

GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT: SUGGESTED STRATEGIES FOR THE 7TH FIVE YEAR PLAN



Prepared for
**General Economics Division
Planning Commission
Government of Bangladesh**

Prepared by
Ferdousi Sultana Begum

December 2014

Acronyms

7FYP	Seventh Five Year Plan	KPI	Key performance indicators
A2I	Access to Information	LFP	Labour Force Participation
ADB	Asian Development Bank	LFS	Labour Force Survey
ADP	Annual Development Program	LGED	Local Government Engineering Department
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome	MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
BANBEIS	Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information & Statistics	MOE	Ministry of Education
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics	MoHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
BMET	Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training	MOPME	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
BMMS	Bangladesh Maternal Mortality Survey	MOWCA	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
BPFA	Beijing Platform for Action	MSP-VAW	Multi-Sectoral Programme on Violence against Women
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	NAP	National Action Plan
CHT	Chittagong Hill Tracts	NCWCD	National Council for Women's and Children's Development
CRC	Convention on the Rights of Child	NCWD	National Council for Women's Development
CSO	Civil Society Organizations	NEP	National Education Policy
DAW	Department of Women Affairs	NGOs	Non Government Organizations
DGHS	Directorate General of Health Services	NPWD	National Policy for Women's Development
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic Acid	OAG	Office of the Auditor General
DPP	Development Project Proforma	PFI	Public Financial Institutions
DRR	Disaster Relief and Rehabilitation	PLAU	Policy Leadership and Advocacy Unit
ECNEC	Executive Committee of National Economic Council	PRP	Police Reform Program
ESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific	REB	Rural Electrification Board
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment	RPO	Representation of People's Ordinance's
GDP	Gross Domestic product	SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
GE	Gender Equality	SDG	Social Development Goals
GGGI	Global Gender Gap Index	SFYP	Sixth Five Year Plan
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting	SSNP	Social Safety Net Programs
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey	STD	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus	SVRS	Simple Vital Registration System
HQ	Head Quarters	ToR	Terms of Reference
ICT	Information and Communication Technology	TPP	Technical Assistance Project Proforma
ILO	International Labour Organization	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
IMED	Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Division	UP	Upazila Parishad
		VAW	Violence against Women
		WDP	Women's Development Policy, 2011
		WID	Women in Development

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Section 1: Background

Bangladesh has been cognizant of the importance of addressing differential needs of women and the existence of gender based discrimination since its independence, and commitments have been enshrined in the national Constitution. The country has therefore taken measures to in promote gender equality (GE) and women’s empowerment in a progressive manner over time.

Bangladesh is a signatory to many international conventions and agreements for women’s and girls’ rights and development. The Country ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1984, endorsed the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) in 1995 and Bangladesh committed itself to the goals and targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)¹. The Government has regularly reviewed progress and reported on the attainment of the MDGs and other international commitments.

The national development plans of the country have been consistent with the international commitments. The Government’s approach towards gender equality has evolved over time since the Fourth Five Year Plan from welfare approach to a women’s rights and efficiency base approach mainstreaming gender and women’s empowerment in the overall development process. The consecutive five year plans and the poverty reduction strategies have progressively incorporated strategies and measures in reducing women’s disadvantage, increasing women’s voice and agency and promoting gender equality. The actions taken have brought about significant improvements in social development and gender equality indicators. The Country adopted its Sixth Five Year Plan (SFYP), 2011-2015 to accelerate growth and reduce poverty, which was formulated within the framework of the Perspective Plan of Bangladesh 2010-2021. The Government formulated its first Women’s Development Policy (WDP) in 1997, updated it in 2011 and formulated two National Action Plans (NAP) in 1997 and in 2013 for its implementation.

Significant policies and strategies have been incorporated in the SFYP to increase women’s participation in economic, political and social life and to remove the existing barriers to women’s advancement. The SFYP recognized the different priorities of women and needs to address women’s interests while planning development interventions. It followed a two-pronged approach in addressing gender based discrimination, firstly, integration of gender into sectoral interventions and secondly giving specific attention to remove all policy and social biases against women.

The period of the SFYP has shown major achievements in areas like economic growth, reduction of poverty, improvements in the trends of human development, life expectancy and others. The Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) 2010 data revealed that the incidence of poverty has declined at an average 1.74 percentage points during 2000 to 2010. Life expectancy for men rose from 64.4 to 67.9 and for women it rose from 65.8 to 70.3 years during 2005-2010. According to the Social Progress Index 2014 by Social Progress Imperatives, the score of Bangladesh was 52.04 which was higher compared to that of Nepal, India and Pakistan in the region. The partnership and cooperation with Civil Society Organizations (CSO) including development and advocacy groups as well as the private sector has been strengthened and a new horizon of public private partnership has opened.

¹A list of prominent treaties signed can be found in Annex 1

The Government of Bangladesh is in the process of developing its Seventh Five Year Plan (7FYP) considering the identified national priorities in promoting gender equality for the next five years based on the review of the progress during the SFYP.

The present paper reviews progress on gender equality under the SFYP, recommends priority issues to be addressed, and suggests strategies for consideration while preparing the 7FYP. Section 2 of the report sets the situation of Bangladesh within the current global and Asia-Pacific regional context. Section 3 reviews the progress of the SFYP in line with the strategy for gender equality and women's empowerment and Section 4 provides an analysis of the challenges and limitation of achieving the targets of the SFYP. Section 5 provides a framework to address gender equality and women's empowerment in the 7FYP. The Section 6 recommends a list of priority actions for the 7FYP within the proposed Framework. Section 7 provides some strategies and future direction and the Section 8 provides suggestion for monitoring and establishing accountability. Section 9 provides indications of some risks, which might hinder the achievements of the 7FYP and should be considered. Some good practice examples from the country and elsewhere have been incorporated in boxes.

Section 2: Global, Regional and National Context

In the Global Gender Gap Index calculated by educational attainment, health and survival, economic participation and political empowerment from the World Economic Forum, Bangladesh ranked 68 out of 142 countries in 2014 with a score of 0.697. Bangladesh advanced the most among the South Asian countries, keeping India, Pakistan and Nepal behind. There was a steady increase of the overall score 0.670 in 2010, 0.681 in 2011 to 0.685 in 2013 with a slight fall in 2012 to 0.668. While preparing the Seventh Five Year Plan (7FYP) an assessment of the global, regional and national context becomes imperative in order to understand the basis and rationale of the suggested actions and strategies. A brief discussion on the global and the Asia Pacific Regional context in some key areas and the corresponding picture of Bangladesh is presented below. The areas have been selected as suggested by the Terms of Reference of this study.

2.1 Poverty

Extreme poverty has declined significantly globally during the last five years. The extreme poor population has reduced from 1.25 billion—or 18.6 percent in 2008 down to 1 billion—or 14.5 percent in 2011. That is one seventh of the world's population live below this line. But the prevalence of underweight children in low-income countries is significantly higher among the bottom 40 percent than among the top 60 percent.¹ A recent UN report cautions that the LDCs continue to be among the most vulnerable and that deepening inequality threatens to exacerbate existing poverty. The study identifies gender inequality as one of the four main determinants of the reduction of extreme poverty in the LDCs. It suggests to address gender inequality and provides women and girls better access to economic opportunities through vocational and managerial skills training². A significant reduction in poverty has taken place in the Asia Pacific Region. According to UN ESCAP³ in 1990 about 52% of the population or about 1.6 billion people of Asia and the Pacific were living in extreme poverty, which reduced to 20% or 743 million in 2011 and continued reducing. Number of people living in extreme poverty on income less than \$1.25 per day has reduced in the region. Yet, two thirds of the world's undernourished population lived in Asia and the Pacific in 2012 and a large number of people lived just above the extreme poverty line. The rate of reduction in rate of extreme poverty has varied in Asia-Pacific region. For South Asia the rate was 19.8 percentage points.

In Bangladesh, inclusive growth has resulted in on an average, in 1.74 percentage points annual reduction during the 2000 to 2010 period. Poverty has consistently declined as measured by reduced head count ratio (on an average, at 1.49 percentage points per year during 1992 to 2010 period). In 2013 the estimated figure of poverty was 26.2 percent. Planning Commission estimates that poverty has declined to less than 25% in 2014. As per 2011 estimate 6% population were living under \$1.25 a day⁴. The Lack of sex disaggregated data makes it difficult to measure reduction of women's poverty. However, the majority of the safety net programs were targeted towards women for reducing their poverty. Still the rate of poverty reduction was lower than expected due to vulnerability to risks—such as natural disasters, climate change, illness, food price rise and economic crises.⁵

2.2 Human development

The Human Development Index (HDI) shows that most developing countries are continuing to advance, though the pace of progress remains highly uneven. The Human Development Report, 2014 presents average global HDI values as 0.702. HDI value for the South Asia was 0.588. It also found women to be more vulnerable and insecure⁶. While all regions are registering improvement, signs of a slowdown are

emerging—as measured by the growth rate of HDI values. Large disparities in income, wealth, education, health and other dimensions of human development persist across the world, heightening the vulnerability of marginalized groups and undermining their ability to recover from shocks. The Asia-Pacific region made good progress on gender equality in human development indicators.⁷ Women now live longer but about two thirds of the world’s under-nourished population lived in Asia and the Pacific. Maternal mortality ratio has been reduced by 61% from 343 in 1990 to 133 in 2010—63% lower than the global average of 210. Since the 1990s, the adolescent birth rate has declined in the Asia Pacific but still, remains high. Despite achievements, large disparities exist and women lag behind the global averages and women face severe deficits in health and education and in their access to power, voice and rights.⁸

Bangladesh has consistently shown improvement in human development index and falls within Medium human development country with a score of .558 as per the report of 2014, slightly lower than the value for South Asia and ranked 142 globally. There has been steady improvement in the social and political empowerment scenario of women in Bangladesh. According to Bangladesh Maternal Mortality Survey (BMMS), maternal mortality declined from 322 in 2001 to 194 in 2010, a 40 percent decline in nine years. As per the Global Gender Gap Index, 2014 the gender gap was narrowed on both the educational attainment and health and survival sub-indexes. However, economic participation for women in Bangladesh is still very low compared to countries in the same income group.⁹ As per Social Progress Index, 2014¹⁰ Bangladesh score was 5204 which was higher compared to Pakistan, India and Nepal.

2.3 Democratic governance

More countries than ever before are working to build democratic governance. Their challenge is to develop decentralized and responsive institutions and processes to address the needs of ordinary citizens, including the poor. Women’s political participation has been considered as one of the key area in developing democratic governance. Women occupy 21.8% seats globally¹¹. The proportion of parliamentary seats held by women in Asia-Pacific region has increased between 2000 and 2014. Women’s political participation has increased largely through the use of reserved seats at the national and local levels. Countries such as Afghanistan, Nepal, and Timor-Leste have allocated 30% of seats for women in national parliaments, while India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, have a 33% reservation quota for women in local government bodies.¹²

In Bangladesh women’s participation in politics has increased. The share of women in the National Parliament is now 20%. A total of 20 women Parliamentarians were directly elected in the current Parliament. Women’s participation in the Parliament has increased from 13 percent, 12.4 percent, and 18.6 percent in 1996-2000, 2001-06, and 2008 respectively. In the last Parliament, the share of reserved seats for women was increased from 45 to 50. The Speaker of the National Parliament, the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the House are woman.

2.4 Financial crisis prevention and recovery

The financial crisis in 2008-2009 was considered to be the worst since 1930 which threatened the collapse of financial institutions and led to stock market drop worldwide. The crisis affected businesses, reduced economic activities and employment at global as well as regional levels. The Asia – Pacific region however weathered the worst global financial crisis successfully and no country in the region experienced a collapse of its banking sector or a balance of payments crisis. The recovery slowed in 2011 as the global economy entered a second phase of the crisis. Major developed economies reduced spending due to public debt concerns, poor growth records and reductions in export. Growth in Asia and the Pacific was further affected by the return of high food and energy prices, disasters and the rapidly

rising food prices, which increased food insecurity as well as the effects of a series of natural disasters. Bangladesh withstood the crisis sustaining its growth momentum due to sound economic management. The anticipated decline in overseas jobs, the pressure on the small domestic job market, and slow growth of remittances were considered for economic and fiscal planning. Although Bangladesh's growth rate was not affected by the global financial crisis, the pace of progress on poverty reduction and social development slowed down. The FY2010 budget undertook fundamental policy and institutional reforms to attain pro-poor and inclusive growth. A countercyclical development program and supportive policy measures were taken to encourage domestic and foreign investment and protect investments in human development through enhanced and effective spending on social safety net programs (SSNP) with external borrowing. The policies recognized the need to strengthen safety nets addressing women's poverty and to protect the gains in poverty reduction and key social development areas and integrated measures accordingly.

2.5 Environment and climate change

Changes in climate have had impacts on natural and human systems on all continents and human influence on the climate system has been clear. Climate change, environmental degradation and severe disasters have impacted the Asia-Pacific region by increases in the intensity and frequency of extreme events causing additional stress on individuals, communities and the Governments. Climate change has threatened to intensify poverty and diminish achievements and growth by affecting livelihoods, access to water and land degradation, women and the poorest are often affected the most. Five of the 10 economies with the highest rates of deforestation in 2012 were located in Southeast Asia. Limited freshwater resources and population growth are challenges facing many Asia and Pacific economies.¹³The climate change situation has impacted on women differently than men. Their lower status makes them more vulnerable to economic shocks. Women in affected areas may experience violence, displacement and hunger while facing additional burdens to carry out their roles as food producers and providers, care-givers, and income earners. The loss of assets diminishes their adaptive capacity and makes them even more vulnerable.

Bangladesh is a victim of climate change, global emission and environmental pollution. There is only 13.20 percent of land in Bangladesh having tree cover with density of 30 percent. Access to fresh water is threatened by salinity, levels of arsenic and natural calamities hampers development and women are affected adversely. The National Climate Change Action Plan incorporates a multi-pronged approach and the country's efforts for climate change mitigation and adaptation has resulted in higher resilience declining disaster losses. The vulnerability to climate change is different for women, as their access and control over resources and decision making is lower than those of men. Women being the majority amongst the poor are affected adversely by disasters and as household managers they bear additional burden to maintain livelihoods and human development aspects. The disaster risk reduction efforts of the Government and the civil society have substantially improved the knowledge, preparedness and recovery from disaster situation. Women demonstrated considerable strength in the face of adversity and played critical roles in both adaptation and mitigation of climate change. However, reducing climate change vulnerability needs substantial additional investment by the state and at the household level.

2.6 Violence Against Women

Violence against women (VAW) is a global concern. WHO found that 35% of women worldwide have experienced either intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their life time. On average, 30% of women who have been in a relationship reported that they have experienced some form of physical or sexual violence by their partner. Globally, about 38% of murders of women are

committed by an intimate partner¹⁴. Violence is also pervasive in the Asia-Pacific region. The region has a high sex ratio indicating son preference, which shows that discrimination even starts before the birth of a child. Social norms often are tolerant of violence against women. Child marriage is also high in the region. Harmful practices like dowry, and polygamy are also practiced in the region.

In Bangladesh harmful and discriminatory practices like child marriage, abandonment, dowry, and gender based violence persists largely due to practices rooted in the traditional social norms that favour boys over girls. Violence takes place at home, workplace and also in public spaces. Often it is women who were seeking employment or wanting to migrate for work may fall victim of trafficking. A National survey carried out by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) in 2011, shows that as many as 87% of currently married women reported having experienced both physical and psychological violence in the last 12 months. There are also new forms of VAW emerging, such as harassment through the use of social media, and new technologies (such as mobile phones), violence against elderly women and so on. Several laws have been enacted and measures introduced to prevent and prosecute violence, but their weak enforcement allows perpetuation of these violations. Together with civil society organizations various support services are provided to the victims and monitoring measures have been established.

Section 3: Progress During Sixth Five Year Plan

This section provides an assessment of the progress of the goal of women's advancement and gender equality as envisaged in the SFYP. A major limitation of this review was the lack of updated data. Most of the important surveys and the national census were conducted in 2010 and 2011, and no updates were available until now. Therefore, the assessment had to rely on estimates, smaller review reports, limited surveys and anecdotal evidences. Discussions in this section followed the sequence of SFYP and at times discussions may seem overlapping though duplication has been avoided as much as possible.

3.1 SFYP Vision Women's Advancement and Rights

The SFYP was developed within the framework of the Perspective Plan of Bangladesh, which elaborates the Government's Vision 21 where it mentions, "Gender Equality is assured". The vision of SFYP declared, "The vision for women's advancement and rights is to create a society where men and women will have equal opportunities and will enjoy all fundamental rights on an equal basis. To achieve this vision, the mission is to ensure women's advancement and rights in activities of all sectors of the economy".

3.2 Progress so far

During the SFYP, improvement in gender equality and women's empowerment have been evident on many fronts. Various processes have been put in place, laws enacted and policies formulated. Various positive measures have been taken by the Government and other stakeholders to promote women's empowerment and shrinking the gender gap. The developmental progress has been the result of a combination of efforts of the Government and other stakeholders in private sector and civil society. However, limitations in achievement were also evident in many areas owing to poor enforcement of policies, resources and lack of purposive planning. A closer look in each area using sex disaggregated and district based data (where available) also depict that there exists spatial variations in gender related outcomes as measured by indicators on human development, productive employment, political participation and such others. This section discusses progress, limitations and areas needing further attention for gender equality and women's empowerment which also provides the basis for recommendations for the 7th Five Year Plan.

3.2.1. Policy and legal framework

Many legal and policy measures have been taken to uphold the rights of women (See list at Annex 1). An important step was the reformulation of the Women Development Policy (WPD) 2011, and the National Action Plan to implement the Policy. Laws formulated include the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2010, the Domestic Violence Prevention and Protection Rules 2013, Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking (PSHT) Act 2012, Hindu Marriage Registration Act 2012 and National Children's Act 2013. Conducive rulings were given by the High Court included directives on Sexual Harassment and on Fatwa. Some sectoral laws that were enacted ensuring protection and benefits of women such as, Overseas Employment and Migration Act 2013 and the Pornography Control Act 2012. Similarly, some policies formulated addressed gendered needs that include among others, National Children Policy 2011, National Education Policy 2010, and National Skill Development Policy 2011. Several acts and policies formulated before the beginning of SFYP, which incorporated provisions for participation and protection of women's rights were in effect, such as the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2009 and the laws governing the local government institutions. The People's Representation Ordinance on representation in political parties and in national parliament was revised in 2013. Recently the (Draft) Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2014 was placed at the Cabinet.

Areas needing attention: Despite enactment of new and progressive laws and approval of policies for establishing women’s rights in the public spheres, many discriminatory laws exist in the country, particularly those governing personal matters. Lack of uniformity in the provisions of family laws for different religion is another important form of discrimination where women from different religions enjoy different rights as per their own religious laws. Also, there are legal ambiguities related to sex work which leads to exploitation and discrimination towards sex workers. Withdrawal of reservation on the 2 Articles, particularly Article 2 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is a commitment of the Government to the Committee on CEDAW that is yet to be fulfilled.

The lack of enforcement of laws and policies is a grave concern. Information and understanding of the legal and policy provisions amongst common women and men is limited. The complicated and lengthy legal procedures make justice costly and inaccessible for women and the poor. Social norms also influence the application of legal provisions and at times hinder fair outcomes. The law enforcers need to be more accountable in timely enforcing laws related to human rights.

3.2.2. Productive employment

Productive employment and control over productive resources are key drivers for enhancing women’s voice, bargaining power, mobility, resilience and on their household wellbeing and human capabilities. Due to lack of updated data, an accurate picture about the progress during the SFYP period cannot be given. The Labour Force Survey (LFS), 2010 found an increase in women’s labour force participation (LFP) from 29.2% in 2005/6 to 36% in 2010. The total domestic employment as estimated by the Planning Commission, rose to 56.5 million workers in 2013 from 51.9 million in the base year 2010 and 1.5 million as migrant labourers (base year data not available). Women’s LFP has been increasing at a faster rate compared to that of men but women are mostly in low end jobs. The readymade garment sector continued to be the largest sector employing women, though mainly as frontline unskilled workers. Though women are seen in some new occupations, but women’s engagement in non-farm sector has not reached the target. In 2010, 68.84% of women were engaged in agriculture sector followed by service sector (21.89%) and industry sector (13.32%). The increase in male internal and external migration, their shifting to non-agricultural activities, and higher crop intensity have resulted in increased women’s participation in the agriculture sector. Women are more concentrated in crop production and post harvest activities rather than in agribusiness and at higher levels of the value chain..

Table 1: Persons 15 years and above by status of employment

Status of employment	total	Male	female
Total	100	100	100
regular paid employee	14.6	17.0	8.9
Employer	0.2	0.2	0.2
self-employed (agri)	22.8	25.8	15.7
self-employed (non-agri)	18.0	21.7	9.4
unpaid family worker	21.8	7.1	56.3
irregular paid worker	2.8	3.1	1.8

Source LFS 2010, BBS

Men dominate all types of industry except in private households where 81% are women (ADB and ILO 2011). Gender differences in the status of employment was also evident in LFS, which showed that 56.3% women were unpaid family workers compared to 7.1% for men. About 15.7% women were self-employed in agriculture, 8.9% in regular paid employment and 9.4% as self-employed in non-agriculture.

