within the current closing date. Therefore, our assessment, which is shared by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), is that there is not a strong justification to extend the project closing date. We kindly request the Project Management Unit to complete the ongoing project impact assessment, put in place a robust exit strategy and take necessary steps to close the project as scheduled. The undisbursed International Development Association (IDA) credit balance will be available to the government for redeployment on other priority projects during this IDA cycle, upon cancelled prior to the closing date.

I take this opportunity to reiterate the Bank's support to the government's agenda of transforming the agriculture sector. We are awaiting swift government approval of the proposed Program on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for Nutrition, Entrepreneurship, and Resilience in Bangladesh (PARTNER) program, with US\$500 million in IDA resources and US\$ 43 million in co-financing from IFAD.

For any clarification or further information, please contact Amadou Ba, Senior Agriculture Economist (email: aba2@worldbank.org) and Samina Yasmin, Senior Agriculture Specialist (email: syasmin@worldbank.org) based in Dhaka.

Sincerely,



Abdoulaye Seck

cc: Ms. Wahida Akter, Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture
Mr. Md Shahriar Kader Siddiky, Additional Secretary, ERD, Ministry of Finance
Dr. Delwar Hossain, Joint Secretary, Economic Relations Division, Ministry of Finance
Mr. Md. Motiur Rahman, Project Director, National Agricultural Technology Program Phase II
Ms. Afrina Islam, Deputy Secretary, Economic Relations Division, Ministry of Finance
Dr. Arnoud Hameleers, Country Program Director, IFAD Bangladesh
Mr. Rajesh Kumar Khullar, Executive Director for Bangladesh, World Bank Group
Mr. Kaikaus Ahmad, Alternate Executive Director for Bangladesh, World Bank Group
Mr. Rajender Kumar, Advisor to the Executive Director, World Bank Group