Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2022

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE

In Bangladesh Studies (4BN1)

Paper 2 The landscape, economy and people of Bangladesh

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Section 1 A focuses on the Physical Environment

For 1a(i) most candidates recognised the correct city with the highest risk of earthquake, successfully interpreting Figure 1 to recognise the different earthquake risk zones. For **a(ii)** the majority of candidates were able to provide a relevant definition of the term plate boundary, although were a little confused about how to express this other than the edge of a tectonic plate. For **(b)** many candidates were successfully able to identify two climatic zones found in Bangladesh. The most common responses were tropical savanna and humid subtropical.

For 1a(i) most candidates recognised the correct year by interpreting the graph showing the number of people in Bangladesh with a mobile phone. For **a(ii)** the majority of candidates were able to successfully complete the calculation. Although it was not required, most candidates showed their working in their response.

In part **(c)** candidates were generally able to identify a cause of storm surges in Bangladesh related to tropical cyclones and the nature of the Bay of Bengal. Although some were able to develop their ideas for a second mark, there were less that were able to continue this to reach the third mark. In these 3 mark explain mark questions candidates need to provide sufficient development of their explanation to reach the full 3 marks.

For part **(d)** candidates were required to use a resource which provided selected impacts of a tropical cyclone and use this to make suggestions about how an international agency and the government might respond. While candidates displayed good knowledge of typical responses to tropical cyclones, a lot of the responses were quite generic in terms of providing aid for those affected and setting up evaluation shelters. Stronger responses suggested particular agencies for example and developed their ideas to show what impact this would have.

In part **(e)** candidates were required to explain why the environmental impacts of exploiting a named natural resource in Bangladesh. There were a range of responses addressing the different natural resources listed in the specification (water, forest products, fish/shellfish or minerals). There were many detailed explanations that explored the exploitation of water or mangrove forests, and candidates were able to explain the various environmental impacts of doing so.

For part **(f)** the command word 'assess' required candidates to consider the extent to which river flooding in Bangladesh is caused by physical processes.

The command word 'assess' requires candidates to consider a number of factors and give a reasoned explanation of the factor or factors felt to be the most important. The majority of candidates took the approach to argue that river flooding is mainly caused by physical processes and would sometimes consider alternative human factors later on in their responses. The stronger responses tended to start with a judgement recognising that there were a range of factors that affect river flooding and stating which they felt were more important. Through this response candidates demonstrated detailed knowledge of river flooding in Bangladesh and were often able to include references to specific places in their answers. Some candidates would start with an assessment and return to it at the end in a summative statement, while others included assessment as they went through the response. Both strategies were effective for this question. It was encouraging to see that the majority of candidates tried to include some assessment in their response even if it was basic. Weaker answers tended to just describe some causes of flooding in Bangladesh.

Section B focuses on the Human Environment

For 1a(i) most candidates recognised the correct year by interpreting the graph showing the number of people in Bangladesh with a mobile phone. For **a(ii)** the majority of candidates were able to successfully complete the calculation. Although it was not required, most candidates showed their working in their response.

For **(b)** many candidates were able to successfully state two factors that affect the location of tertiary jobs. A few candidates may have mixed up the sectors, demonstrated to references to raw materials, for example, indicating they were writing about the primary sector.

In part **(c)** candidates demonstrated a good understanding of why remittances are an important part of the economy of Bangladesh. Unlike the previous 3 mark question candidates were generally able to develop their responses more effectively to access the 3 marks. There were clear explanations about the role of remittances in balancing the deficit of trade.

For part **(d)** candidates were required to use an image of rail transport in Bangladesh to suggest two challenges facing transport systems in the country. There were 2 marks available for each challenge. Candidates often provided responses which would have been worthy of several marks demonstrating they clearly understand the range of challenges facing the transport system. The majority of candidates focused on the railway system as this was inspired by the resource, but there were also more general

responses relating to the volume of passengers and maintenance of transport systems that were often very detailed.

In part **(e)** candidates were required to explain how food security if managed in Bangladesh. In general there was a good awareness demonstrated of why food security is important for Bangladesh and there were a range of way that were explored. Some responses focused on strategies to increase agricultural production as the way that food security was being managed, while others recognised there are a range of ways food security it managed, not only in terms of supporting more production but in terms of ensuring the sustainability of food supply.

For part **(f)** the command word 'evaluate ' the impact of transnational corporations (TNCSs) on the people of Bangladesh. The command word 'evaluate' requires candidates to come to a conclusion/judgement which needs to be supported with an evidence-based argument. The majority of candidates took the approach to consider the positive and negative impact of TNCs and form a conclusion at the end. These tended to be the strongest responses where the was a balance the evaluation. Weaker response tended to describe impacts of TNCs. Some responses did not focus specifically on the people of Bangladesh and instead considered the broader economy, and the focus on people was more implicit. Many responses to this were well structured and provided a clear conclusion.

Section C focuses on Challenges for Bangladesh

For 1a(i) most candidates recognised the correct Human Development Index score for Bangladesh. For **a(ii)** the majority of candidates were able identify an indicator that is used to calculate the Human Development Index, with literacy rate being the most common response. Incorrect responses tended to name infant mortality rate.

For **(a)(iii)** many candidates were able to successfully explain one factor that has led to reduced mortality rates. These were usually well developed explanations that made reference to advanced in healthcare and education.

In part **(b)** candidates demonstrated a good understanding of challenges facing rural populations in Bangladesh. Many focused on access to poverty, education and gender equality. The specification lists challenges for rural populations including: population structure of rural communities, poverty, education, gender equality, subsistence agriculture and rural-based craft industries, and the impact of remittances. Fewer responses addresses these other areas. Many candidates were able to develop their explanations to show

why the issue highlighted was a challenge, recognising that this had implications for quality of life in, and economies of rural areas in Bangladesh.

For part **(c)** candidates were required to use a resource which highlighted the pace of population growth in Dhaka to consider opportunities and challenges for those living in large cities. Candidates were very good at suggesting the challenges, with often detailed response about traffic congestion, air pollution, housing and employment issues. An image of rail transport in Bangladesh to suggest two challenges facing transport systems in the country. Responses for the opportunities tended to be less strong and often quite basic around the idea of there being more labour supply.

In part **(d)** candidates were required to explain how the impact of climate change may affect the economy of Bangladesh. There were some very strong responses to this question demonstrating the candidates had a very good awareness of how climate change was already impacting Bangladesh and the potential for it do so in the future. Stronger responses had a clear focus on the economy in terms of money spent on mitigation and adaption. Some weaker responses tended to describe some of the potential impacts of climate change, which sometimes would consider more impacts on the environment than the economy specifically.

For part **(e)** the command word 'assess' required candidates to consider the physical factors that influence the population distribution of Bangladesh. The command word 'evaluate' requires candidates to come to a conclusion/judgement which needs to be supported with an evidence-based argument. The majority of candidates took the stance that physical factors had a very strong influence on the population distribution considering both the topography and climate of different regions of the country. Stronger answers tended to have a more balanced approach recognising that human factors related to employment and industry were also important. As with other 8 mark questions on this paper it was encouraging to see that many candidates attempted to try and address the command word. There were lots of responses with evaluative statements at the beginning of responses, as well as those with clear conclusions. This led to a range of well structured responses for these questions.