There is a higher growth rate of women as unpaid family workers (237% compared to only 35% for males)¹⁵ from the period of 1999-2000 to 2010 and majority of women’s economic participation was in informal sector. A good number of women are now engaged in the ICT outsourcing market, in armed forces and in law enforcing agencies. Though

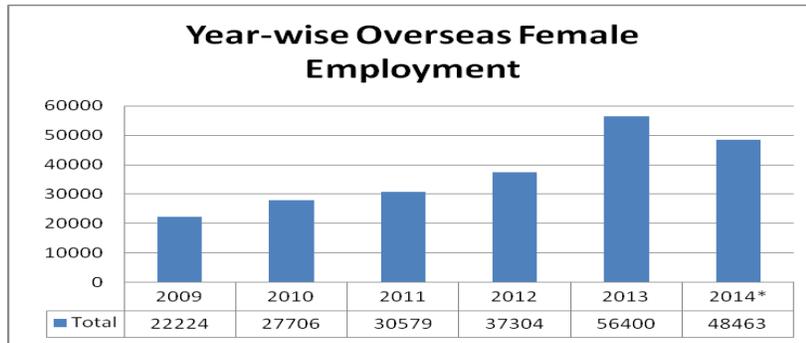
women’s participation in the public service is increasing, however less than one fourth of the senior officials and managers are women.

Positive trends:

Women’s entrepreneurship development: The Government supports entrepreneurial capacity development and access to finance such as quota provisions for women in allotment of plots in BSCIC industrial estates, bank finance and business development services. Bangladesh Bank (BB) established refinancing schemes and has encouraged all banks and financial institutions to provide loans to women entrepreneurs at 10 percent interest rate and to give collateral free loans upto Tk. 25 lakhs. Banks have been instructed to reserve 15 percent of total SME funds exclusively for women entrepreneurs. About 40 Banks and non-banks Financial Institutions have availed these refinance facilities. A dedicated Women Entrepreneurs Desk has been established in BB and all the banks and financial institutions have been directed to establish Women’s Desk at head office and at branch levels.

Labour migration: Internal and external migration has increased for both women and men. In 2011, 12.28% of the households reported of migration and 8.60% of the households had at least one migrant abroad. In 2013, about 13% of international migrants were women as per BMET, and they mainly work as housemaids, cleaners, care givers etc.¹⁶. Only 3% of the migrants are in professional categories and women are fewer due to lack of their marketable skills.

Figure 1: Year wise overseas female employment



Source: <http://www.bmet.org.bd/BMET/statisticalDataAction> (2/10/2014)

Some initiatives have been taken to promote equal rate of wages for work of equal value for both women and men, increased participation of women in the labour market, equal opportunity at the workplace, security and occupational health and safety measures. Following the Rana Plaza collapse in 2013, the Government, moved to address

safety issues in the readymade garment factories. The Labour Law has been amended enhancing workers’ right to form trade unions, introducing an insurance scheme, setting up central fund to improve workers’ living standards, and requiring businessmen to deposit five percent of annual profit in employee welfare funds.¹⁷ A new wage board was announced in 11 May 2013 for fixing minimum pay for garment workers. Through these amendments the Labour Act, 2006 (revised 2013) supports decent work environment. The Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment has set up 16 labour wings in Bangladesh Embassies and Missions abroad to support migrants, ensure their safety and security and to promote overseas employment.

Areas needing attention: Women’s participation is concentrated in the agriculture sector in rural areas and their participation in non-farm employment has not increased as per SFYP targets. Women’s limited access to information, time burden, low access to technology, traditional gender roles etc. have constrained them from shifting towards non-farm activities. Wage gap between women and men still remains and women receive almost two thirds of men’s wages. Minimum wages have not been set for all sectors. Women’s skills and education level are not suitable to respond to the need of employment market both at home and abroad. Traditional segregation of work also discourages women from

entering in some job areas. Lack of gender responsive working environment including inadequate facilities of child care, transport, accommodation, occupational health and safety are some of the reasons that discourage women from accessing the job market. Women as majority of the workers in the informal sector have no legal protection against abuse, discrimination, irregular employment, low wages, and long work hours. Although policy measures are in place and the Government has granted women 6 months maternity leave, often this is not followed by the private sector or the NGOs. Women entrepreneurs have not yet been able to access institutional financing at a desired level, due to their own lack of capacity to fulfil the requirements and the banks' lack of confidence in women. Provision for health, life and disability insurance for workers, especially in informal sector is missing. The Labour Law 2013 does not include rights of domestic and agricultural workers and limits are placed upon union participation in factories. The compliance of women's rights in labour laws is limited with regard to health, safety, security, maternity, child care, etc. by the private sector and enforcement mechanism is absent. Regulatory and incentive based measures are needed to ensure that private sector, chambers of commerce, employers associations and trade unions, play a positive role in ensuring these.

A major constraint was that specific targets were not set in these areas and that women's contribution for economic growth was not adequately considered. Planned measures to harness women's potentials were not put in place. The participation of women in readymade garments and other industries was not by design for their empowerment but as cheap labourer, which is evident from the struggle for pay and bonus every year.

3.2.3 Enabling environment

Enabling environment is about changing social norms and providing support services and infrastructures. Various campaigns and advocacy initiatives to change social norms are being implemented by the government and NGOs to eliminate discrimination and negative attitudes against girls, and promote treating girl and boy child equally and equal sharing of household and productive work. The major one is Mina campaign. Local government institutions, NGOs and electronic and print media are active in advocating for equal rights for girls and boys. The curriculum of the primary and secondary school levels have been reviewed and revised to highlight equal rights and roles of boys and girls. Eve teasing has been declared a punishable offence and community awareness against eve teasing has been initiated. Social norms related to girl's education, health and economic participation is changing positively and women's increased participation in economic and political spheres is evident. A National Plan of Action (NPA) has been formulated to implement the National Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010. A CSO alliance called **Girls not Brides** is working to eliminate child marriage.

Transport is provided by the government for secretariat and some other agency staff and some garment workers by their employers. Day care centres at the Secretariat and division level have been opened by Department of Women Affairs (DWA). Local Government Engineering Department and Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) also have day care centers. Separate toilets for women girls has been identified as a necessity and all educational institutions, schools, offices, markets, gas stations have been directed to ensure separate toilet facilities for women and girls.

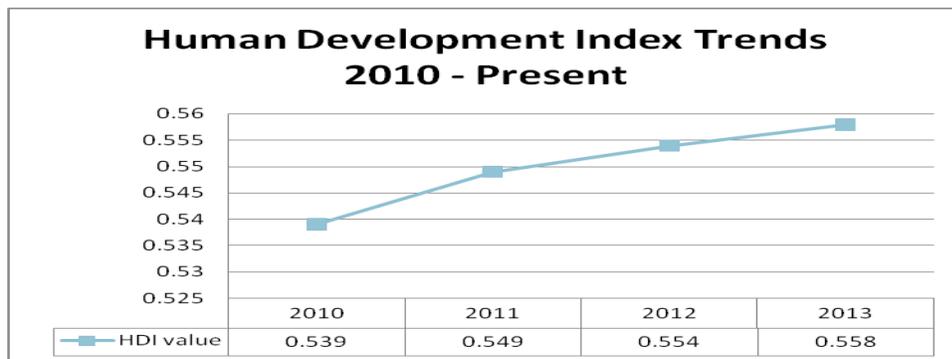
Areas needing attention: Attention towards addressing girls' health and education has increased but there remain some differences on overall treatment and achievements in higher education, healthcare and services for girls and boys. There is increasing recognition that the term "eve teasing" diminishes the serious harm done and development practitioners recommend to refer to it as violence or harassment. Transport and other infrastructure facilities for women are very limited compared to the

needs. The SFYP did not have planned initiative, targets and coordination with private sector for ensuring safe workplace and transportation for women. Girls are still discouraged to continue higher education due to insecurity and other reasons. Incidences of gender-based violence in educational institutions, at workplace, and during travel have been reported and need addressing.

3.2.4 Eliminating women’s health and education disparities

In Bangladesh Human Development Index has shown a slow but upward trend as a result of a pluralistic and inclusive approach in addressing education and health in a comprehensive manner.

Figure 2: Human development index trends 2010 - present



Source: http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/BGD.pdf (2/10/2014)

The share of actual allocation on gender of Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health has increased over time.

3.2.4.1 Education

The National Education Policy (NEP), 2010, promotes an inclusive education agenda deemed at removing all disparities in education including gender. Indicators on education have improved on equitable access, reducing dropouts, improving completion of the primary and secondary cycles for girls, and implementing a number of quality enhancement measures in different levels and streams of education. Free textbooks, food for education, media outreach, and community/ satellite schools, schools in private sector, stipends for poor students, better infrastructure, water supply and sanitation facilities, improved curriculum and teaching modality, and inclusive¹⁸ education measures were the influencing factors. Gender parity has been achieved in primary and secondary enrolment. The Education Assistance Trust Act, 2012 has been passed and the Education Assistance Trust established initially with an allocation of Tk. 1000 crores (100 billion BDT) to benefit the underprivileged meritorious students. Bangladesh is one of the fifty-four countries with a gender disparity in favour of girls.

Primary education: Dropout rate at primary level has reduced and the pass rate for girls increased from 87.51 percent in 2009 to 97.19 percent in 2012. The internal efficiency reached to 73.5% for boys and 77.2% for girls in 2012. Survival rate and Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) for girls increased.

Table 2: Primary Survival, NER And Pass Rate Of Girls

Years	Dropout Rate	Survival Rate		NER (%)		Pass rate
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Girls
2009	45.1	57.1	62.2	89.1	99.1	87.51
2010	39.8	65.9	68.6	92.2	97.6	91.98
2011	29.7	77	82.1	92.7	97.3	97.08
2012	26.2	73.5	77	95.4	98.1	97.19

Source: Primary School Census, 2012

By 2012, the proportion of female teachers in Government primary schools rose to 61%, from 50% in 2005 and the proportion of female head teachers rose from 22% to 42% over the same period due to a 60% quota for females.

Secondary education and retention: As of 2011, the percentage of women having secondary or higher education stood at 30.8, in comparison to 39.3 for males.

Table 3: SSC completion rate by sex and year

Year	% of Pass Total	Female	Male
2009	67.41	65.07	69.69
2010	78.19	76.36	80.00
2011	82.16	80.72	83.62
2012	86.32	85.27	87.39
2013	89.28	88.69	89.87

Percentage of girl students in secondary education was 53.61% as of 2011. In 2010 and the pass rate for girls reached 88.69% (89.87% for boys) in 2013 from 65.07% (69.70% for boys) in 2009. Girls outnumber boys due to the stipends for girls and dropout of boys for joining the labour force.

Tertiary education: The completion rate of girls at the tertiary level and different streams shows improvements. The pass rate of 33.7% for girls and total pass rate 31.2% at the degree level in 2002 reached at 75.23% for all

Source: BANBEIS, Basic Education Statistics-2012

students and 79.64 for girls in 2011. Women's enrolment in public and private universities though has increased but women only comprise 30.03% of students and 22.84% of teachers in 2012.

Table 4: Percent of male and female students in public and private university,2012

Type of University (Number)	Number of teacher				Student Enrolment			
	Total	Female	Male	% of female	Total	Female	Male	% of female
Public (34)	9962	1931	8031	19.38	316331	108377	207954	34.26
Private (52)	10683	2784	7899	26.06	280822	70977	209845	25.27
Total (86)	20645	4715	15930	22.84	597153	179354	417799	30.03

Source: BANBEIS, Basic Education Statistics-2012

Adult literacy: Adult literacy rate reached 62.5% for males and 55.1% for females at the national level in 2011, an overall improvement from 2005 (SVRS 2011). Growth of adult literacy since 2008 has been slow and fell short of the required rate for achieving the MDG and SFYP target of 100% by 2015.

Technical and Vocational Education: The NEP and the National Skills Development Policy, 2011 focussed on marketable skills and establishing linkages between training institutions and employers. Vocational skills training indifferent training has been imparted to women under about 10 different ministries and many NGOs. Women's participation, though on the rise in different public and private technical institutions is still low of only 27.2% other than in medical stream, where it is almost equal.

Areas needing attention: A large number of children with special needs, children from vulnerable groups and children in remote locations remain out of the school system. High repetition and dropout rates are the major barriers for achieving the targets of survival rate across different levels. The quality of education is a challenge at all levels as learning outcomes are lower than expected. Serious gap exists between the learning from the school system and existing demands of the market. Women particularly have less access to marketable skills. Women's quota for teachers and school management committees are yet to be fulfilled alongwith training of women to perform their roles effectively. Child marriage, insecurity and lack of employment are major factors that hinder higher education for girls. A new challenge is the reduction of students in the science stream and girls are in lesser number there. Market oriented education for all requires science education, IT skills, continued market assessment and improvement. On the other hand there is need to provide comprehensive life skills and human right education to create egalitarian relationships. Availability of statistics from English medium and unregistered religious educational institutions is difficult. The share for gender in the budget of the Ministry of Education catering to secondary and tertiary level is below one third.

3.2.45.2 Health

With a view to accelerating progress of the health, population and nutrition (HPN) sector, the Third Health Population and Nutrition Sector Development Program (HPNSDP) is under implementation with a pluralistic health system with participation of many stakeholders including the private sector. Women-focused, equity-oriented, and targeted programmes, such as those in family planning, immunization, oral rehydration therapy, maternal and child health, vitamin A supplementation, and others have supported improving health outcomes. Pro-poor and pro-women programmes in microfinance and education, deployment of (mostly female) community health workers to bring high-priority services to doorsteps, and mitigation of the effect of natural disasters played important roles.

Immunization and primary healthcare: Immunization coverage for women with Vitamin A and TT has increased. Intensive programs on exclusive breast feeding; maternal, newborn and childcare; working in synergy with the health programs, have contributed largely for child immunization. Women's access to health care services has increased through revitalization of 12,000 + community clinics. Above 73% of the clients of the clinics are women of whom 90% are poor and more than 46% are of reproductive age. Urban primary healthcare facilities have been expanded for the low income urban communities and the slum dwellers especially women and children in accessing immunization, care and MCH services. Poor women and children card holders are given free services.

Nutrition: Control and prevention of nutritional deficiencies are addressed through awareness raising, the routine service-delivery network, and National Nutrition Services (NNS) and programs for ensuring food security, safety net programs including the allowance to cover nutritional deficiencies. Yet, malnutrition remains a major concern and in 2011, about 24% women had low body mass index.

The rate of underweight in children decreased from 46% in 2007, to 36% in 2011 but even in the wealthiest quartile, 21% of children were underweight in 2010. Even, about 30% children born to mothers with secondary education, were malnourished. In 2011, children under five were found severely malnourished and 51% of children aged 6-59 months were anemic. Obesity also is gradually

Table 5: Trends in nutritional status of women and children under 5

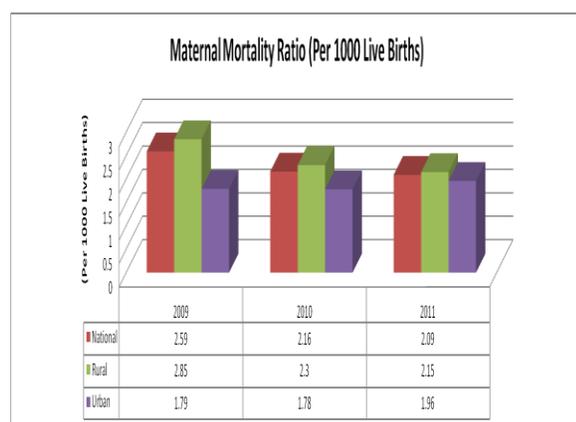
Year	Women		Children (Under 5)		
	Height Less Than 145cm in %	BMI Less Than 18.5in %	Stunted in 5	Wasted in %	Underweight in %
2004	16	34	51	15	43
2007	15	30	43	17	41
2011	13	24	41	16	36

Source: BDHS 2011.

becoming prominent among women and children. 2% women were obese and 14% were overweight and 43% women were anaemic in 2011. Of women age 15-49, only 27% received postpartum vitamin A supplementation and 82% lived in households without iodized salt. .

Child marriage and pregnancy: The proportion of women marrying before age 18 decreased slightly but child marriage and adolescent motherhood rates are still very high. About 50% of all 15-19 years old females are married, of whom about 33% are already mothers, and another 6% are pregnant. There are serious intergenerational health effect and the risk of high maternal mortality, and children becoming significantly malnourished, if born to a teenage mother. Everyday 21 women die giving birth, of whom 13 are below 18 years of age.

Figure 3: Maternal mortality (per 1,000 live births)



Source: Sample Vital Registration System-2012

Maternal and child health: Overall mortality rate among women of reproductive age has declined mainly due to increase in proportion of deliveries by medically trained providers. Maternal mortality declined from 322 in 2001 to 194 in 2010 (MICS), a 40 percent decline in nine years. 43.5% of women age 15-49 years with a live birth in the last 2 years were attended by skilled health personnel in 2012-2013, from 24.4% in 2009. Use of institutional delivery facilities, improved ante natal care (ANC) and post natal care (PNC) and Information, Education and Communication(IEC) have yielded progress but challenges remains in reproductive health care.

Sexual and reproductive health and rights: Increase in contraceptive prevalence rate from 56% in 2007 to 61% in 2011 has an important role both in reduction of fertility and decreased risk of maternal mortality. Decisions concerning women’s reproductive behaviour is often controlled by partners and the family and is evident when the cause of infection of women by HIV/AIDS in analysed. As of 2014, a total of 3,241 persons are registered as HIV/AIDS infected though estimated number is 9,500. Among them (estimated number), 9,300 were of age 15 and up of whom 3,300 were women.¹⁹. Government has planned to set up 20 healthcare facilities for HIV testing and counselling and providing free ARV for people living with HIV. Women suffering from STD and HIV are subject to social stigma. Women’s rights to determine their own sexuality free of coercion, discrimination and violence, is still to be understood and accepted and information and counselling on this is not available at health centres and hospitals.

Institutional healthcare facilities at the tertiary level in both public and private sectors have increased. Health screening services for breast and cervical cancer and fistula have been established and 25 hospitals have been certified as women friendly at affordable cost. A cardiac centre and diabetic centre

are being established for women. A registration and tracking system of services for women and children is under process of establishment at the community clinics.

Areas needing attention: Not all health indicators in Bangladesh are positive. Rates of use of maternal and antenatal care, skilled birth attendance, and facility-based deliveries are lower than those for neighbouring countries. The pronounced reductions in mortality accompanied by persistent malnutrition and low use of some basic health services present a paradox. Less successful have been improvements in maternal and child nutrition and access to primary care. Despite improved survival, chronic malnutrition, anemia, underweight amongst children and women are concerns. Obesity is also emerging as concern. Inequality in terms of access and utilization of health services among rich and poor exists. About 64% of the healthcare cost is borne out of pocket. Health insurance system covers only a few working in government or corporate sectors. Access to lifelong and tertiary level healthcare for the poor and for women even from non-poor households is limited. Low priority on women's health care needs by family is evident in the lower number of women admitting in the specialized hospitals. Private sector services are inaccessible for the poor. The global warming and climate change has increased tropical diseases and catastrophic health care expenditure. Demand for health care and family planning services in urban poor communities is increasing due to rural-urban migration but the coverage is limited compared to the needs. Women accounted for 35.9% of newly reported cases of HIV/AIDS in 2013²⁰. Comprehensive knowledge of HIV among young people age 15-24 in 2008-2012 was as low as 14.4% for males and 11.9% for females (UNICEF) and knowledge among sex workers was low. HIV and some other disease related stigma makes women suffer discrimination. Education related to reproductive health is limited. VAW related healthcare needs are increasing. Ensuring required health care services for physically challenged women is still limited. With the increase in life expectancy, the need for geriatric care is also increasing.

3.2.5 Women in social protection programs (SPP)

The social safety net programmes (SSNP) of the Government to support the poor and the vulnerable population have been major factors behind the falling poverty rates. These include social protection, social empowerment, food security, and microfinance programmes. Women were identified as a distinct group in social protection programs as they are particularly in disadvantaged situation and fall within the lowest poverty quartile. An important programme targeted to women is Vulnerable Group Development programme, which accounted for 2.75% percent of the FY15 SPP budget, and about 750,000 destitute women of remote areas are given a monthly allowance of Tk. 400 for 9,133 million months and training on income generating activities. Other programs are Allowance for Widow and Deserted Destitute, and Rural Employment and Road maintenance Programme-2. The Maternal Health Voucher Scheme (MHVS) provides subsidies to pregnant women to enable them to buy specific services. The Vulnerable Group Feeding, school stipend programmes, allowances for the elderly, people with disabilities, widows and food assistance for CHT, test relief, open market sales (OMS) also benefit women. These programmes are significant, when combined with active labor market programs such as skills development and training and cash- or food-for-work programs.

The budgetary allocations for social protection programs (SPP) in absolute terms have grown, which was 2.42% in FY 2010 and is 2.3% of GDP in FY2015. The total amount spent on these programmes in FY14 was Tk. 216.2billion and the allocation for FY 15 is Tk. 250 billion, which is 12.28% of the total budget. The current social protection system is complex comprising above 90 programmes managed by as many as 30 line ministries/agencies. The Government, with a view to streamline the social protection system has formulated a National Social Security Strategy to strengthen the existing safety net programmes with a universal and life-cycle-based coverage with international standard. The intension is to broaden the scope of social protection from the narrow safety net concept and include employment policies and

social insurance and marginalized communities to address the emerging needs of a middle income Bangladesh in 2021 and beyond.

Aside from the Government, the banks and micro-finance institutions (MFI) are involved to provide financial services to the people and accelerate the overall economic development of the country through microcredit operations. The activities under Corporate Social Responsibility funds of banks and corporate houses in the private sector also significantly target women.

Areas needing attention: Given the good initiatives, the coverage of social protection programmes is low compared to needs and still there are complains about targeting and leakages. The poor and informal sector workers are not covered by any social protection program. The ongoing programs are time bound and the value in real terms is low. Specific targeted program for the poor framework need strengthening. The ongoing effort of BBS of developing a citizen's register to allow tracking of poverty levels and receipts of various allowances by individuals should be implemented. The proposed social security strategy should be implemented with specific attention to the pockets of poverty, vulnerability, and lifelong health care should be ensured for poor women and men and the most marginalized including women living with HIV, transgender population, sex workers etc..

3.2.6 Political empowerment and participation

Constitutional, legal and policy provisions: Women's participation in the National Parliament and local governments has been supported through constitutional and legal provisions. In the 14th Amendment of the Constitution, the provision of women's reserved seats was increased to 50.

The Representation of People's Ordinance' (RPO) 2013 (Third Amendment) specifies some characteristics that a registered political party must meet in order to qualify to participate the National Election. These include reserving at least 33% of all committee positions for women including the central committee and progressively achieving this goal by the year 2020. The RPO promotes parties to adopt practices of non-discrimination and inclusion of women inside the party leadership role. The WDP, 2011 also advocates for ensuring 33% representation inside the political parties, increase the number of women's seats to 33 percent and for direct elections to reserved seats.

Women in Parliament and Cabinet: In the 10th Parliament after the election of 2014, there are 69 women parliamentarians of whom 50 are on the reserved seats and 20 have been elected directly, bringing the percentage of women MPs to about 20%. There are 50 Standing Committees with a total number of 509²¹ members of whom 428 are male and 81 are female²². The appointment of the first woman Speaker in 2013 is a significant step in the history of Bangladesh. In the current Cabinet, the number of women Ministers is low compared to six women ministers in the earlier cabinet.

Women in local government: In the local government system, Union Parishad, Upazila Parishad, Municipalities and City Corporation are governed by separate acts. These Acts, provided for direct election of women in reserved seats to the tune of one third of the total seats. In addition, women can compete in direct elections for general seats. The Upazila Parishad Act 2008 and Local Government (Upazilla Parishad) Law, 2009 also reserved one seat for women among the two elected vice chairpersons.

Table 6: Women in some local government elections

SL	Name of the Election	Contesting Women Candidates	elected Women Candidates
1	Upazila Election Women Candidate-2009	1,936	481
2	Chittagong City Corporation Election-2010	59	14
3	Narayangongj City Corporation-2011	56	9
4	Comilla City Corporation Election- 2012	69	9
5	Municipality Election-2010-11 (310)	3,720	930
6	Upazila Election-2014	1,556	458

Source: Democracy Watch

Women in political parties: Although the two biggest political parties of Bangladesh are led by women, women’s participation in general is low in the political hierarchy. The parties are also generally shy in nominating women in general seats. Very few women are in leadership positions and they usually are in committees those are traditionally considered to be women’s area, such as, education, health, women and children committees and are less likely to be on economics, budget, and foreign affairs committees.

Areas needing attention:Lack of family support, women’s lack of political experience, traditional gender roles are barriers. Elected women representatives of public offices need capability, institutional support and resources in order to function effectively. Capacity building and mentoring programmes for women candidates and women elected to public offices as well as programmes on leadership and negotiation skills for current and future women leaders should be institutionalized. The proportion of women elected in regular seats has not progressed as desired. Strong awareness-raising activities for the society as a whole about the importance of gender equality and women’s participation in political decision-making, is necessary. Although the numbers of women in local government is increasing, there are issues around their effectiveness and capacity. Lack of political apprenticeship and work experience, and social norms make women’s capacity weaker. The authority of women elected to reserved seats and resources available to them are not equal to those of the members holding the general seats. Their constituency is three times larger than that of their male counterparts. As a result, they cannot fully meet the expectations of their constituencies.

3.2.7 Addressing violence against women (VAW)

Violence against women is a concern as the first national survey carried out by BBS in 2011 found very high rates of prevalence of VAW. As many as 87% of currently married women reported having experienced any type of violence in the last 12 months. Psychological violence was the most common at 82%, followed by physical violence 67% and economic violence was 53%.The perpetrators were current husband, previous husband and non-partner perpetrators.

Table 7: Percentage of women who experienced violence by current husband

	Any type of Violence	Physical Violence	Sexual Violence	Psychological Violence	Economic Violence
Ever	87	65	36	82	53
Last 12 Months	77	33	24	72	32

Source: Violence Against Women Survey 2011, BBS

Legal measures: As mentioned in section 3.2.1 that Government has taken many legal measures for combating VAW like the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2010, the Rules of Procedure to implement the Act, 2013. Several other acts address some of the forms of violence that were not addressed by the other laws, such as, human trafficking, migration, acid crime and so on. The

Labour Code, 2006 and its revision in 2013 recognized the issue of sexual harassment in the work place. The High Court provided guidelines to employers and educational institutions on how to address sexual harassment issues and to formulate policies to protect women from sexual harassment in work places, educational institutions and other public places, and to take immediate steps to enact legislation to address sexual harassment. The harassment of young women, particularly students, has been inserted as an offence in the Mobile Court Act, 2009.

National action plans: A national action plan on VAW for the period 2013 to 2025 outlines actions in six main areas, namely, (i) legal arrangements, (ii) social awareness and mental transformation, (iii) advancement of women’s socio-economic status, (iv) protective services, (v) curative and rehabilitation services, (vi) inter-sectoral cooperation and (vii) community involvement. A National Plan of Action 2012-2014 to combat human trafficking has also been adopted.

Institutional mechanisms: A Multi-Sectoral Programme on Violence Against Women (MSP-VAW), is now in its 3rd phase implemented by MOWCA in collaboration nine other Ministries. It supports a National Helpline Centre for the victims of violence to call for advice and legal, psychological or administrative counselling. Eight One Stop Crisis Centre (OCC) in the Medical College Hospitals (MCHs) provide all required services, such as, health care, police assistance, DNA test, social services, legal assistance, psychological counselling and shelter services for the woman victims in one place. Sixty One-Stop Crisis Cells provide information and referral services. A National Forensic DNA Profiling Laboratory and a National Trauma Counselling Centre are functioning.

Table 8: Women and child related crime statistics: 2009 - 2013

Year	2009	2010	2011	1012	2013
No of Cases	13997	17752	21389	20947	19601

Source: <http://www.police.gov.bd/Crime-Statistics-comparative.php?id=208> (1-10-2014)

The Police Headquarters has set up a ‘Special Cell’ comprising female police personnel. A web-based Integrated Crime Data Management System has been installed, where every reported incidence of violence, trafficking victims/survivors and other relevant statistics are preserved. An increasing trend of Women & Child Repression was observed during 2009-2011 and then showed a decline in reported cases. It is not clear whether this indicates a decline in such incidences or under-reporting. Monitoring cells have been established at the Criminal Investigation Department, Police Headquarters and in each district to monitor, in particular, criminal prosecution of human trafficking.

MOWCA operates a Central Cell to ensure coordination of work on prevention of VAW and established Committees for the Prevention of VAW at district and upazila (sub-district) levels. The Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA) has set up an ‘Acid Cases Monitoring Cell’ and a special fund to assist victims of acid attacks has been established. The MoHA coordinates efforts in preventing human trafficking and has also set up a Taskforce for rescue, recovery, repatriation and reintegration of victims of trafficking, especially women and children. Due to all these initiatives, Bangladesh graduated from “Tier 2 Watch List” to “Tier 2” in the US State Department Report on Trafficking in Persons.

Areas needing attention: Social norms are still tolerant of VAW and both individuals and communities feel that it is justified in certain contexts. These beliefs are also prevalent among the law enforcement authorities and the judiciary. Accessing justice still remains complicated, costly, and lengthy for women and the poor. Women seeking justice are stigmatised at times. Legislation on sexual harassment based on the High Court Directives of 2010 and incorporation of the SAARC Convention on Trafficking into national legislation are necessary. Enforcement of the existing legal framework needs strengthening with more accountability. Under reporting is widespread and the police HQ has records of only cases

lodged. Measures are needed to ensure full-scale training for all concerned including the judiciary and police to address VAW and also allocation of necessary budget and human resources is necessary for the purpose. Working with the community to change social norms and enforcement of legal provisions are essential.

3.2.8 Gender mainstreaming

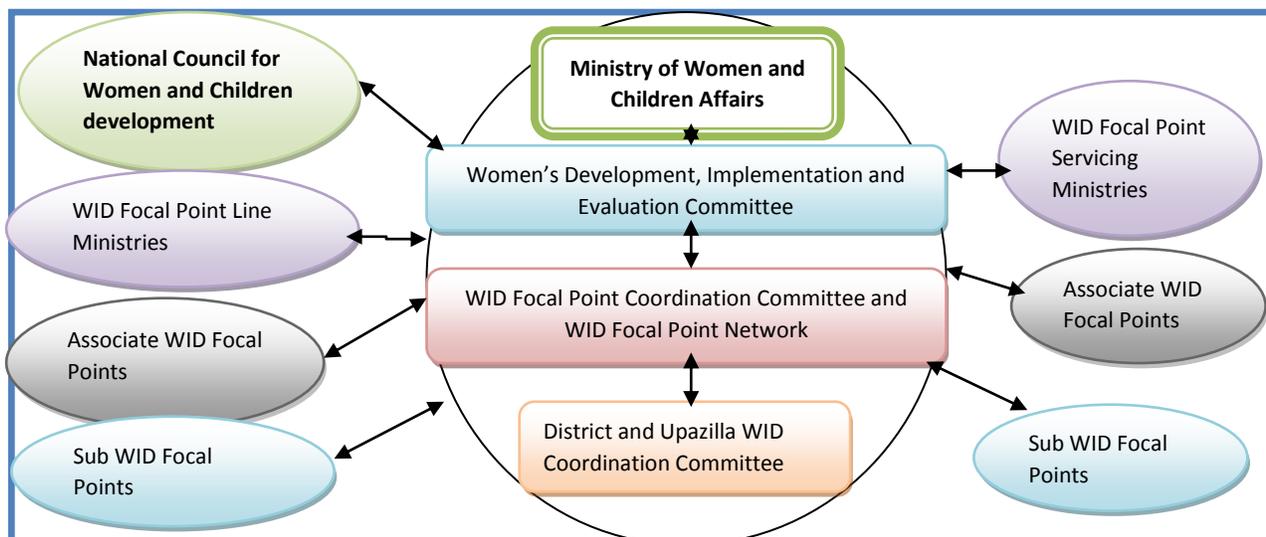
Gender mainstreaming was taken as an approach for the promotion of gender equality since the Fourth Five Year Plan and SFYP continued with the approach. The WDP, 2011 also called for integration of gender in sector policies and operations. Gradual improvement was observed in mainstreaming gender in sectoral policies and legislations. Some sectoral laws address women’s participation and rights. Similarly, the policies related to water, agriculture, water supply and sanitation, health, and education recognized the differential needs of women and their limited participation in public spheres and they have integrated guidelines and activities to address these.

Areas needing attention: Though gender mainstreaming has been adopted as an approach, full scale mainstream was yet to achieve due to the limitations of both technical and financial capacity. Progress in mainstreaming gender and its results vary across sectors. Social development sectors show better results and the hard infrastructure sectors like transport and energy are yet to understand and apply the concept of gender mainstreaming in policies and operations. Macro-economic policies like trade and finance are still to consider gender. Many policies are yet to address gender aspects such as the Energy Policy. The accountability and capacity for gender mainstreaming and monitoring remain weak. In most cases projects/programs supported by development partners integrate technical assistance support and show good results. All programmes of GOB should also take necessary measures in mainstreaming gender.

3.2.9 Institutional strengthening

Institutional structure for women’s empowerment and gender equality had been in place since late nineties. MOWCA as the nodal ministry operates through its three agencies, Department of Women Affairs, Jatiya Mohila Shagstha and Bangladesh Shishu Academy. The National Council for Women’s and Children’s Development (NCWCD), several committees and WID focal Point mechanism had been in place for guiding and monitoring women’s advancement. The following diagram presents the mechanism. The mechanisms, though considered good has been criticized for not functioned effectively.

Figure 4: Institutional mechanism of women’s advancement



Areas needing attention: There are limitations of capacity and effectiveness of these mechanisms. The NCWCD, the highest guiding body has not met regularly to provide necessary guidance. MOWCA, the nodal ministry for integrating and coordinating women's advancement issues has been weak in terms of both technical capacity and resources. MOWCA could not effectively in provide technical support to other ministries as well as lacked authority and expertise to coordinate or supervise other ministries. MOWCA has focused more on project implementation and not been given adequate authority to perform the oversight function of gender mainstreaming. Resources allocated for MOWCA is at times even less compared to a project in other ministries. The Policy Leadership and Advocacy Unit (PLAU) of the MOWCA has not been institutionalized with technically capable human resource. The field officers of the Department of Women Affairs (DWA) are also constrained by low status, capacity and logistics to support women. The terms of reference (ToR) of the WID Focal Points is not integrated within the ToRs of the concerned officials. The Committees have neither been able to sit regularly nor have effectively monitored progress of mainstreaming gender in the sectoral performance. The role of IMED has been minimal in monitoring gender aspects of development programmes and need strengthening.

3.2.10 Integrating gender issues in planning and budgetary processes

The Government introduced the Medium Term Budget Framework (MTBF) in 2008 for attaining public financial management reform objectives and ensuring increased efficiency in the use of public money. In 2009 the Ministry of Finance initiated use of the Recurrent, Capital, Gender and Poverty (RCGP) model for analysis with scope for multi-year planning. All expenditure items under different ministries were disaggregated to indicate the percentage of allocation benefiting women and also addressing poverty. A Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) with fourteen criteria of performance on women's advancement and gender equality was introduced, which provided an essential element of promoting gender equality. The Ministries are to provide estimates of budget allocation for gender equality and poverty related activities within the sectoral policy. The resource allocation for gender is to be aligned with the identified priority areas by the ministries and to be consistent with actions based on 14 set criteria. The approach continued during the SFYP and all the Ministries have been covered by GRB. Since 2009, the Government has started reporting on the progress of gender responsive budget.

The ECNEC in collaboration with MOWCA has issued guidelines for Gender Responsive Planning and Review, guiding on how to address gender in technical assistance and investment project documents.

Areas needing attention: The GRB provided the government with an estimate of public expenditure in gender disaggregated manner. Reporting on progress of gender equality aspects is difficult because of non-availability of sex disaggregate data. The claims of the ministry/division about having positive impacts on women's advancement and rights cannot be established in absence of monitoring using sex-disaggregated data for baseline and reporting. The present practice of assigning a percentage is a guess work although based on the best information available, and cannot be considered as accurate. Particularly that the field offices and agency officials are not oriented and aware on the methodology and need for such calculations. Analytical rigour in the Gender Budget Report is weak particularly for the ministries not dealing with social issues. Capacity needs to be developed at agency and field levels including local government institutions. Other limitations are tracking the disbursement of funds for their planned or expected use; highlighting gender issues in public expenditure reviews; and consideration of gender in revenue side of the budget. To date only the allocation is the basis of assessment. The gender budget reporting compiles report in three different areas and divides the Ministries in 3 groups each contributing in one area. This division is problematic as the same ministry can contribute in all three areas. Also the 14 criteria need review to capture all needs of women²³.

As for gender responsive planning, the agencies are not oriented or aware of the Guidelines and its use is limited. The main limitations are lack of purposive gender planning and that the guidelines are not integrated within the project planning formats. Staff capacity is also limited in using the guidelines.

3.2.11 Strengthening female participation in economic decision making

Women's participation as entrepreneurs has been on the increase and women entrepreneurs have been appointed as directors of banks. Chambers and business associations have opened cell or formed committees to address gender equality. Some women are functioning as managers in the chambers, corporate houses and financial institutions. Though all chambers and associations have women members, but their number is very low and role in decision making is lower. However, the MCCI President is a woman and the FBCCI First Vice President is also a woman. Women are included as members of delegations for trade fairs at times. The country's textile, footwear and leather industry have benefitted from a boom of women employees but only a handful of these garment and textile factories are owned by business women.

Areas needing attention: Data related to women in decision-making positions in the private sector is limited. The capacity of women to participate in trade negotiations and in economic decision making is almost absent. Actions in promoting their role in commerce, trade negotiations and in various committees of the Ministry of Commerce, in influencing international economic agenda and the international legal obligations were limited and needs emphasis in the next plan.

3.2.12 Addressing special needs of ethnic women

Bangladesh is cognizant of the needs of the ethnic minority groups and ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD). After the CHT Peace Accord, 1997, the Government members of Parbattaya Chattagram Jana Shanghati Sanity (PCJSS) got jobs in the police and tribal families repatriated from the Indian State of Tripura were rehabilitated. In the FY 15, 13,000 families are covered under CHT Food Assistance Programme under the Social Safety Net Programme.

Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility has supported communities across CHT to be empowered through formation of 3,257 Para (local communities) Development Committees and 1,686 Para Nari Development Groups (Women's Groups), and provision of micro-grants for community projects. A model for community-based health services in remote areas developed through a network of 1,000 Community Health Service Workers, backed by 16 Mobile Health Teams with 80 Satellite Clinics across 15 Upazilas (lowest tier of government). The media, lawyers and civil society groups are working together in the area to address conflict and violence. A Peace Makers' Network has been formed with 47 members (13 women) who have been trained on conflict mediation and peace building, who play a role in mediation as well as flagging a conflict situation to the administration.

To facilitate education of tribal children, 10 hostels were constructed in CHT area under Second Primary Education Programme and sub-component addresses the particular needs in formal schools of tribal children, ethnic minorities has been integrated in the third phase of the programme. One Stop Cell has been established in the three hill districts in order to give information and referral services to victims of violence. Women have been identified as the district target group and their employment in project infrastructure construction and maintenance has been incorporated. Similarly women are supported for economic self-reliance through microcredit support in partnership with NGOs under other rural development projects. In Modhupur and other areas tribal women are involved in social forestry. In the Northern region women from Santal community have been trained on modern vegetable cultivation

techniques and women entrepreneurs of CHT have been introduced to bank financing through SME Sector Development Project of Bangladesh Bank.

Areas needing attention: Given these initiatives, women's empowerment amongst ethnic minority groups is relatively low. There remain disparities in accessing to health care, education, and productive assets. Early marriage is also equally widespread amongst the poor ethnic minority groups. In the CHT area violence, killing and kidnapping of women, are reported, mostly as part of local conflicts over land and forest resources. The Hill People continue to fight among themselves for establishing supremacy and settlers create conflicts over land. Women fall victims of the situation in both cases. Kapaeeng Foundation²⁴, in a recent report revealed that repression of women was carried out as a tool for land grabbing, which needs to be watched and prevented. Education in mother tongue is yet to be ensured.

3.2.13 Promoting positive images of women

Portrayal of women in media: Both electronic and print media are giving attention to involve women or address women's need as clients. Print media has separate women's pages, which often highlight stories of successful women, but also focus on subjects that relate to traditional roles of women. Portrayal of women's positive image is promoted through electronic media as well. Publishing of pictures of victims of rape and the perpetrators have been restricted. The news and feature contents have seen transition. Issues such as health, education, child care, violence and women's work and such topics have gained prominence. A National Broadcasting Policy 2013 was drafted with the objectives in strengthening of broadcasting ensuring release of social responsibility of preventing any broadcasting against social and ethical norms; portrayal of women's productive roles; and prevention of projecting women as objects in commercial media. The Pornography Control Act, 2012 aims to prevent deterioration of moral and ethical values of the society and to prevent the use of information with criminal intention. The Act declares any pornographic recording of video, still picture and publication of them in print, electronic or other form a Criminal offence. The Act has a separate section for child pornography. Inclusion of mother's name in the Passport and other official documents is one such positive step in improving women's image.

Areas needing attention: Portraying women in a negative light as well as projection in promotional programmes as commodity have been noted to enforce the traditional image of women, particularly through the soap operas and films. The lifestyle magazines and electronic media often project the importance of physical appearance of women. Greater linkage with women activist groups and media is essential to promote women's positive image. Mass awareness among the media personnel at all levels, including for the media owners is necessary in order to promote positive portrayal of women's roles and images. The expansion of consumerism, particularly in commercials and movies calls for orientation and improvement of capacity of corporate and media houses on the positive portrayal of women. Some media though have established their own norms related to portrayal of women, establishment of principles and ethics for all media and development of the capacity of media personnel in projection and portrayal of women and gender aspects is necessary. Establishment of a screening body for commercials, formulation of gender policy and owners' manual for media houses, well equipped registration body are necessary. Dedicated time/space for women's positive portrayal is essential.

With the expansion of information technology and social media some evidence of pornography and abuse of women have been observed. The challenges of managing Bangladesh's exposure to new media and ICT within the changing global scenario, need careful planning so that ICT is used for the women's advantage, at the same time minimizing any potential risks.

3.2.14 Disability and gender issues

In Bangladesh, at least 10% population is physically challenged and this number is 8.77% amongst women. Women's disability put them in a complex discriminatory situation, where their access to education and productive employment is limited as women and also they are subjected to social stigma. Disabled women are also more vulnerable to gender-based violence.

Table 9: Disability rate per 1000 population by sex and locality 2009-2011

Sex	2011			2010			2009		
	National	Rural	Urban	National	Rural	Urban	National	Rural	Urban
Male	11.10	12.11	9.26	11.47	12.18	9.42	10.96	11.61	9.49
Female	8.77	9.37	7.68	8.84	9.27	7.60	9.00	9.41	8.07
Both Sex	9.93	10.74	8.47	10.18	10.75	8.52	9.99	10.51	8.78

Source: Source: Sample Vital Registration System 2011, BBS

The Government runs several projects for the disabled persons under the social safety net programmes, which include allowances for the financially insolvent disabled, stipends for disabled students, grants for schools for disabled persons, establishment of an Autistic Academy and construction of a multi-purpose sports complex for persons with disabilities.

Areas needing attention: The coverage of human development and economic empowerment services and safety net programs for the physically challenged people are limited and more so for women. Data on disabled persons' health, education, employment situation etc. is not presented. Plans need to address the multiple dimensions of disability based on accurate data. BBS should collect and compile such data. Education and health care needs of persons with disability should be considered within the education and health sector programs and the role of Department of Social Services should be strengthened within these programmes.

3.3 Spatial variation in gender equality results

Despite successes in gender equality results in many areas, it is to be noted that women are not a homogenous group and achievements varied based on their class, ethnicity, religion, physical ability and geographic location. Use of differential data shows that some areas or groups have benefited more, performed better or utilized the services better than the others. Therefore, performance assessment based on average has limited the possibilities of reducing gender gaps in the areas or amongst groups that are lagging behind. Labour force participation rate in some districts, like Pirojpur, Chandpur, Noakhali and Laxmipur and Faridpur were less than 25% compared to national average of 36% in 2010. Similarly, Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey 2011 found that districts in Sylhet Division were lagging behind other divisions based on indicators on fertility, contraceptive use, use of skilled personnel in attending child birth, vaccination coverage etc.. Literacy rate in Bandarban, Cox's Bazar, Sunamganj, Netrokona, Jamalpur were between 35-40% compared to national average of 58%. Similarly, households of the hill districts and some of the northern districts have low access to water supply. In all areas such variations will be noticed, if examined carefully. Therefore, comparison of sex-disaggregated data within geographical locations and groups should be ensued for reducing gender and spatial gaps in performance.

Section 4: Limitations and Constraints Faced in Implementing SFYP for Women's Empowerment

Women's advancement and rights was identified as an area of action and the SFYP declared a vision of a society with equal opportunities and that men and women will enjoy all fundamental rights on an equal basis. Ensuring gender parity was declared as one of the strategy for SFYP. The SFYP show the Government's increasing efforts to incorporate women's rights and gender issues. In general the plan has made impacts in improving the lives of the women of Bangladesh. However, the results of the initiatives remain much low on women's empowerment due to several limiting factors.

Women's development as recipient of benefits not so as contributor to growth: The SFYP though incorporated a vision for promoting equal opportunities for women and men, the contribution of women for the economy was not adequately considered. Harnessing the full potential of women comprising 50% population as contributor in realizing the national target of economic growth was not systematically planned. Women's empowerment and development often was designed by considering women as recipient of services or for low end jobs. Planned promotion of their role as agents and equal contributors could have brought better results for the country's growth. Planned initiatives to enhance women's human capability and provide support services to transform women as economic contributors from unpaid family labour were less than needed.

Lack of consistency in gender results indicators and weak monitoring: The result monitoring framework of the SFYP integrated limited number of result indicators on education, formal sector employment and contraceptive use. The sectoral results indicators of other areas had no gender focused targets. Gender integration depended on the willingness and interest of the executing agency or the ministry. The monitoring indicators on gender equality in the results framework were different from the targets identified in the strategy Table 1.4. Though some sector-based gender equality result indicators had been identified with support from development partners, their use was limited. It has been a struggle to specify sector or issue specific result while preparing reports for CEDAW, BPFA or such other. Gender equality results were often hidden at national or sectoral levels. Qualitative results are seldom assessed at the macro or sectoral levels. A set of nationally agreed gender indicators would bring in better results. Systematic monitoring of gender equality results was also lacking. The Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation Division (IMED) mostly focused on financial and physical progress and the monitoring formats did not integrate gender related result monitoring criteria. Monitoring of the gender budget utilization at the field level was not introduced. The Committees established by MOWCA for monitoring of gender equality and women's advancement were irregular and not effective.

Lack of sex disaggregated data and reporting: Despite improvement in collection and compilation of sex disaggregated data in many areas, lack of collection and collation of sex-disaggregated data in several areas has posed a challenge on measuring the development results. For example, studies found that the female-headed households usually earn less income since poor women have low earning capacity and their wages are lower than male's wages but most of the reports do not shed any light on the rate of reduction of poverty amongst women. Availability and use of sex of disaggregated data and gender based analysis in all areas could have further enhanced the efficiency in planning, implementation and assessment of results of development initiatives.

Inadequate attention to spatial variations of gender equality outcomes: Like all other areas, gender equality outcomes also varied by district and regions as measured by different indicators. Attention was inadequate in reducing the gender gap based on spatial variations of gender equality results.

Lack of a comprehensive approach: Although the SFYP though intended to adopt a two pronged approach, with a focus on specific gender equality issues and mainstreaming gender in other areas. This did not fully happen in practice. There were weaknesses in integrating gender perspectives in the process of formulation, implementation and evaluation of policies, programs and projects of all sectors. The vision of SFYP was not supported by actions and indicators required in all areas as envisaged for mainstreaming.

Overlapping actions and lack of coordination: Given that gender is a crosscutting issue, inter-sectoral and inter-ministerial coordination, cooperation and collaboration were not ensured for achieving results. The provisions in the WDP 2011, and the Action Plan were not included in the operation or business of all the relevant ministries. Initiatives to influence the role of private sector to be more responsive to women's needs were inadequate. It has been found that many of the projects undertaken by the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and the other sectoral ministries have similar objectives and goals. This leads to duplication of efforts using scarce resources as well as undermines comparative technical capacity and advantage.

Weakness in planning, budgeting and resource allocation: Purposive planning for gender equality is yet to be commonly practiced in all sectors. The Guidelines for Gender Responsive Planning, issued by ECNEC is yet to be integrated within the planning document formats and introduced to the planning staff. Also a gap between stated goals and objectives in planning and actual budgetary allocation has been observed, for example resources in implementing the National Action Plans on VAW, Trafficking or Women's Advancement were not specified. Identification of gender related result indicators combined with resource allocation (financial and human) during planning could have brought better results from projects/programs. Often it is a struggle to address the needs of various sectors with limited resources. Prioritization of investment area is a necessary element for better results. The challenge of balance between allocation of resources in social sectors and hard infrastructure is to be addressed. Despite gender responsive budgeting, the allocation on gender is often curtailed when resources are limited. The allocation for entire MoWCA is less than a large project in energy or transport sector.

There are other issues as well. Planning Commission uses 17 sectors for planning, and the Ministry of Finance uses 13 sectors for budget allocation. These together with the division of ministries by 3 gender equality results areas in gender budget reports pose difficulties in understanding and application of the 14 GRB criteria.

Social barriers and conservatism: Social norms and beliefs are key factors that shape behavior, rules, policies, and actions at the individual, community and also at the national levels. The influence of prevalent discriminatory and patriarchal social norms and values on women's participation in decision-making and policy implementation is significant. Social practices and beliefs that inhibit women's mobility between the household and public spaces refrain them from pursuing social, economic, political activities. Although women's participation in outdoor economic, social and political spheres is increasing, patriarchal norms and values still extensively constrain them as institutions are mostly male dominated. Non-cooperation of men and VAW persist as the barriers to enhancing women's effective participation.

The role of different conservative groups was not supportive while the WDP 2011 was formulated and approved. Some groups demonstrated against the provisions related to women's acquisition of assets under the policy. As a result, the Policy declared that no laws will be formulated and implemented against Shariah, though the country is not governed by Shariah laws and that all its population are not Muslims. Similarly, despite giving a positive recommendation by the Law Commission on the withdrawal

of reservation on Article 2, the commitment on the withdrawal of reservation could not be materialized. These barriers limit releasing women's full potentials.

Lack of Accountability: An accountability mechanism to implement the NAP and gender equality could not be established. WID Focal Point mechanism has not been effective. Similarly, the project documents incorporate an elaboration of how the projects /program benefit women but the project and ADP review process do not question implementation of gender equality related provisions. On the other hand, reporting of the progress of gender related results was the responsibility of MOWCA in SFYP but the achievements are not in MOWCA's hand. Better results would be achieved, if the relevant ministries are held accountable for results as per the NAP with MOWCA given some oversight authority.

Ineffective enforcement: Even though formulation and adoption of policies, laws, and measures promoting women's economic empowerment, participation, institutional changes, social changes are noteworthy, the lack of implementation and enforcement of policies, laws and reform measures have limited the achievements. The implementation of the current laws on VAW has been less than satisfactory. General lack of orientation, capacity, efficiency and gender sensitivity in the law enforcing agencies, courts and administration etc. are the causes of such performance. The laws, policies and mechanisms in place to stop the practice of dowry, VAW and early marriages and promote women's development could have yielded better results in protecting women's rights, if enforced effectively.

Role of men: For women to undertake market-oriented and public sphere activities men's support is needed and also men need to share household activities. Engagement with men including the youth and adolescents is critical in removing obstacles, discriminations and in protecting women's rights. The SFYP integrated objectives requiring men's participation, but the roles and responsibilities of men in reducing gender disparity and sharing care work was not sufficiently addressed.

Low capacity in managing gender mainstreaming: There is widespread lack of understanding of the concept of gender mainstreaming at the operational level. Often support for women's practical benefits without addressing gender inequality is considered as women's development. Lack of human resources with technical knowledge, particularly on sectoral gender issues is a great limitation often hampering implementation of the strategies and plans. Also it is evident that gender mainstreaming at the beneficiary level is accepted faster than bringing in changes at the institution levels or in reforms.

Disasters and crisis: As mentioned earlier in Section 2, the implementation of the SFYP was somewhat slowed down due to stress owing to some natural calamities and the effect of the financial crisis of 2008-2009 at the international level. Though the Government's policies have helped efficiently in overcoming the situation, still in some areas women could not recover their loss.

Issues with inadequate attention: Globalization has created new avenues for employment in the export oriented enterprises and as migrants creating new needs for services and has made women susceptible to new types of VAW. An assessment of global labour market combined with skills development and measures for protection from VAW are to be considered for planning. The advantage of the rapid change in the landscape of information technology to women's benefits is yet to be realized. Also the need for managing violence related to ICT without curtailing rights to information and opinion has to be considered. Due to male migration abroad and in other sectors women's participation in farm based activities and as unpaid family labour is increasing. Preparing women for this new responsibility with technology and other support to help them in becoming paid workers, self-employed or reaching to higher levels of value chain is important. Women's vulnerability to climate change has been considered in DRR activities, but initiatives to build their economic and social resilience are inadequate.

Section 5: Promoting Gender Equality and Overcoming Barriers

7th Five Year Plan

Gender inequality has been identified as barrier to economic growth, poverty reduction and family wellbeing. It is important to address structural barriers to gender equality on one hand and facilitate women's advancement in different areas on the other. These two approaches to gender equality require concerted and multipronged action across sectors, at the public, institutional and household levels. Gender analysis is an essential tool for understanding how institutions (the state, the market, the community and family/kinship) create and reproduce inequalities. Research and analyses have identified the need for challenging social norms, progressive legal frameworks that are effectively enforced and increasing women's voice, agency and benefits through macro-economic and sectoral policies and programs. Increasing women's economic benefits; creating an enabling environment; managing shocks; ensuring social safety; and improving human capital all are also required for gender equality. All these have to be context and time specific requiring appropriate analysis by sex, ethnicity, age, spatial variation and other such dimensions.

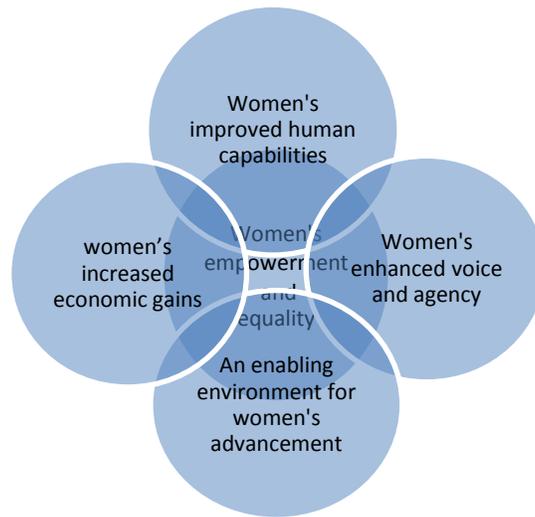
The vision of 7th Five Year Plan should be grounded in the Government's Vision 2021 within the framework of the Perspective Plan and priorities to be given to fulfill the gaps as identified in the SFYP. This has to be also consistent with the vision of a middle income country by the end of the Plan period. While the emphasis is on elimination of extreme poverty and growth with equity, women as distinct target group as agents and beneficiary of development is to be promoted. Therefore, it is critical to consider women as resources and efforts to be given to harness their full potential. Developing women's human capability should be emphasized to enable to become effective contributor in the labour market for supporting economic growth. To do this, the social barriers limiting women's mobility and empowerment need to be removed; violence prevented; services ensured; enforcement of policy/legal provisions ensured; and results to be monitored ensuring accountability.

The vision of the 7th Five Year Plan should be, "a country where men and women will have equal opportunities and rights and women will be recognized as equal contributors in economic, social and political development". The Mission should be to ensure women's advancement as self-reliant human beings and reduce discriminatory barriers by taking both developmental and institutional measures.

Gender equality and women's empowerment agenda for the 7FYP should be designed within a well thought out framework that encompasses all the dimensions mentioned above. Strategies and actions that not only enhance women's capabilities and access to resources and opportunities but also address the barriers in structures and institutions and aim at changing social norms and protecting their rights are critical to integrate within the plan. Establishing monitoring, oversight and accountability mechanisms is equally important.

The following diagram provides a visual presentation of a framework for women's empowerment and gender equality. The framework identified 4 areas of strategic objectives. These are:

1. Improve women's human capabilities
2. Increase women's economic gains
3. Enhance women's voice and agency
4. Create an enabling environment for women's advancement



The proposed framework draws from other frameworks and strategies that have been used by development practitioners and encompasses the key aspects of women’s empowerment and gender equality²⁵. The areas are closely interlinked, and are not mutually exclusive. Gender equality results in one area may have an impact on progress in others such as, quality education supports access to employment and decision making. Similarly achieving result in one area may require work in more than one area. Actions in all areas is required to empower women and in promoting gender equality. The key aspects of the four strategic areas are highlighted below.

- **Human capabilities:** deals with women’s and girls’ access to health care, life expectancy, nutrition, reproductive health, education, information, training, and other services that enables women to achieve better health and educational outcomes. This also includes women’s freedom from violence and coercion. A comparison with men or boys through use of sex disaggregated data is necessary to plan and address women’s greatest needs for human capabilities.
- **Economic benefits:** deals with women’s access to or control over productive assets, resources, services, skills, property, employment, income, information, technology, financial services, and other economic opportunities including community resources like land, water, forest etc. Consideration of barriers to women’s economic participation, facilitation of support services and a comparison with men’s access to these resources, services, and assets is essential for better planning.
- **Voice and agency:** women’s role as decision makers in public and private spheres including politics and promotion of their leadership is considered here. Changed attitudes on women’s and girls’ rights, women’s enhanced knowledge of their rights and increasing their bargaining power are reflected on. The understanding and support for women’s rights among men and boys are also part of this area.

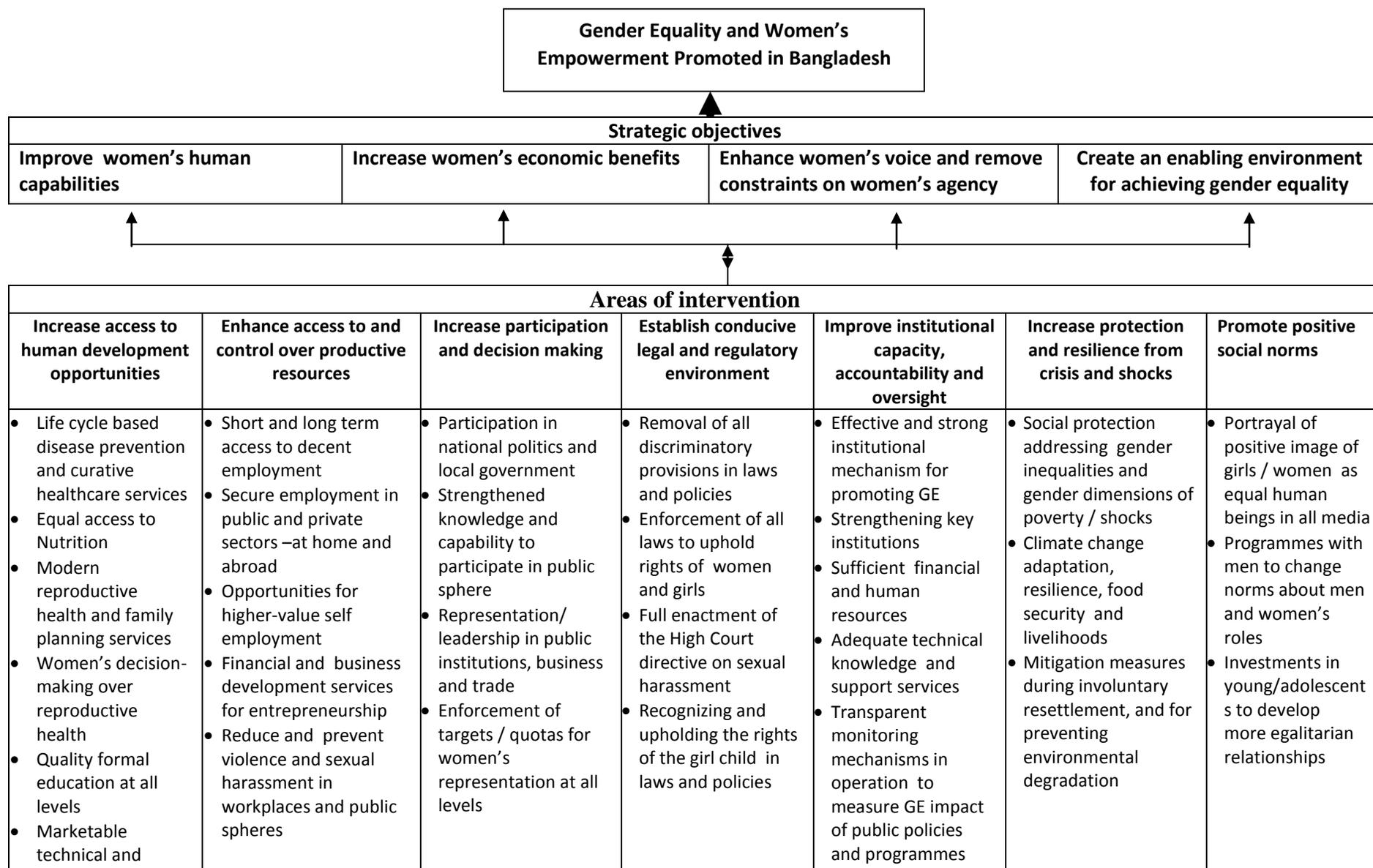
- **Enabling environment:** The socio-political environment, legal and policy support, and congenial social norms are the key in this area. Oversight, enforcement of laws, regular collection of sex-disaggregated data, gender and social analysis skills including the capacity to develop, implement, and monitor gender strategies, understanding of gender issues in the sector are the key areas.

Seven action areas have been identified, which will contribute in achieving results in these four areas.

1. Increase access to human development opportunities
2. Enhance access to and control over productive resources
3. Increase participation and decision making
4. Establish conducive legal and regulatory environment
5. Improve institutional capacity, accountability and oversight
6. Increase protection and resilience from crisis and shocks
7. Promote positive social norms

The framework with details of action areas is presented in the following page.

Promoting Gender Equality: A Framework for the Seventh Five Year Plan



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vocational education incl. ICT • Safe water supply and sanitation services • Freedom from violence • Ending child marriage • Participation in sports and culture • Protection and development of physically and mentally challenged women • Protection of ethnic cultures and empowering ethnic minority women • Protection and advancement of vulnerable groups (transgender, sex workers, women in HIV/AIDS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to support services (e.g. safe transportation, day care, housing) • Access to markets and productive assets (land, seeds, fertilizers and extension services) • Increased ownership of land and productive resources • Access to, and decision-making over, community resources (water body, forest, land) • Labour market analysis and linkages • Access to technology and information • Access to market infrastructure and energy services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership and leadership in associations and decision making forums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizing women's rights and upholding them in sectoral laws and policies • Ensuring accountability of law enforcers • Regulatory measures in public and private institutions to remove discrimination and in promote women's participation and benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to develop, implement, and monitor gender strategies across government and in sectors • Sex disaggregated data and analysis across sectors • Defined national and sectoral gender equality results • Accountability for gender equality results • Inclusive and gender-sensitive citizen accountability mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure, information, and services for livelihood and strengthening resilience to climate change, calamities and shocks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special programs toChange social norms on specific and harmful practices (e.g. on VAW, child marriage, dowry) • Recognition and sharing of care work
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Some Suggested Gender Equality Indicators

Increase access to human development opportunities	Enhance access to and control over productive resources	Increase participation and decision making	Establish conducive legal and regulatory environment	Improve institutional capacity, accountability and oversight	Increase protection and resilience from crisis and shocks	Promote positive social norms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion rates in primary and secondary with learning outcomes by sex • Ratio of boys and girls enrolled/completed tertiary and technical education • Percentage of women facing violence • Percent of women married age 15-19 • Maternal Mortality Ratio per 100,000 live births • Under 5 mortality rate per 1000 live birth boys and girls • Nutrition level of boys/girls and women/men • Births attended by trained personnel • Households having access to safe water and safe sanitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rate of labour force participation by sex • Status of employment by sex • Ratio of women to men migrant workers • Ratio of wage between women and men • Ratio of women and men in public sector employment by level • Ratio of SME lending for women and men (number and amount) • Households connected to electricity and renewable energy • Accommodation, day care services for women established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of women in regular seats of the Parliament • Percentage of women in trade and other delegations and in diplomatic missions • Percentage of women in regular seats in local government • Percentage of women candidates for next elections • Percentage of women on party central committees • Election Commission monitoring of implementation of RPO 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced time for disposal of VAW cases • Issue guidelines for private sector for ensuring women's employment and support services • Number of policies/acts reviewed and formulated with gender mainstreamed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DPP and TPP formats integrate guidelines for gender responsive planning and review • IMED integrates gender equality monitoring • Percentage of budget for gender equality and women's empowerment • BBS and all ministries/agencies ensure sex-disaggregated data based reporting • National and Sectoral GE performance indicators agreed • Role of MoWCA strengthened 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coverage of livelihood program for women in disaster prone areas • Households with reduced risks • Reduced number and increased coverage of social protection programmes for women • Percentage of women on Disaster Management Committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines for media on positive portrayal of women • Investment on Campaign on value of household care work • Number of specific program with adolescents • Acceptance of violence against women by girls and boys (from BDHS)

Note: If these indicators are accepted, the targets to be set by the planners during the preparation of the Plan

Section 6: Key Issues for Promoting Gender Equality and Women’s Advancement for the Next Five Year Plan

The formulation of the 7FYP is to be based on the findings of the review of the achievements under the SFYP and gender relations within the current context as has been discussed in sections 2, 3, and 4. The following have been identified as the key areas to be addressed under the 7th Plan and organized as per the seven action areas identified in the framework presented in Section 5. Four strategic objectives are proposed to be addressed through actions in these seven blocks.

6.1 Increase access to human development opportunities

Building the human capital of women to foster equality of opportunity is essential. Early and continuous investments in human development for girls should be ensured for equitable economic growth. Education, health, nutrition, freedom from violence and such others are considered enabling human development opportunities.

6.1.1 Life cycle based disease prevention and curative healthcare services

Considering the current realities of women in Bangladesh, a lifecycle based healthcare system including tertiary care should be accessible to women within affordable cost. The health care system should be made more responsive to differential needs of women and men aiming at reducing discrimination and ensuring equal benefits. One of the major areas is to undertake information and motivational campaigns to inform households, both women and men about the need and availability of preventive care and screening services. It is essential to emphasize on and invest in preventive services to save the country and households from incurring much higher cost for treatment. Coverage of the existing low cost health care services needs expansion to include the poor of the remote and vulnerable areas. The ongoing primary health care services should ensure equal immunization support for both girls and boys who are not covered yet. Similarly immunization, maternal and ante-natal care for pregnant women and post-natal care for both mother and child should be ensured through increased facilities as well as information and motivation both in rural and urban areas. Reproductive health care services including counseling should be expanded. Expansion of women friendly hospitals in all districts by enhancing services in all sadar hospitals and medical college hospitals is necessary including outputs of reproductive health care. The proposed system for registration and tracking of services for women and children at the community clinics and all hospitals should be made effective. Ensuring availability of geriatric care at the upazilla level, which may include introduction of health voucher for elderly women and men is a need, which will become more important over time. HIV

ICT for Health: MOVE-IT Bangladesh

Universal Registration of Mothers and the Children
Text: Drawing on the Government of Bangladesh's commitment to Digital Bangladesh 2021 and the health sector priority to scale-up maternal, neonatal and child health programs, MOVE-IT Bangladesh is a multi-stakeholder collaborative process that aims to register all pregnant mothers and their children in Bangladesh in a unified electronic information system that tracks vital events (births, deaths, causes of death), non-fatal health events, and coverage of priority services. Through the development of common standards for unique identification of mothers and children and agreement on a minimal data set, MOVE-IT Bangladesh is harnessing the power of mobile and electronic health technologies to ensure that all mothers and children are part of a universal vital events and health information system. Such a system promises to transform traditional paper-based approaches to vital statistics and health records with the prospect of real-time, continuous reporting on the health and well-being of mothers and children.

Source: Health Watch Report, 2011

testing and counseling should be scaled up among key populations and high risk groups and awareness amongst migrant laborers and their spouses need be promoted. Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission (PMTCT) services need to be scaled up for HIV infected women.

6.1.2 Equal access to nutrition

The high rate of malnutrition among children and women calls for a multidimensional approach to address the intergenerational health impact. It should include awareness on child/women nutrition, food value and food diversity. Together with this, the ongoing iron acid (IFA) supplementation during pregnancy to cover iron-deficiency anaemia, postpartum vitamin A supplementation, treating intestinal parasites, distribution of albendazole tablets, vitamin A campaign for children and separate deworming programme should be strengthened and expanded. Campaign through media on obesity and overweight, and the importance of physical work and healthy food may be undertaken. Ensuring salt iodization through BSTI and compulsory physical exercise in schools are essential. Target specific food fortification for micronutrients should be promoted with local producers. Food security and safety net programs including the maternal health vouchers and allowance to cover women's/girls' nutritional deficiencies particularly in the calamity/poverty prone areas should be continued and expanded. Promotion and expansion of homestead gardening and poultry in the rural and remote areas particularly amongst the poor introducing climate tolerant varieties is essential in order to ensure protein and vitamin consumption.

6.1.3 Modern reproductive health and family planning services

Counselling on population control and reproductive health and behavior should be continued and expanded in all health care centres. Community based family planning services should be continued and expanded to cover urban poor women and men. Motivational work in urban slums and remote areas for use of modern contraceptives and availability of modern contraceptives at a low cost especially in remote areas should be ensured.

6.1.4 Women's decision-making over reproductive health

Information and education is necessary to enhance women's control over their own reproductive health. Education in this case to include education for employment and economic gain that gives self-reliance and confidence together with information on elements of reproductive health care, their availability and need for such care. Counselling services should be made available in all health care centers for men, women and couples.

Maternal Health Voucher Scheme

Government introduced in 2007 the maternal health voucher scheme, a demand-side financing (DSF) initiative, to improve access to and use of quality maternal health services. Currently, the program is being implemented in 46 upazilas of 41 districts and 7 upazilas of 4 MNHI (maternal and newborn health initiative) districts. Poor women defined by specific criteria (roughly 50% of the pregnant women) and validated by local government representatives are eligible for the voucher. Half of the target population qualifies as poor. The total number of cumulative beneficiaries reached 870,423. In 2012, a total of 152,401 pregnant women received the benefit. A voucher entitles its holder for specific health services free of charge, viz. antenatal and postnatal care, safe delivery, treatment for complications, including cesarean section, transportation cost, and laboratory tests. If delivery is attended by skilled staff, voucher-holders get unconditional cash benefits for nutritious food and gift-box. Safe delivery rate is now at 85% amongst the voucher recipients. Both public and non-public healthcare providers (NGO and private facilities) participate in the DSF scheme. There is a target to scale the program up to 100 upazilas, with a 20% increase each year. Strikingly, the maternal mortality rate among the voucher-holder women is 12 per 100,000 live births, in sharp contrast to the national rate of 194 per 100,000 live births.

Source: Health Bulletin, DGHS, 2013

6.1.5 Quality formal education

Education is key to empowerment and formal education is often a precondition for decisions making positions in both public and private sectors. Quality of primary and secondary education should be ensured for girls and boys through teachers' education, curriculum improvement (including subjects to promote equality and equity by gender, ethnicity, class, physical ability etc.), and introduction of extra-curricular activities to build confidence and to overcome the limitations in learning outcomes. Transition from primary and completion of secondary education for both boys and girls should be ensured with continued support from poverty focused stipend, free education, books, and so on. Girls' participation at the tertiary level and technical education should be increased through increased community motivation to change social norms on girls' education, providing scholarships, special quota provisions, infrastructure including accommodation, transport, water for girls and such support. Other actions should include increasing the percentage of women teachers and teachers' training on inclusive education and making the education environment safe for girls. Science and technical education streams with qualified faculty should be promoted in universities through regulatory measures and increase girls' participation by establishing targets. The registration and licensing process for private universities and colleges may include such criteria. It is also essential to ensure learning of English both written and spoken as a global language. The curriculum and teaching staff should be prepared accordingly. Use of ICT should be expanded in teaching and learning combined with access to low cost power supply.

6.1.6 Marketable technical and vocational education including ICT

One of the key requirements for employment of women equally with men is marketable education and skills. It is essential to reform the educational curriculum to cater to the needs of the country and the changing global requirements based on labour market analysis and future projections. It should also include measures for proficiency in ICT. Modernization of trade skills education; increasing different language proficiency; hands on training; standardization of courses in consistency with international needs; establishing globally acceptable certification system; and improved qualification of teaching staff are the needs of the day. This is also necessary for professional migration. Market need assessment and adjustment of curriculum should be a regular phenomenon.

6.1.7 Safe water and sanitation services

Access to safe water for drinking and household facilitates women's empowerment, by reducing drudgery and allowing to be engaged in productive endeavours. Access to water and sanitation services is also essential for household health care. It can save the family from additional expenses and women from care services. These services, both at home and in public places should be expanded to facilitate women's participation in economic and political activities. Arsenic and saline screening should be ensured and traditional filtering methods be disseminated widely. Also water conservation program for the Northern region and coastal belt is important to ease water stress and protect from salinity.

6.1.8 Freedom from violence

One of the most prevalent human rights abuses, which has enormous impact on all aspects of women's lives is violence at home and outside and also on the economy. Multipronged actions are essential to curb VAW including motivation of family, enhancing community support, enforcement of legal provisions, improving women's human capabilities, access to low cost prosecution services and economic self reliance of women. The ongoing initiatives under the multi-sectoral program and institutional mechanisms should be expanded in more areas. Prevention should be emphasized and women's and community awareness of the economic, social and health impact of VAW should be enhanced. Information and support services for women in accessing legal support, shelter, counselling

should be expanded and support for women's economic self-reliance should continue. A new dimension of VAW is against the elderly women needs addressing though there is law on parents' care. Private and public institutions should be instructed to formulate and enforce policies to protect women from sexual abuse at work places/ educational institutions and other public places. Accountability mechanism has to be developed and implemented for the law enforcing agency members in addressing VAW. Marital rape should be brought within legal provisions. The culture of impunity should be addressed. Development and institutionalizing a professional social work mechanism should be explored for support.

6.1.9 Ending child marriage

Child marriage is prevalent and is a barrier to girls' ability to reach their potential, fulfil their aspirations and contribute to their communities. In Bangladesh 33% girls are already mothers by age 19, posing significant risks to their health as well as the increased probability of children becoming stunted. This will require action in multiple areas. The existing age at marriage for girls and boys should be strictly enforced. Compulsory registration after birth of a child has to be ensured. The revised Child Marriage Restraint Act 2013 should have penal provisions for both guardians and registers. Civil society movements against child marriage should be strengthened, community orientation improved and support for continuation of education at secondary levels is to be ensured to eliminate child marriage.

6.1.10. Participation in sports and culture

Women's participation in sports and cultural activities should be ensured from school to build self-confidence amongst girls. Extra-curriculum activities should be encouraged and supported. Sports, literature and cultural competition etc. should be supported in educational institutions and outside.

6.1.11 Protection and development of physically and mentally challenged women

As almost 10% population is physically or mentally challenged, the upcoming disability survey should identify extent and types of disability disaggregated by sex. The social protection measures should be extended and expanded to cover more such persons. The gender based vulnerability of this group should be addressed by especially designing programmes to benefit them. In addition, allocation of resources for education and health services for different types of physically challenged persons should be increased and institutional capacity to support these persons should be enhanced. The needs of this groups should be addressed within human development and economic development agenda as well.

6.1.12 Protection of ethnic cultures and empowering ethnic minority women

The cultures of different minority groups should be protected and women and men should be given support for development in education, employment and political participation. Education in mother tongue together with access to formal primary and secondary education, and employment opportunities should be ensured.

6.1.13 Protection and advancement of vulnerable groups

Programs should be undertaken to protect the human rights and development needs of the vulnerable groups, such as, transgender, sex workers, low caste, and such groups. Also new immigrants to urban areas also need specific support in terms of accessing basic services.

6.2. Enhance access to and control over productive resources

Increased access to productive resources enhances women's self-reliance and income. It is important to enhance women's capacity to enter the labour market for income. Three important areas facilitating

income are, job creation; connecting with productive jobs being created or get help to create own jobs in self-employment; and increasing women's productivity of the existing jobs.

6.2.1 Short and long term access to decent and harassment free employment

Creation of short and long-term wage employment for women is essential. Support to private sector through finance, policy and encouraging foreign direct investment is essential to address the high unemployment rate. The private sector has to be regulated and monitored in enforcing equal wage and benefits for women and men as per Labour laws and the ILO Conventions. Safety net programs designed to create employment for women and men should support transition to self-employment. Setting target for short-term employment opportunities under construction and development projects for women will facilitate employment. Guaranteeing equal wages will ensure that women benefit equally as men from their labours. Motivation of private sector and oversight for payment of equal wage and support services should continue.

Women's Employment in infrastructure: Bangladesh

Secondary Towns Integrated Flood Protection Project II (STIFPP-II), implemented by Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) jointly with LGED implemented a, urban flood protection project in 9 towns, which included flood control, drainage and town level flood protection infrastructures. A Gender Action Plan integrated preparation and implementation of town-specific GAPs, involvement of women, establishment of gender and environment committees chaired by female ward counselors and women-led community development committees for undertaking infrastructure-related slum improvement activities. Women were also employed in project-funded construction for flood protection and drainage works. Achievements included, about 26% of the 902,400 person-days of employment in flood protection work went to women (just over the target of 25%); and training, guidelines, and monitoring forms for contractors on equal wages and appropriate working conditions for women. Project management also provided employment for women as well as training of both women and men on gender issues. Project review notes several challenges facing the project in reaching and benefiting women:

Source: Shortened from Asian Development Bank, *Gender Equality Results Case Studies: Bangladesh, 2010, Manila, Philippines*

6.2.2 Secure Employment in public and private sectors –domestic and abroad

Women in non-traditional trade: Breaking gender stereotypes in Bangladesh

Nupur Howlader is Bangladesh's only nationally-qualified female welder. She is about to become Bangladesh's first nationally-certified female welder – the result of a skills training programme run by the ILO and funded by the European Union (EU) that provides technical skills to young and under-employed people. It has given her the chance to both earn a better living and challenge gender stereotypes. In a country where women's participation in technical and vocational education is strikingly low, Nupur is an important role model. Nupur has raced through her theoretical lessons at Barisal Technical School and College and her practical placement at the Sundarbans shipyard. She is now in the last stages of her practical training at [Linde Bangladesh](http://www.linde.com/bd), a local branch of the international industrial gas and engineering company. She is now nationally-certified at Level 1, meaning she can weld steel plates, make sheet metal and interpret technical drawings, among other skills. She will soon be nationally-certified at Level 2, meaning she will be able to do arc welding, join different metals and have an understanding of metallurgy.

http://www.ilo.org/asia/info/public/features/WCMS_228070/lang--en/index.htm

Filling up of the existing vacant positions in the public sector will allow additional employment for a large number of women and men where women with right qualifications may be given precedence to increase women's share of employment and overcome historic patterns of exclusion. Improvements in working conditions are needed to attract more women to the civil service. Recruitment of women; timely promotions, especially at senior levels; addressing safety and security concerns at field levels; gender sensitivity and elimination of discriminatory attitudes among management will enhance women's participation. Market research for identifying new and diversified opportunities for women abroad is needed and, combined with development of women's marketable skills. Given the increasing trends in women's educational attainments, the existing quota of 10% and 15% for officers and staff

respectively in public service should be revised upward. Institutional weaknesses and constraints should

be removed through transparent human resource management functions. The availability and use of adequate sex-disaggregated data for human resource management and planning should be ensured.

6.2.3 Opportunities for higher-value self employment

As employment opportunities in both public and private sectors are limited, self employment is a critical avenue to empower women by ensuring economic self reliance. The large number of micro-finance users, the unemployed school graduates and dropouts, and the unpaid family labourers are the main groups who will contribute to family and for growth, if they are introduced to simple time saving and green technology, information about markets, source of finance and training. Those opportunities will increase women’s participation in non-farm activities. Ensuring support from private sector, NGOs, business associations and media is also important.

6.2.4 Financial and business development services for entrepreneurship

Women entrepreneurship needs to be supported and entrepreneurs are to be prepared to qualify for institutional finance, i.e. they have to be prepared with required paper work, business planning, financial management and such other. On the other hand, the financial institutions need to simplify the procedures, delegate authorities at the division/ district levels upto a certain limit of lending, and follow BB circulars strictly to finance women. Bangladesh Women Chambers of Commerce and Industry and some others are working to develop business capacity of women entrepreneurs and linking them with the banks and PFIs. All chambers and associations should be encouraged to take similar initiatives for entrepreneurs at the district levels. Business incubator services should be expanded by the chambers and associations. Opportunities to participate in trade fairs and higher levels of the value chains should be created. Scope for women at different levels of the value chain of different products should be identified, disseminated and supported with technology and inputs. Ethnic crafts should be promoted.

6.2.5 Reduce and prevent violence and sexual harassment in workplaces and public spheres

Community orientation and motivation by using communication methods and media is important to create public opinion against VAW in public places. Steps should be taken immediately to enact legislation to address sexual harassment as per Supreme Court order. Enforcing the directives at all institutions and establishing a monitoring mechanism of compliance of the same should be established. Ensuring prosecution of VAW committed at public places will help curb the offense. As mentioned before, orientation on the laws and establishing accountability of the members of law enforcing agencies in implementation and enforcement of the legal provisions are essential.

Child Care in Chile’s Labour Code, August 1995

In Chile, the Labour Code since 1917 has required employers with more than 50 women workers aged at least 18 years, to provide child care facilities. Amendments in 1925 reduced the requirement to more than 20 women workers and that employers to provide for children under the age of 2 by creating their own nursery, sharing a nursery with the other employers in their location, or paying for an approved nursery. In 1995, the Labour Code was further amended to include employers in industrial and service sectors,(such as shopping malls)(Article 188). Also, free public nursery places are available for children aged 3 months to 2 years living in the poor areas of the country and they have increased from 14,400 in 2005 to 64,000 in 2008.

Source: Chile. Labour Code (Codified law approved by Decree-Law No. 1) (Law No. 20545 of 17 October 2011), as cited in ILO. 2010. Workplace Solutions for Childcare. Geneva. pp. 177–178.

Extracted from: Asian Development Bank (ADB) and International Labour Office (ILO), (2013), ‘Good Global Legal Practices to Promote Gender equality in the Labor Market’, Manila, Philippines.

6.2.6 Access to support services

Infrastructure and support services are key to increase women's participation in public spheres. Safe and affordable transport system is necessary to increase women's mobility. The public transport system should be frequent, safe and affordable. Public and private transport companies should be encouraged through budgetary incentive to run more buses with reserved seats for women or women only buses during peak period. Employers who employ more women in factories can be provided loan facilities to operate transport services for their women employees. A policy to increase bus services at least for girls' schools and colleges in all cities of the country is important. Safety and security (lighting, police patrols, safe toilets, waiting rooms) measures in public transport stations should be compulsory part of transport management. Road safety should be ensured through enforcement of traffic rules and laws. Cleaning of foot paths, compulsory use of over bridges for road crossing, increased public transports are some other measures to support women's mobility. Training/orientation on the importance of traffic safety should be provided to both public and private service providers using media and also in schools is necessary. Commuter train services between Dhaka and nearby cities, like Narayanganj, Gazipur, Tongi, Narshingdi should be introduced/increased with ladies compartments at peak hours. Similarly workplace safety and security concerns, child care, housing and toilet facilities, etc. should be addressed by ensuring regulatory provisions with private sectors and also by encouraging private sectors to develop low cost housing and child care facilities. Dispersal of industries is also necessary to improve the living conditions of workers of RMG and other industries, which is also essential for future human capabilities.

6.2.7 Access to markets and productive assets (land, seeds, fertilizers and extension services)

The extension services of all the government agencies (livestock, fisheries, agriculture etc.) should take specific measures in reaching women with support for training on technology, market information, production techniques, sources of raw materials, etc. Employing women as extension workers is useful in reaching women and opening new employment opportunities for women. The distribution of seeds and fertilizer through women farmer groups will help grassroots level women who are gradually being responsible for farming. Partnership with NGOs has proven to be effective and should be continued.

6.2.8 Increased ownership of land and productive resources

The current practice of distribution of khas land in the name of both spouses should continue. Similarly access to forestry resources through women co-management groups should continue and expand. Micro-finance operations need to combine vocational skills, markets, information. Community orientation on giving women due share of their inherited property is often missing, which should be promoted and enforced. In case of river erosion or such disaster induced migration women should be considered as a special group for housing or land support. The spirit of CEDAW and its application in case of inheritance in other countries with Muslim majority like Tunisia and Turkey should be assessed.

6.2.9 Access to, and decision-making over, community resources (water body, land, forest)

Women's participation in accessing and taking decisions regarding community resources should be ensured by

Women in environmental protection: Khurshida Begum Received Wangari Maathai Award-2012

Khurshida Begum received for the first ever Wangari Maathai Award-2012 for her pioneering role in co-management in wildlife conservation, management of forest resources and recognise her efforts to promote community forest management in Bangladesh. She works at a village in the south-eastern Cox's Bazar district. She was selected for the Wangari Maathai Award-2012 in Rome for her co-management efforts and leadership in wildlife conservation of forest resources in the area. She made the local people aware about biodiversity conservation for future generation. Her exceptional efforts in helping women of her village form a community patrol group alongside forest department guards to protect the forests and biodiversity of the Tenkaf Wildlife Sanctuary from illegal logging and poaching has been recognized. The Wangari Maathai Awards were established by the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), of which FAO is an active member, to recognize the efforts to improve and sustain forests and to honour the memory of Wangari Maathai, the Kenyan environmentalist and the first African woman to win a Nobel Peace Prize for her contribution to sustainable development, democracy and peace.

Source: <http://www.cpfweb.org/86207/en/>

provisions of women's participation under the Social Forestry Rules, Water Management Policy, Forestry Sector Policy, WATSAN Policy and so on. Similar practice should be integrated in all relevant sectors. Women's participation in relevant associations and groups should be ensured and monitored. Women's views should be heard and their needs should be addressed. Imparting training and information is necessary to prepare women to participate effectively in these groups.

6.2.10 Labour market analysis and linkages

As mentioned in 6.1.6 it is essential to increase women's skills levels based on market needs. Continued labour market analysis to understand the dynamics and emerging needs and linkages with employers is necessary to cater to the needs of domestic and international markets. Continued updating; support for Balancing, Modernization, Rehabilitation and Expansion (BMRE); modernization of trade skills; and information on product diversification, and employable education and skills should be continued. Labour market analysis needs close linkage with education sector so that training and education system and curriculum can respond to the identified needs.

6.2.11 Access to technology and information

Access to modern technology related to business and jobs should be expanded at a low cost. Women's access to information related to markets, employment, production or business opportunities should be increased through using media and ICT. Increased access to mobile phones, internet and radio etc, will help women in accessing information. The A2I to reach young girls should be strengthened and be responsive to the needs of less educated persons.

6.2.12 Access to market Infrastructure and energy

Women's access to energy (power, fuel and green) should be increased for reducing their drudgery and saving time for productive employment, and increase their access to information. Women's expanded access to renewable energy should be ensured in both grid and off-grid areas to facilitate their economic gains as well as conservation of resources. The energy policy should consider and enhance women's access to solar power, bio-gas, improve cook-stoves etc. Women's access to rural market corners and such infrastructure have proved to be beneficial and can be expanded in collaboration with the local government institutions (e.g. municipalities, city corporations). Some municipalities have already taken such initiatives in urban areas, and the others should be encouraged.

Infrastructure for women: Bangladesh

The Second Rural Infrastructure Improvement Project (RIIP II) under Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) aimed to upgrade rural roads, rural markets, and union council complexes. It also aimed to strengthening the capability of union councils. RIIP II targeted to provide employment in construction, tree plantation and care and infrastructure maintenance, particularly of poor and women. Women's Market Sections (WMS) in 40 markets with 280 shops for women were established and women shop owners were trained on business skills. Around 15% space in all open shades were kept for women traders. Toilet and water facilities were created in 114 markets and 40 WMS. The contractors received training on creating a congenial work environment for women laborers and their contracts included provisions to ensure women laborer's safety, security, access to safe drinking water, toilet, and shed for resting and lunch. Female members of 89 UP received coaching on Earthen Village Road maintenance and 943 women were employed & trained for Sustainable Flood Damage Rehabilitation. The female tree care takers were oriented on banking, savings and on deed entitlement for tree care taking. Around 90% of them had opened individual savings accounts at their nearest bank. The design of 46 UP Complex included separate sitting rooms with toilet facilities for female Union Parishad (Council) members.

Source: Summarized from Asian Development Bank, *Gender Equality Results Case Studies: Bangladesh, 2010, Manila, Philippines*

6.3. Increase participation and decision making

6.3.1 Participation in national politics and local government

Women's participation in national Parliament and local government has increased but the evidence of women raising their voices on behalf of women rights is limited. Women's political orientation should be enhanced through apprenticeship, training, campaigns and by establishing support and monitoring mechanisms to increase their participation as contestants in regular seats. Some projects have introduced training of women public representatives and citizens and monitoring of women's role in different committees. Steps should be taken so that these approaches are uniformly practiced. The provisions of RPO 2013 related to women's participation and representation in political parties should be ensured by enforcing it within the registration criteria. In the current system, women's Parliamentarians do not have specific constituency, and therefore, they have less opportunity to contribute to a community or build support and there is no mechanism for them to be accountable to public. Change in the constitutional provision for assigning them specific constituency and direct election has been a demand for long time from civil society. This needs to be considered positively.

6.3.2 Strengthened knowledge and capability to participate in public sphere

Training, orientation and knowledge development should be provided to all women employed in the public sector. The capacity of the existing training institutions should be increased with experienced faculty and other resources in the area of gender mainstreaming to both women and men. Leadership training and performance monitoring against defined results should be available to women and all staff. Rules and regulations related to different sectors and businesses should be easily accessible.

6.3.3. Representation/ leadership in public institutions, business and trade

Women's representation together with appropriate training and capacity building support should be institutionalized in public institutions. Private sector institutions and trade bodies should also be instructed to develop their own gender strategies and ensure more women's representation at different levels. It could be considered as criteria for qualifying for different incentives by the private sector. Women's participation in delegations and committees for trade and other important negotiations and development initiatives should be made mandatory and private sector to be encouraged /incentivised to have women on the Boards. Such legislation might also be considered.

6.3.4 Enforcement of targets / quotas for women's representation at all levels

The existing quota provisions for women's representation in different services need to be enforced and/or increased by taking specific measures, especially as the availability of qualified women increases with improvements in women's educational attainments. Also an assessment of the quota provisions for different groups, the performance of these groups and, future possibilities should be considered. Based on the performance of different groups and improvements in the enabling environment, an exit from different quotas can be planned for when quota is not necessary. This can only be done when the capability of different groups is equal and no discriminatory practices are in place.

6.3. Membership and leadership in associations and decision making forums

Memberships in different sectoral committees and associations should be enforced, such as in, water management associations, sanitation committees, water supply committees, which are formed as per the policies/rules for sectoral ministries and agencies. Similar initiatives by others sectors are necessary. This should be supported by clear TOR and orientation and training for women on their roles in such bodies as well as orientation of their male counterparts.

6.4. Establish conducive legal and regulatory environment

6.4.1 Removal of all discriminatory provisions in all laws and policies

Some laws and policies are yet to incorporate provisions to ensure women's participation and equal rights and these need review and revision. Some of the laws, such as the Citizenship Act 2009 is still to ensure equal rights of both spouses in ensuring citizenship of spouse of foreign nationality and need to be revised. As another example, the Renewable Energy Policy of Bangladesh did not consider participation or benefit of women though women are involved, which should be reviewed to integrate women's perspectives and benefits. Also, punitive and discriminatory laws and policies related to HIV response need to be addressed for an enabling legal environment for access to HIV services. It is essential that all sectoral policies are also reviewed from a gender lens in order to make them more conducive to women's participation and empowerment. MOWCA's capacity should be improved to provide technical support to line ministries in reviewing such laws. Partnership with women groups should be promoted for this. Similarly, withdrawal of the reservations on CEDAW, particularly on Article 2 should be considered as per the recommendation of the Law Commission.

6.4.2 All laws effectively enforced to uphold rights of women and girls

The enforcement of the legal and policy provisions should be ensured through establishing effective mechanisms and accountability. Some good practice examples are available in other countries, which include, independent Commission on Women, Oversight of Human Rights Commission and Audit Commissions, which may be considered for adaptation. Women's access to the legal system should be ensured through expansion of support from Legal Aid Fund, simplification of legal procedures, removal of discriminatory procedures and retention of legal practitioners to support poor women. Capacity of judiciary and law enforcement agencies to deal with such cases should be strengthened. A separate tribunal for dealing with human trafficking cases should be formed.

6.4.3 Full enactment of the High Court directive on sexual harassment

The Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA) filed a writ petition in 2010 under Article 102 of the Constitution to formulate policies to protect women from sexual harassment in work places/ educational institutions and other public places, and take immediate steps to enact legislation to address sexual harassment. The High Court ruled in May 2010 and provided guidelines to employers and educational institutions on how to address sexual harassment.²⁶ The directives should be enacted as a law and implemented by employers and education bodies. Compliance by public and private sector should be monitored.

6.4.4 Rights of the girl child recognized and upheld in laws and policies

Girls as a distinct group should be recognized and their rights and advancement should be upheld in all relevant policies and laws. All new laws and policies should be reviewed by MOWCA before their approval and enactment. Partnership with child rights groups should be promoted for the purpose.

6.4.5 Women's rights recognized and upheld in sectoral laws and policies

As mentioned in the above sections all new laws and policies to be formulated in different sectors should ensure addressing gender issues in the sector and women's participation and benefit should be ensured. All laws and policies should be reviewed before their approval and enactment. MOWCA should be able to draw on gender experts with sectoral expertise in the process.

6.4.5 Accountability of law enforcers

A transparent accountability mechanism for the law enforcing agencies should be in place so that they are accountable to take action fast on offences related to VAW and women's human rights. Additionally, sufficient orientation and human resources for the agencies should be ensured.

6.4.6 Regulatory measures in public and private institutions in removing discrimination and in promoting women's participation and benefits

Government should direct all public and private institutions to put in place measures in promoting women's participation and benefits through incorporating provisions in human resource policies (recruitment, training, promotion) and removing all provisions that hinder women's advancement. Each agency should be motivated to have specific target or measures for women's development and report on progress.

6.5. Improve institutional capacity, accountability and oversight

6.5.1. Effective and strong institutional mechanism

The existing institutional mechanism for women's advancement needs to be made effective with accountability, capacity and authority. Regular guidance from NCWCD, functioning of the committees and the WID Focal Point mechanism should be ensured. Other institutions should also be assigned specific roles in promoting gender equality. These should include Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) in generating sex disaggregated data synchronized with the national and sectoral indicators and the reporting needs for CEDAW, SDG and such others. IMED should have accountability to monitor gender equality results and the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) should be given responsibility of auditing gender budget expenditure. Similarly Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) can be assigned to necessary gender equality research and BMET strengthened for analysis of labour markets at home and abroad.

Mainstreaming Gender in Sectoral Policies: National Skills Development Policy 2011, Bangladesh

Section 14.5- Women: Women should have equal access to both formal and non formal programs so they can acquire or improve their knowledge and skills for meaningful employment or upgrade existing employment opportunities. Given the current low participation rates of women in skills development, special efforts are necessary to correct this gender imbalance, particularly in the formal training system. The participation of women in skills development programs government will be increased by:

- a. Offering a broader range of traditional & non-traditional skills training programs that could improve the employability of
- b. Reviewing programs and their delivery modes to assess their gender friendliness;
- c. Conducting social marketing and awareness raising for women on the benefits of skills development;
- d. Increase enrollment rates for females across all skills development programs;
- e. Providing a gender friendly environment for female students;
- f. Providing separate wash rooms for male & female students;
- g. Employing female instructors where possible;
- h. Implementing a workplace harassment prevention policy in public institutions;
- i. Ensuring all instructors and managers undergo gender awareness, workplace harassment prevention and equal employment opportunities (EEO) training; and
- j. Providing a system where all students have access to counselling services.

Source: Extract from National Skills Development Policy 2011,
http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@asia/@ro-bangkok/@ilo-dhaka/documents/publication/wcms_113958.pdf

6.5.2 Strengthening key institutions

Capacity of the key institutions like MOWCA including DWA and PLAU, IMED, BBS, OAG and Planning Commission should be strengthened in performing their roles as per mandate in design, review, implementation, and monitoring of gender equality and women's advancement related actions and their results. MOWCA should be geared more towards an oversight role like other regulatory ministries with review of its mandate to promote its roles to monitor gender equality with allocation of adequate resources. BBS has to be assigned to ensure regular collection, collation and analysis of sex disaggregated data on different sectors as per agreed indicators. These institutions should get additional staff, resources and capacity building support for their staff to be able to perform their responsibilities.

6.5.3 Sufficient financial and human resources for gender mainstreaming

Generally there is a lack of resources for agencies in implementing and monitoring activities for advancing women's rights and gender equality. Similarly, there is a general lack of capacity and allocation of human resources to work in this area. Projects/programs generally lack resources for the identified gender related actions. Often functions in this area are consultant dependent. It is essential to allocate both financial resources as per targets of each agency and projects and human resources in the institution with capacity development support. The National Action Plan should be used as a reference point while allocating resources for women's empowerment and gender equality.

6.5.4 Adequate technical knowledge and support services

It is important to increase the number of technically competent persons who can carry out gender analysis, assessment, planning, implementation and monitoring. Though Dhaka University and some institutions have initiated courses, the education institutions should be encouraged to initiate additional courses to develop technical knowledge on how to address gender in different sectoral operations. The capacity of PLAU and DWA should be enriched so that their staff are able to monitor performance and can guide other agencies and ministries, if needed. Gender analysis training should be part of all staff training.

6.5.5 Transparent monitoring mechanisms established and implemented to measure impact of public policies and programmes

The review of 7FYP programs should incorporate monitoring of gender equality results. IMED monitoring should integrate monitoring of progress of women's empowerment and gender equality based on project/ program targets. More rigorous monitoring of the gender budget is essential across agencies, sectors and field level. The OAG should be assigned to monitor expenditure and results in the area of gender equality. Transparent procedures at different levels should include holding open meetings, issuing publicly available financial disclosure statements, and conducting budget review.

6.5.6 Capacity to develop, implement, and monitor gender strategies across government and sectors

Building the capacity of women and men in institutions to understand gender issues and developing their motivation to bring about changes within their own domain and act accordingly. Orientation of the policy makers and training and capacity building of existing staff contingent in different institutions has to be continued and expanded. All training programs of different institutions should integrate gender issues that are relevant to the sectors' or departments' operation with specific actions identified and monitoring of the same. Private sectors should be encouraged to incorporate gender perspectives in their operation and employ gender specialists, if needed.

6.5.7 Sex disaggregated data and analysis across sectors

Setting up of benchmark and progress review both are critical. Availability of sex-disaggregated data is the basis of baseline and assessment of development results for gender equality and women's empowerment. It has been a constant concern that sex disaggregated data for all areas is not available. Even though data are collected from men and women and can be presented in a disaggregated manner, often data are presented in general terms. It is critical that all agencies, field offices and local government institutions, collect and present data in a sex disaggregated manner, which eventually supports the Government and all to conduct gender analysis and use them for planning and evaluation. As the Government has recognized a third gender, all data should also reflect that category. Sex disaggregated data, if analyzed by income group, ethnicity, physical ability or geographical location will provide better information of the differential needs of women from different groups and locations.

6.5.8 Defined national and sectoral gender equality results

The indicator of the government's performance on gender has to be defined besides measuring growth, investment, deficit etc. A compilation of defined gender equality results with indicators should be integrated in the plan document for all sectors for monitoring purpose. At the national level, a list of gender equality indicators should be identified, agreed and monitored. The poverty assessment and income data should be sex disaggregated in all wealth groups so that women's poverty reduction is effectively measured.

6.5.9 Accountability for gender equality results

Accountability for the achievement of gender equality targets and results must be ensured. The Project/program management should ensure utilization of resources for gender equality as stated in the project documents, and be accountable for any failure. Reallocation of resources from gender equality objectives to other action areas should be restricted. Performance assessment criteria of projects/programs should ensure assessment of gender equality targets and results.

Gender in Governance and Decentralized Gender Budget

Second Urban Governance and Infrastructure Improvement Project (UGIIP II), implemented by the Local Government Engineering Department in 47 municipalities of Bangladesh. The municipalities are supported for infrastructure development based a performance criteria called Urban Governance Improvement Action Program (UGIAP) with 6 performance areas, i. Citizen awareness and participation; ii. Urban planning; iii. Women's participation; iv. Integration of the urban poor; v. Financial accountability and sustainability; and vi. Administrative transparency. Each area has a number of actions. A municipality has to fulfill them all to qualify for infrastructure funding. The actions under Women's participation are preparation of a gender action plan (GAP) for the municipality and integrate it within the Pourashava (Municipal) Development Plan and identify and approve budget to implement the GAP. The features of the GAP should include, leadership of women counselors in town and ward level committees; participation of women citizens in municipal affairs and on social and gender issues at the ward and municipal level; addressing gender based needs in the design and use of municipal infrastructures, such as bus terminal, public toilets, water supply etc. ; and introduction of a monitoring and report system on GAP. Continued participation and infrastructure finance are dependent on meeting *all* the performance criteria under the UGIAP, including the criteria on women's participation. Each municipality is required to allocate 2-3% of the revenue budget for gender related activities. Benapol municipality in 2013 constructed toilet in railway station, established mini park, established women's corner in the municipality office for giving one

6.5.10 Inclusive and gender-sensitive citizen accountability mechanisms

Mutual accountability is important to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. Inclusiveness is as much about increasing citizen involvement in processes such as local consultations as it is about involvement in formal institutions. At country level it means that the Government, private sector, parliaments, local development actors, civil society including women's organizations, private sector and national women's machineries make transparent and binding commitments and that they all

should work for gender equality in their own area and be accountable. The Government need to provide guidelines, ensure oversight and establish partnership for ensuring accountability.

6.6. Increased protection and resilience from crisis and shocks

6.6.1 Social protection addressing gender inequalities and gender dimensions of poverty and shocks

There is a need to address connections between the gendered nature of poverty, vulnerability, and social protection program design and implementation to increase the effectiveness of social protection policy and to strengthen the institutional features of social protection systems. The lifecycle based social protection strategy should be implemented ensuring addressing of the gender dimensions of poverty and considering the marginalized population. Sex disaggregated assessment should be used for planning and operation. Women are less likely to have access to most forms of health insurance that are based on formal employment, which is often the necessary condition for implementing a contributory scheme. A regulatory framework for the private and informal sector should be developed, with a view to providing women and men with access to social security, insurance and other benefits and to monitor and take measures against the exploitation of women and girls. Short term employment measures should be carefully planned for protection of women during economic crisis and to extend insurance for employers and workers as fall back against any shrink in market and in crisis. The initial steps in moving toward gender equality in social protection entail accelerating women's access to the formal economy by increasing opportunities and upgrading skills for women engaged in economic activities.

6.6.2 Climate change adaptation, resilience, food security and livelihoods

Adaptation capacity against climate change impacts need to be augmented amongst community including women by investing in DRR and building resilience. Women equally with men should be oriented in dealing with hazards, including forest conservation to reduce probabilities of landslides and flooding; land use planning to minimize exposure to hazards; early warning systems and livelihood diversification into more resilient and empowering occupations. Resources should be allocated for full implementation of the Climate Change Gender Action Plan of the Government. Women's capacity to play effective role in DRR related committees should be strengthened. Women's livelihood services should continue to ensure food security (e.g. low gestation and less water intensive crops, food storage and preservation technology, food preservation during calamities) amongst vulnerable groups, including climate induced migrants to urban areas. Providing women with greater access to employment guarantee schemes, skills development, technology, entrepreneurship support and training would also help.

6.6.3 Mitigation measures of involuntary resettlement, and for preventing environmental degradation

Women should be counted and given due compensation for loss of livelihoods and assets for involuntary resettlement during land acquisition and construction of infrastructure through resettlement plans. Also women's engagement in climate change mitigation measures should be increased, such as, knowledge of technology with low carbon emission, such as, forest and bio-diversity conservation, water management, access to renewable energy (solar, wind, bio-gas), and scientific waste management, where women also can become entrepreneurs or workers in these areas.

6.6.4 Infrastructure and information services for livelihood and to strengthen resilience to climate change, calamities and shocks

Infrastructure (transport, energy, water, sanitation, market, service providing centers) in the calamity prone areas should be climate resilient in order to facilitate continued mobility and services of the people, men and women. Early warning about calamities and information related to services, shelters, livelihood support etc. should be disseminated to women and men through community radio and strengthening community networks. Water, flood refuge and sanitation facilities should be expanded with designs that address women's needs including that for child care, delivery and such other, and address women's safety and security concerns.

6.7. Influencing social norms and changing how women and girls are valued

6.7.1 Portrayal of positive image of girls / women as equal human beings in all media

Portrayal of women's positive image has to be promoted. The news/feature contents should advocate against VAW, dowry, child marriage and such evils. Negative projection of women as well as portrayal as commodity should be prevented, and positive portrayal promoted through mass awareness among the media personnel, including for the media owners. Regulatory measures are also to be enforced for positive portrayal in promotional for consumer products and establishing ethical values. With the expansion of information technology and social media, these should be used to influence social norms, promote ethical values and curb abuse of women. Establishment of screening body for commercials, formulation of gender policy and owners' manual for media houses, well equipped registration body and inclusion of dedicated time/slot in media on gender equality issues are necessary. The exposure to new media and ICT need to be used carefully so that ICT is used for the women's advantage, influencing social norms and behaviour and also minimizing any potential risks of VAW.

6.7.2 Programme for men to change norms about men and women's roles

More programmes should include active engagement of men in all spheres to promote women's advancement and curb men's participation or support of harmful practices. Men should be informed and involved in promoting gender equality as they often control or influence social behavior, the number and variety of sexual relationships, timing and use of contraceptives, women's mobility outside home and access to sexual and reproductive health care. It is also important to develop groups of men as advocate to change social behavior, prevent VAW, share household responsibility, promote gender equality and hold other men accountable for discriminatory behaviour. Building the capacity of women and men in community institutions to understand gender issues – in turn developing the political will should be promoted for changes to happen.

6.7.3 Working with children and adolescents to develop norms of more egalitarian relationships

Arpan working with girls -India

Arpan empowers children and communities with prevention and intervention skills to reduce instances of child sexual abuse for both girls and boys. Arpan addresses child sexual abuse and was the first organization in Mumbai to offer personal safety education to children, teaching them about safe and unsafe touches and how to seek help. Arpan also provides training to teachers, parents, and other NGOs on prevention and intervention. Arpan not only works to prevent abuse but also meets survivor needs. The organization provides psychosocial support, rehabilitative services, and safe spaces for children who have experienced abuse and works with schools to develop long-term plans to ensure the personal safety of students.

Source:https://www.globalfundforchildren.org/a-call-to-action-gfc-celebrates-the-international-day-of-the-girl/?utm_content=buffer17614&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer

Because gender socialization of both boys and girls begins early at home and community, it is important to initiate change processes at a young age to shape attitudes and transform behaviors. Early initiation and continued investment in children and adolescents is critical through education curriculum, sports and culture, social behaviour, media and all other means to promote the culture of equality between girls and boys and their equal human rights is necessary, so that men do not grow up with a discriminatory view towards women. A young population of age group 15 to 24 years comprises nearly nine

percent of the country's population, who can be useful strength. Girl-centred programmes equipping adolescent girls with knowledge and skills can build their confidence and contribute to the efforts to end inter-generational poverty, illiteracy, ill health, and gender inequality.

6.7.4 Change social norms on specific and harmful practices (e.g. on VAW, child marriage, dowry)

Community awareness programmes and actions should be initiated, strengthened and continued involving men, women and youth against the existing harmful practices, such as dowry, VAW, Child Marriage. Investment in these areas is essential to prevent VAW and reduce discriminatory barriers.

6.7.5 Recognition and sharing of care work

Care work, often performed by women and unpaid is generally unrecognized as valuable. Bangladesh Economic Association estimated that women's paid and unpaid works contribute between 20%-48% of gross domestic product (GDP). The Center for Policy Dialogue has recently assessed a higher percentage of contribution in GDP²⁷. While women's economic, political and social participation outside home is on the increase, the need for sharing the burden of household care work is also increasing. It is important to highlight the importance of household work and promote sharing of household responsibilities to ease women's double burden as well as harnessing women's potential for economic growth by reducing their drudgery. It is essential to disseminate at the community level the value of household and care work by communicating the messages that women convert crops into food and that the household care work is essential for human development and productive work.

Section 7: Operational Strategies and Future Direction

The 7th Five Year Plan should set specific objectives and plans to promote gender equality as one of the key strategic directions in order to promote equitable growth and achieve national goals. A few strategies are suggested below for consideration.

7.1 Gender as one of the key strategic area

The Plan should identify promoting gender equality as one of the key strategy so that discrimination against women and girls are reduced and that their potentials are utilized for facilitating national growth. The link between gender equality and growth should be acknowledged and women as change agents should be recognized and developed. It is also important to recognize that women are not homogenous groups and that different groups have different needs and they can contribute differently.

7.2 Resource allocation: prioritizing investment areas

Considering the resource limitation and the five year time period, it is important to identify priorities and invest in strategically important areas instead of too much spread of resources. Priority areas should be chosen on the basis of possibilities of contribution towards both economic growth and women's empowerment and actions that can facilitate results in more than one areas. The key areas should be to ensure equal benefit from quality formal education; marketable skills to maximize productivity and potential of women; nutrition and lifelong health care; infrastructure that facilitates women's human development, mobility and economic gains; and actions that enhances positive social norms and reduces VAW and other harmful practices. An assessment of geographic areas that lag behind national average as measured by different gender equality indicators should be prioritized for resource allocation and closing the gender gap in the identified areas. This will increase women's economic participation, employment and contribution as well as empower them. Enforcement of laws and policies and effective monitoring should be ensured for good administration and governance. The available resource envelop for 7FYP should be reviewed, resource requirements to address gender equality objectives and targets should be estimated and additional resources should be sought, as needed. Positive results can be harnessed in some areas by ensuring informed and planned initiatives within existing resources.

7.3 Gender mainstreaming in all macro and sectoral policies and operations

Mainstreaming of gender should continue to be an approach and all macro-economic and sectoral policies should integrate gender as a crosscutting theme as suggested in earlier sections. Gender analysis should be used to plan and assess every sector's contribution to improving the lives of women, men, girls and boys of all age. Action plans should be drawn with a view to reduce inequality and promote an equal relationship between sexes.

7.4 Investment for engaging with men and adolescents

Engagement with all stakeholders including men, boys, leaders, adolescents is important in promoting gender equality (as mentioned in 6.1.3 and 6.1.4). As men are the key stakeholder in shaping the social norms, their involvement is essential in bringing attitudinal and behavioral changes against child marriage, discrimination, dowry, and greater male involvement in household work, and so on. Similarly investment for early and continued engagement with adolescents and youth should be part of the implementation strategy .

7.5 Mandatory reporting based on sex disaggregated data

To ensure results from actions related to gender equality all reporting of national progress including those related to Post 2015 agenda should be based on sex disaggregated data to allow a better understanding the progress in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment.

7.6 Partnership with civil society and private sector

Partnership and cooperation with Civil Society Organizations (CSO) including development and advocacy groups and private sector should be strengthened to promote their role and support in implementation and monitoring of actions and to achieve good results. Development and advocacy initiatives on gender equality issues and to form public opinion against harmful practices should be pursued jointly and they should be partners in better delivery of services, especially in rural and remote areas. The public-private partnership for implementation of sectoral programs and for providing services, improving work environment, job creation has to be essential in achieving results as envisaged in the 7FYP. The role of private sector in promoting human development and employment should be encouraged by using both regulatory and incentive based methods to bring them as partners. The role of civil society should be an integral part in developing sectoral strategies and monitoring of programme/project delivery and their results.

7.7 Strengthened accountability and oversight

Accountability and oversight mechanisms have to be established and strengthened as has been mentioned in section 6.5. Specific responsibility in implementing activities and achieving results as envisaged in the, WDP and NAP, sectoral policies and projects/programs should be assigned. The monitoring and review process should put emphasis on achieving gender related targets and results. An expenditure monitoring process for gender equality should also be attached to it.

7.8 Balancing expenditure for social and human development and growth focused infrastructure

In Bangladesh, where resources are limited, there is always a struggle in assigning priority and distribution of resources. The need for resources for infrastructure addressing climate change impacts, communication, energy, water is enormous. Similarly needs in social sectors for human development, promoting gender equality and ensuring inclusive growth are also high to ensure sustainable growth. So, there is a need for balancing the allocation in both areas. On the one hand, allocation for human capability development, employment and gender equality should be sufficient and on the other hand all the hard infrastructure support should be designed to promote inclusive growth and gender equality.

7.9 Identification of gender result indicators and ensure monitoring

A committee should be formed with technical persons to determine national and sectoral result statements and indicators for use in measuring progress at the national level and at sectoral levels and reach to an agreement on them. Support from WID Focal Points should be taken to identify sectoral indicators. Progress should be regularly monitored based on these indicators.

7.10 Review and revise the project/program planning /and review formats

An immediate action should be to integrate the gender equality guidelines issued by ECNEC in the planning formats and the IMED's monitoring formats.

7.11 Review mechanism

A separate Committee/body should be formulated with technically knowledgeable persons on gender in different sectors (drawn from government, civil society, academia, and private sector) for the monitoring and review of performance of 7FYP, NAP and SDG and ensure regular review.

7.12 Effective coordination

The role of MOWCA should be strengthened and organized as an oversight ministry for coordination and promoting gender equality instead of an implementing Ministry. The existing Women's Development, Implementation and Evaluation Committee and the WID Focal Point mechanism should be revitalized and strengthened with orientation and by assigning responsibility for ensuring performance.

Section 8: Monitoring and Accountability

The 7FYP should ensure a mechanism to establish accountability to citizens for equal benefit of women and men from development on behalf of the government, Parliament and local government institutions. For these the following steps are important.

8.1 Institutional mechanisms for monitoring

As mentioned in section 6.5, the existing institutional mechanism needs to be more effective. The meetings of NCWCD, WID Focal Points and the Committees should be regularized ensuring regular reporting. The capacity of WID Focal Points and IMED should be strengthened for giving guidance, and monitoring and PLAU should be institutionalized and strengthened for GE technical support.

8.2 Nationally agreed verifiable gender indicators

For establishing good monitoring and accountability mechanism it is critical to have a list of agreed gender equality indicators at the national level for measuring the progress of gender equality under the 7FYP. These may include employment in formal sector, tertiary education, reduction of VAW and child marriage, reduction of maternal mortality and malnutrition, reduction of poverty of female headed households and such other key areas. These should be consistent with the indicators of the NAP and the post 2015 (SDG) goals and the four areas suggested in the framework.

8.3 Sectoral gender result statement and indicators

In order to establish accountability, promote better results and monitor progress effectively, sectoral result statements with a few key performance indicators (KPI) in each sector should be identified and monitored. The sectoral indicators should also be reviewed to reflect gender equality aspects. A review and compilation of indicators for each sector already developed by different development partners and Government will be helpful. The Planning Commission and IMED should finalize the indicators with support from sectoral ministries. All relevant stakeholders working in the sector should be informed of the expected results and indicators so that they are also active in implementing actions and monitoring for those results. A list of suggested sector wise gender equality indicators is at the end of this section.

8.4 Gender integrated IMED monitoring

The IMED monitoring formats and methodology should be reviewed in order to incorporate gender equality aspects in monitoring of project/program progress with a specified time frame. The identified sectoral indicators should be used to monitor results in different areas. IMED staff should be responsible, oriented and trained in conducting such monitoring. All project review and completion reports should assess performance of gender equality.

8.5 Gender responsive planning

The gender planning guidelines should be integrated in the DPP and TPP formats and be used extensively for project/program planning and review, which will eventually support better monitoring for results. The project/programme plans should always have sufficient budget allocated for gender mainstreaming. The planning staff of each ministry and department should be responsible to ensure gender mainstreaming actions and resources.

8.6 Monitoring of gender responsive budget utilization

The utilization of resources allocated for gender at the field and agency level should be monitored by each ministry and by the ministry of finance. The IMED and other institutional monitoring including project/program review should focus on financial and qualitative progress of gender equality results based on set of agreed gender related monitoring criteria for each sector or project.

8.7 Use of sex disaggregated data for reporting and decision making

As mentioned in the earlier sections, ensuring collection of sex disaggregated data at all levels, collation of the same and reporting based on gender analysis of such data should be made compulsory in all sectors. This will enable agencies to better monitor gender equality and women's empowerment and help in taking management decisions.

8.8 Regular review of performance

An initial review after the first year of 7FYP implementation should be conducted to review whether the suggested mechanisms are in place and resources allocated or not as planned and then a mid-term and a final assessment of progress should be conducted in collaboration with different stakeholders. Gender related performance should also be part of regular sectoral ADP review process.

8.9 Gender action plan for projects and programs with indicators in logical framework

It is important that all projects/programs develop a short gender action plan stating the gender equality results and actions to achieve them. The plan should be part of the project/program document with a few key performance indicators that should be integrated within the project logical framework so that monitoring of results is ensured. Resources should also be allocated for the purpose. This approach has already been practiced in some sectoral projects, which have shown good results.

Gender action plan: A tool for ensuring gender equality

A Project Gender Action Plan (GAP) is Asian Development Bank's key gender mainstreaming tool for ensuring gender-inclusive design and implementation of projects/programmes. The GAPs give visibility to and accountability for gender mainstreaming. They make gender mainstreaming tangible and explicit in program and project design and implementation. GAPs include quotas, targets, activities, and design features to address gender-equality issues by the project/programmes. They provide a road map for project implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. GAPs also help deliver practical benefits to women and facilitate strategic benefits in changing gender relations. A good GAP is based on sex-disaggregated data and detailed gender and social analyses, which identify key gender inequalities and constraints that the project will aim to improve. A GAP includes clear design features, activities and realistic targets and sex-disaggregated baseline data. Time bound gender specific indicators are included in the design and monitoring framework (DMF). GAPs should be simple and understood as well as owned by implementing agencies with responsibilities and implementation timeline. Provision of long-term gender specialist, sufficient budget for implementation and gender capacity building are part of a good GAP.

Source: Asian Development Bank- ADB Gender Tip Sheet no 2 – Preparing a project Gender Action Plan

8.10 Resource allocation for review and monitoring

A major limitation of capturing gender equality results is lack of resources in monitoring and evaluating the performance. It is important that adequate resources (human and finance) are allocated for periodic monitoring and result assessment.

8.11 Partnership with civil society for monitoring

Partnership with civil society, women's groups, private sector representatives and citizens should be considered in order to monitor the grassroots level actions, services and achievements. The existing membership of civil society members and institutions in different committees should be expanded and strengthened by involving experts in each area with knowledge of gender equality.

Suggested Gender Equality Outcomes and Indicators at Sector Level

Sector	Expected outcome	Country and Sector Level Gender Equality Indicator
Macro level and poverty	Inclusive growth with reduction in poverty of marginalised group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour force participation rate of men and women • Percentage of women as migrant workers • Wage rate for women and men • Percentage of expenditure and coverage of women under social protection programmes • Number and percentage coverage by improved social protection systems, by sex and age • Poverty reduction indicators as measured by households headed by women and men
Education	Reduces gender inequality in educational outcomes and employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion rate of Primary /Secondary /technical education by sex with learning outcomes • Enrolment/completion rate of boys and girls at tertiary /technical education • Transition rate of women and men to job market from technical and tertiary level • Percent of women in education management-teachers/SMC/Principals/HTs • Number of new curriculum addressing market needs • No. of technical /tertiary education institutions linked to employers.
Health and population services	Access to quality and affordable healthcare services by the poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birth attended by skilled personnel • Maternal mortality ratio • Coverage of immunization under <12 months and <23 months for girls/boys • Percent of women married below age 19 • Percentage of women given birth below age 19 • Coverage of modern contraceptive use amongst men and women • Utilization of health services at community clinics and tertiary care by sex and age.
Development, Agriculture, and Food Security	Reduced disparities in income, food security and livelihoods opportunities for women and men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of women and men in agriculture wage/ self employment • Agriculture wage rate for women and men • Nutritional status of boy/girls, women/men • Per capita availability of food in poor households, disaggregated by type of household head • Percentage of households with year round employment
Transport	Increased women's access to affordable and safe transport services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average reduction of travel time and cost to schools/work/health services for women and men • Number and type of completed gender-responsive design features that facilitate access for female transport users, people with disability, and the elderly and safety and security for women
Public Sector Management	Reduced disparities in public sector employment with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of women and men in public service by level • Percentage of women in civil service by cadre and level

Sector	Expected outcome	Country and Sector Level Gender Equality Indicator
	improved gender responsive support services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coverage of support services (day care, transport, housing) for women employees in public sector
Law, Justice, Security, and Governance	Women's and girls' legal and human rights are promoted and protected, as well as those of men and boys.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average time for disposal of VAW /trafficking cases Number of backlog in disposal of VAW and family dispute cases Number of oversight meetings by Parliamentary Standing Committee and NCWCD
Urban Development	Urban infrastructure and services are responsive to women's needs and priorities, and accessible, affordable, and safe.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percent of urban population with employment by sex Percentage of urban poor households covered by primary health care services Number and types of facilities created in urban areas for women for safety and security in bus terminals, public toilet and such others
Disaster Preparedness and Response to Sustainable Development and Climate Change	Reduced vulnerability of poor women to climate change impacts, and strengthened resilience and capacity to disaster preparedness and response.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage of women accessing employment/income in climate change adaptation /mitigation activities Number and percentage of households resilient from flood and disasters Percentage of households in calamity prone areas having sustainable food production, energy/toilet and clean water sources during disasters Percentage of households in calamity prone areas that have sustainable livelihoods during disasters.
Finance, Private Sector and Enterprise Development	Improved economic status of women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of budget spent on gender mainstreaming Percent of employment created for women in SME sector Self employment created by microfinance for women and men Number and percentage of women receiving finance Number and percentage of women in trade delegations Percentage of registered SMEs/industries owned by women
ICT and Communication	Reduced gender disparities in women's access to and benefits from ICT and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percent of women and men employed in ICT including outsourcing Number of women and men having access to mobile phone No of women and men having access to internet facilities
Energy	Poor households have access to reliable and affordable energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percent of households having access to electricity or renewable energy Time saved by women in collecting fuel etc. Number and percent of energy based enterprises established by women Percent of households using improved cook stoves
Water Supply and Sanitation	Reduced time burden for women and girls (collecting water and health care) due to demand-driven water supply and sanitation infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percent of urban households covered by safe and continuous water supply facilities Percent of rural households covered by safe and continuous water supply facilities Percent of urban households covered by safe sanitation facilities

Section 9: Risk Analysis

While the 7FYP will address poverty and growth issues within a limited resource envelope and promote gender equality and women's empowerment, a few factors should be kept in mind that can pose risk in achieving the goal and targets set in the Plan. These factors, if not considered and addressed adequately may hinder realizing the results of development efforts towards women's empowerment and gender equality. The public policy should consider and invest in building resilience to different shocks and risks that hinder women's empowerment in order to protect the gains in human development and economic growth, if the country is to achieve its target of becoming a middle income economy.

9.1 Climate change, non climatic impacts and disasters

Bangladesh has experienced the effect of climate change, manifested in the increase of extreme weather conditions such as, droughts, storms or floods, water stress, salinity and so on. The effect of climate change vary among regions, groups and generations but negatively impact on overall economic and social development. The adverse effects of human made environmental degradation also pose substantial risks such as lose of tree cover and, water and air pollution. Women are likely to experience significant impacts as they are majority among the poor and have less adaptive capacity than men again due to social-norms and low access to and control over resources. Women in rural areas are highly dependent on local natural resources for their livelihood, as they are responsible for water, food and energy for cooking and heating. Women face disadvantages, which include limited access to decision-making and economic assets that compound the challenges of climate change. The high population to land ratio is a major limiting factor as well. Climate change may pose risk in attaining the goals of the 7FYP at two levels, firstly at the individual and community level, and secondly at the national level.

1. Extreme weather events and climate change events often results in loss of assets, livelihood, health problem, and curtails access to services at the household level. This may result into further impoverishment, diminishing adaptation capacity for women. It also may lead to climate induced involuntary migration. All these may result in loss of gains already made through development efforts as well as by individual endeavours. Access to community resources like water, fuel etc. may become expensive and time consuming. This will have a negative effect on family health and education, food security and nutrition, women's empowerment and further investment from national budget for addressing practical needs may be warranted.
2. At the national level, climate change can result in pressure on the national exchequer for relief and rehabilitation resulting in reduced availability of resources for development and growth focused activities that promote women's empowerment. Lose of infrastructure may warrant for high investment in this area limiting resources for human development.

There is need for building resilience within community as well as providing support for climate resilient infrastructure for protection. Similarly balancing of investment in both areas should continue. A fall back strategy for climate change and environmental degradation with identified resources should be in place including social protection and crisis prevention. The Climate Change Gender Action Plan should be integrated within the climate change strategy of the 7th Five Plan for implementation ensuring adequate resources for both adaptation and mitigation of climate change.

9.2 Fundamentalism/ Conservatism

Some conservative religious groups active in the country, are not supportive of women's progressive development and empowerment. In the past fundamentalist forces tried to stop the NGO movement in promoting women's economic self-reliance, which was foiled by the government and the society. The growing visibility of women became an added threat to fundamentalist ideology. It is advantageous, therefore, for the fundamentalists to target women who step outside home against social norms as they are considered a potential threat to the traditional male- supremacy. The fundamentalists obstruct women's empowerment in general and gender relations in particular. This is leading to newer more specific forms of violence against women; a violence which requires the support of village elites being in a position to order in shalish, though not acceptable by law. Rights of women are not recognized by these groups as required by international treaties. Violations of the right to life, liberty and security are frequently reported. VAW including rape in public domain is increasing on an unacceptable proportion. These groups, with their own interpretation of religious sayings may hinder the efforts and initiatives as envisaged in the 7FYP. A continuous vigilance on these groups as well as continued engagement with different stakeholders in motivating to change the social norms and practices will be necessary to avert this risk.

9.3 Child marriage, nutrition deficiency and VAW

If the current trend of child marriage, early pregnancy and nutritional deficiency continue, it will substantially compromise the gains in many areas, including, human capability and economic benefits of women eventually leading to high expenditure on health care and reduced national growth. The effect on the nutrition and reproductive health will also be negative on the future generations. Also, unless the discriminatory norms towards women and VAW are not addressed, the planned initiatives will not yield desired level of women's empowerment. Therefore, these areas should be addressed in a comprehensive manner. Enforcement of laws related to marriage and protection from violence should be ensured together with support for social and economic development to reduce malnutrition, early pregnancy and to address other related health issues.

9.4 Capacity limitation- resources, data

One of the major limitations in the country is the technical capacity and knowledge to manage gender equality and women's empowerment process. Despite good plans, due to the lack of operational capacity and resources, the implementation may be hindered. A key problem is the lack of sex-disaggregated data and their use for analysis, reporting and management decision making. Capacity also include ability to do gender analysis for strategic planning, integration of gender into strategic planning processes including results statements and indicators, gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation, gender-responsive budgeting and tracking of resources, gender-responsive planning (e.g. development of project or programme documents), gender-specific programming (e.g. inclusion of gender in country programme and reports). Allocation of resources for mainstreaming gender is also limited. On the other hand, ministries and agencies lack technically capable human resources to work in the area of gender. Similarly such lack of capacity is also evident in private sector and civil society. All these may also pose limitation in achievement of gender equality results as envisaged in the Plan. It is therefore, essential to take into account the need of capacity building in managing gender mainstreaming process and

collection as well as use of gender based information. Therefore, investment in human resources and their capacity development should be an integral part of the efforts towards promoting women's empowerment. Within a limited resource envelop, this is all the more important to address gender equality capacity development in order to achieve the full potential of results from development efforts.

9.5 Economic shocks/crisis

Recession and food and fuel price inflation faced in the last decade provided experience to be cautious of these potential risks. Bangladesh overcame the stress due to its dynamic population, strong macro-economic policies and commitments. Some economists forecast²⁸ warns about "dangerous new asset bubbles" and declares that "now is the time to prepare" for the next crisis. Right now, the citizens of the planet are more than 223 trillion dollars in debt. The fuel price is reducing in the world market. These signs are to be observed carefully and preparation should be taken at the national level. The export market trends should also be observed carefully and export diversification promoted. The effects of economic shocks fall on household level, which may change the household dynamics, expenditure pattern, food distribution and the employment pattern. Women of the vulnerable and poor communities may be subject to further low nutrition, violence, and health problems. At the state level stress on the additional requirement of social protection, food aid support or subsidy on food may lead to resource constraints for development activities. Even with good social protection plan, the poor women and people from ethnic groups and socially excluded groups - still will likely be left out. Macro-economic management, significantly strengthening the social protection programs, development of insurance sector introducing micro and health insurance, food security and livelihood options to meet the needs of under-privileged groups should be planned in a well thought out manner. Options for financing the social protection programs and continued investment for inclusive sectoral development should be explored and ensured. Support to and partnership with private sector should be ensured for continued employment and social protection to promote resilience from crisis. Investments should be ensured for prevention and addressing the adverse effects of globalization and managing migration by ensuring growth of tertiary sector, introducing appropriate and emerging technologies and creating economic opportunities at the local level. All these effort should include women as important stakeholders and contributors.

Annexes

Annex 01: Ratification of Conventions by Government of Bangladesh

Ratified	Instrument
✓	<u>Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989</u> Signed and ratified 1990 Reservations Article 14, paragraph 1 Article 21 applies subject to the existing laws and practices in Bangladesh
✓	<u>Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict 2000</u> Signed and ratified in 2000 Declaration Article 3(2) minimum age for recruitment into armed forces
✓	<u>Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography 2000</u> Signed and ratified in 2000
✗	<u>The Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Inter-Country adoption 1995</u>
✓	<u>Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages 1964</u> Acceded in 1998 Reservations Article 1: Consent to marriage Article 2: Minimum age for marriage
✗	<u>Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime 2000</u>
✓	<u>Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006</u> Signed and ratified in 2007
✓	<u>ILO Convention no. 182 on worst forms of child labour 1999</u> Ratified in 2001
✗	<u>ILO Convention no.138 on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment 1973</u>
✓	<u>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women 1979</u> Acceded in 1984 Declaration The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh does not consider as binding upon itself the provisions of article 2, [...] as they conflict with <i>Sharia</i> law based on Holy Quran and Sunna.

- ✓ **Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women 1999**
Signed and Ratified in 2000
Declaration
The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh declares in accordance with Article 10 (1) thereof, that it would not undertake the obligations arising out of
- ✓ **Convention on the Political Rights of Women, 1953**
Acceded in 1998
Reservations
Article 3: Consonance with Constitution
Article 9: Consent of disputing parties
- ✗ **Convention relating to the Status of Refugees 1951**
- ✗ **Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons 1954**
- ✗ **Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness 1961**
- ✓ **International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) 1966**
Acceded in 1979
- ✓ **Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment 1984**
Acceded in 1998
Declaration
The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh will apply article 14 para 1 in consonance with the existing laws and legislation in the country.
- ✓ **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966**
Acceded in 2000
Reservation
Article 14: Equality before court and tribunal and due process rights.
- ✓ **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966**
Acceded in 1998
Bangladesh interprets the self-determination clause in Article 1 as applying in the historical context of colonialism. It also reserves the right to interpret the labour rights in Articles 7 and 8 and the non-discrimination clauses of Articles 2 and 3 within the context of its constitution and domestic law.
- ✓ **International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid 1973**
Acceded in 1985

✓ **Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide
1949**

Acceded in 1998

Declaration

Article IX: For the submission of any dispute in terms of this article to the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice, the consent of all parties to the dispute will be required in each case

Source: http://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/Child_Rights_Convention.pdf

Annex 2: Relevant Plans, Policies and Laws

Plans

1. Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan, (BCCSAP) 2009
2. Climate Change and Gender Action Plan (ccGAP) 2013
3. National Disaster Management Plan 2010-2015
http://www.dmr.gov.bd/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=305&Itemid=236
4. National Plan of Action 2011
5. National Plan of Action for Combating Human trafficking 2012-2014
<http://actbd.org/doc/NPA%20FINAL%20DRAFT%2026-01.pdf>
6. National Plan of Action to Prevent Violence Against Women and Children 2013-2025
7. Disaster Management Plan (2008-2015).
http://www.preventionweb.net/files/9472_NationalPlanforDisastermanagement.pdf
8. Perspective Plan 2010-21
<http://www.plancomm.gov.bd/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Perspective-Plan-of-Bangladesh.pdf>
9. Sixth Five Year Plan 2011-2015, (<http://www.plancomm.gov.bd/sixth-five-year-plan/>)

Policies

1. Draft National Environment Policy 2013
2. Health Policy 2011
http://www.mohfw.gov.bd/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=74&Itemid=92&lang=en
3. Information and Communication Technology Policy 2009
(http://www.cabinet.gov.bd/file_upload/news_events/en_382.pdf)
4. Integrated Policy of Initial Care and Development of the Children 2013
5. National Agriculture Policy 2010 (http://www.moa.gov.bd/policy/Draft%20Agri_Policy_English.pdf)
6. National Broadcasting Policy 2013
7. National Child Labour Elimination Policy (NCLEP) 2010
8. National Children Policy 2011
9. National Children Policy 2011
<http://www.mowca.gov.bd/wp-content/uploads/National-Child-Policy-2011.pdf>
10. National Education Policy 2010
http://www.moedu.gov.bd/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=338&Itemid=416
11. National Labour Policy 2012
http://www.mole.gov.bd/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=443&Itemid=522

12. National Labour Policy 2012
http://www.mole.gov.bd/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=443&Itemid=522
13. National Skill Development Policy 2011
http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo_dhaka/documents/publication/wcms_113958.pdf
14. National Water Policy
<http://www.mowr.gov.bd/images/pdf/National%20Water%20Policy%20%28English%29.pdf>)
15. National Women Development Policy 2011
<http://www.scribd.com/doc/52431073/National-Women-Development-Policy-2011-Bangladesh>

Acts

1. Overseas Employment and Migration Act 2013
http://asianparliamentarians.mfasia.org/phocadownload/resources/policies/bangladesh%20overseas%20employment%20and%20migrants%20act%202013%20_english_.pdf
2. EPZ Labour Welfare Association and Industrial relations Act 2010
3. Citizenship (amendment) Act, 2009
http://bdlaws.minlaw.gov.bd/print_sections_all.php?id=242
4. Hindu Marriage Registration Act-2012
5. Labour Welfare Association and Industrial Relations Act, 2010
<http://www.clcbd.org/document/622.html>
6. Mobile Court Act, 2009
7. National Acid Crime Prevention Act (Amended) 2010
<http://bolobhi.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Acid-Control-and-Acid-Crime-Prevention-Act-2010.pdf>
8. National Children Act 2013
9. Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act 2012
10. The Disaster Management Act, 2012
<http://www.ddm.gov.bd/pdf/diastermanagementact%202012.pdf>
11. The Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2010
http://phrplanbd.org/attachments/article/42/DV%20Act_Engling%20Translation%20%28unofficial%29.pdf
12. The Local Government (Municipality Corporation) Act, 2009.
<http://www.ecs.gov.bd/MenuExternalFilesEng/268.pdf>
13. The Pornography Control Act 2012.
<http://www.oijj.org/en/docs/general/control-of-pornography-act-2012>
14. The Right to Information Act, 2009
http://www.moi.gov.bd/RTI/RTI_English.pdf
15. পিতা-মাতারভরণ-পোষণআইন, ২০১৩
http://bdlaws.minlaw.gov.bd/bangla_all_sections.php?id=1132
16. Bangladesh Water Act 2013 <http://www.mowr.gov.bd/images/pdf/WaterAct.pdf>
17. Domestic Violence Prevention and Protection Rules 2013
<http://www.mowca.gov.bd/wp-content/uploads/Domestic-Violence-Rules-English.pdf>
18. Forestry Sector (Amendment) Rules 2009, 2011
19. Guidelines for Participatory Water Management
http://books.google.com.bd/books/about/Guidelines_for_Participatory_Water_Manag.html?id=CxIAAAAYAAJ&redir_esc=y

20. High Court Directives on Sexual Harassment
http://www.supremecourt.gov.bd/scweb/documents/298639_WP%20No.%208769%20of%202010.pdf
21. High Court rulings on Fatwa(http://www.blast.org.bd/news/327#_ftnref1)
22. Palermo Protocol on Human Trafficking <http://www.palermoprotocol.com/>
23. Representation of People's Ordinance' (RPO) 2013 (Third Amendment)
24. Social Forestry (Amended) Rules 2010
http://www.bforest.gov.bd/doc/SF%20Rules_January2010.PDF
25. The Local Government (Union Parishad) Law, 2009.
<http://www.ecs.gov.bd/MenuExternalFilesEng/267.pdf>
26. The Local Government (Upazilla Parishad) Law, 2009.
http://www.lgd.gov.bd/downloads/Upazila_Parishad_Act_1998.pdf
27. The Peace Accord signed between Parbattya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) and the National Committee on CHT Affairs, established by GoB.
http://www.mochta.gov.bd/index.php/index/othercontent/Peace-Accord-English_19/14/0/12

Annex 03: Some Related Tables and Figures

3.2.2. Productive employment

TABLE 1: LABOURER FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES OVER TIME

Labour Force participation rate (%) (refined activity rate)	2002-2003	2005-2006	2010
Total	57.3	58.5	59.3
Male	87.4	86.8	82.5
Female	26.1	29.2	36.0
Urban			
Total	56.8	55.7	57.3
Male	85.1	83.2	80.2
Female	27.4	27.4	34.5
Rural			
Total	57.5	59.4	60.0
Male	88.1	88.0	83.3
Female	25.6	29.8	36.4

Source: Labour Force Survey 2010 (BBS)

TABLE 2: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLDS REPORTING MIGRATION OF ANY MEMBER BY RESIDENCE

	Total	Within country	Abroad
National	12.28	3.97	8.60
Rural	13.72	4.84	9.25
Urban	8.33	1.62	6.85

Source: HIES 2010(BBS)

TABLE 3: BREAKDOWN BY SEX OF MALE AND FEMALE OFFICERS AT MIDDLE AND SENIOR LEVELS, 1999- 2011

Level	2011		2006		1999	
	Men (%)	Women (%)	Men (%)	Women (%)	Men (%)	Women (%)
Secretary	96.1	3.9%	98.4	1.6	98.0	2.0
Additional Secretary	94.8	5.2%	100.0	0.0	98.2	1.8
Joint Secretary	90.2	9.8%	93.2	6.8	98.5	1.5
Deputy Secretary	88.1	11.9%	88.3	11.7	98.6	1.1
Senior Assistant Secretary	79.8	20.2%	84.3	15.7	91.0	9.0
Assistant secretary	79.8	25.9%	77.3	22.7	85.7	14.3
TOTAL	79%	21%	85.0	15.0	91.5	8.5

Source: Ministry of Public Administration, Public Administration Computer Cell, 5 September 2011, and Human Development report in Facts and Figures of Gender Compendium of Bangladesh 2009, BBS

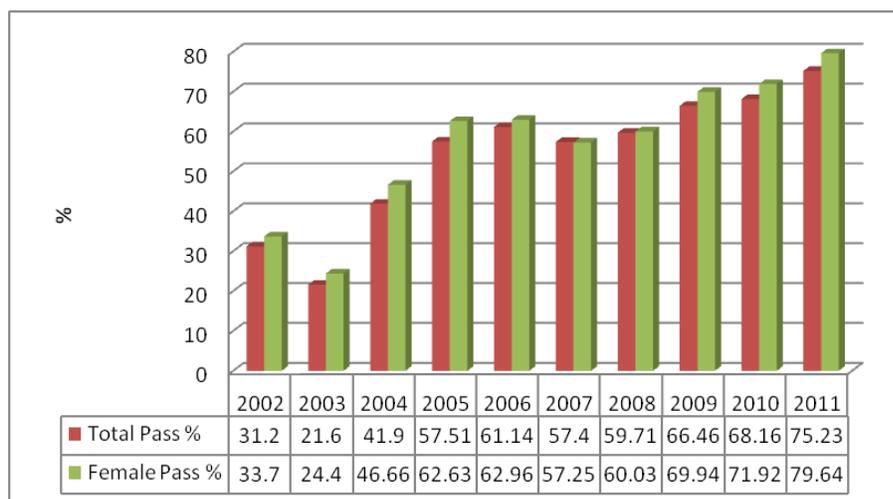
TABLE 4: CLASS WISE NUMBER OF FEMALE OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES IN 2009 AND 2012

Service category	No of Women in 2009	Women as % of total in 2009	No of Women in 2012	Women as % of total in 2012
Class I	13595	14.2	17,616	15.6
Class II	6062	12.5	7003	12.9
Class III	182375	26.1	181324	25.3
Class IV	21604	10.6	44256	19.0
All categories	223636	21.3	250,199	22.4

Source: Ministry of Establishment in BBS 2010 and 2013

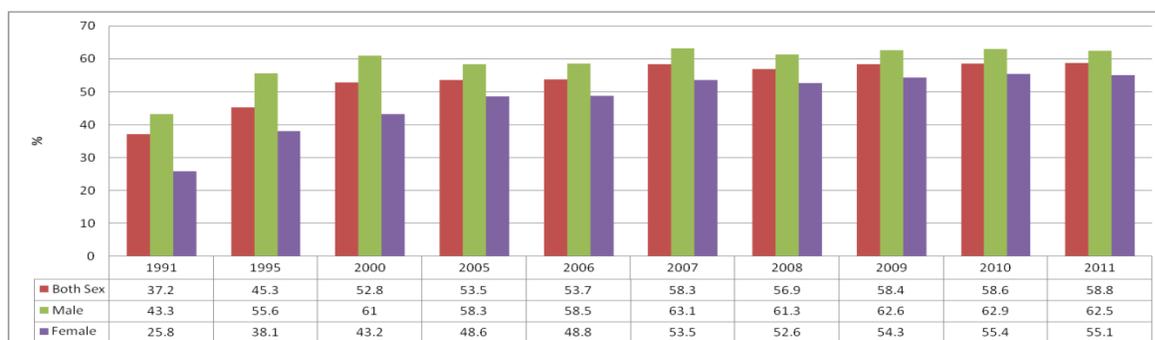
3.2.4 Education and Health

FIGURE 1: FEMALE PASS RATE AT DEGREE (PASS)



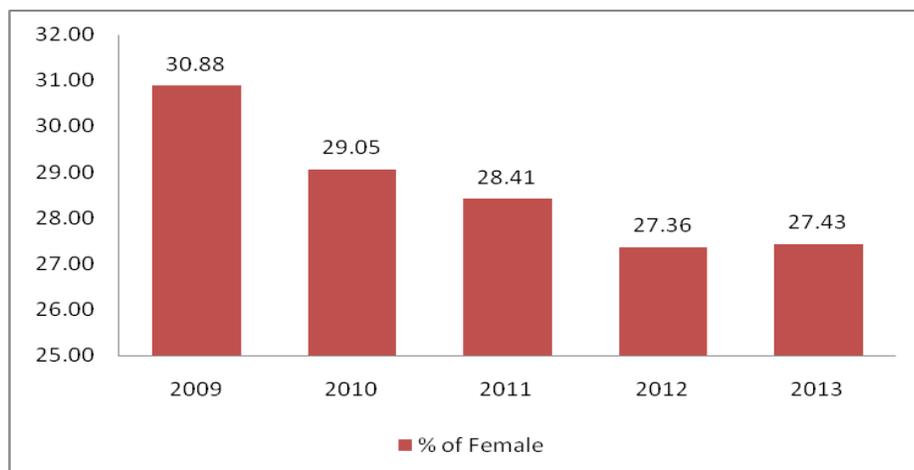
Source (BANBEIS, Basic Education Statistics-2012)

FIGURE 2: ADULT LITERACY RATE



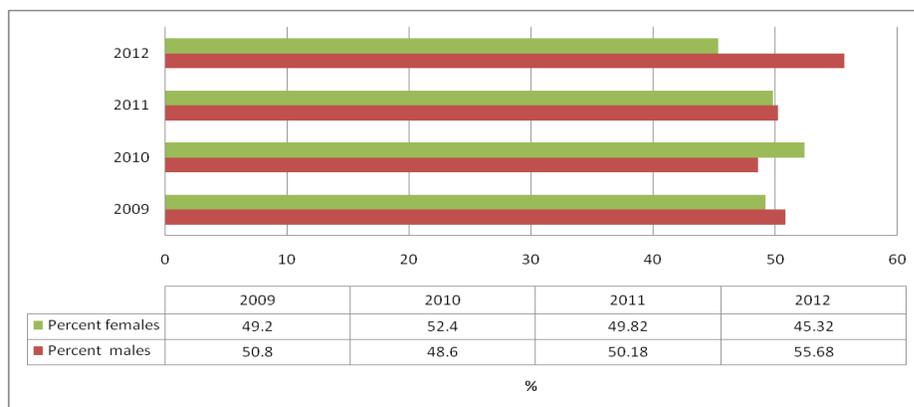
Source: Sample Vital Registration Survey 2011

FIGURE 3: PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE STUDENTS APPEARED IN SSC (VOC.) EXAMINEE 2009-2013



Source: BANBEIS Report 2013

FIGURE 4: PERCENTAGE OF NEW MALE AND FEMALE MEDICAL AND DENTAL DOCTORS



Source: HB 2013 final - Full version 1March14

TABLE 5: VALID FULL VACCINATION COVERAGE DIFFERENTIALS BY SEX, AREA OF RESIDENCE, AND DIVISION AS PER EPICES 2013

Age Group	Sex		Residence		Division						
	Boys	Girls	Rural	Urban	Barisal	Chittagong	Dhaka	Khulna	Rajshahi	Rangpur	Sylhet
≤12 months	81%	80%	81%	80%	78%	79%	79%	85%	85%	81%	81%
≤23 months	84%	83%	84%	84%	80%	82%	83%	87%	87%	85%	83%

Source: BDHS 2013

TABLE 6: NEONATAL MORTALITY RATE (PER 1000 LIVE BIRTHS)

Year	Both Sex	Male	Female
2009	28	29	27
2010	26	28	24
2011	23	25	22

Source: Sample Vital Registration System 2011

TABLE 7: CHILD DEATH RATE (1-4) BY SEX AND LOCALITY

Year	National			Rural			Urban		
	Both Sex	Male	Female	Both Sex	Male	Female	Both Sex	Male	Female
2009	2.7	2.9	2.6	3.2	3.6	3.1	1.9	1.8	2
2010	2.6	3	2.3	2.8	3.3	2.4	2	2.2	1.9
2011	2.4	2.6	2.3	2.9	2.9	2.8	1.6	1.8	1.4

Source: Sample Vital Registration System 2011

TABLE 10: CONTRACEPTIVE PREVALENCE RATE BY LOCALITY IN BANGLADESH

Year	National	Rural	Urban
2009	56.1	54.4	58.7
2010	56.7	55.3	60.9
2011	58.3	56	62.2

Source: Sample Vital Registration System 2011

TABLE 9: PROPORTION OF WOMEN 20-24 YEARS OLD WHO ARE MARRIED BEFORE AGE 18

Year	National	Rural	Urban
2006	64.1	67.4	56.2
2011	51.1	51.6	50.6

Source: Gender Statistics Bangladesh 2012

TABLE 11: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MOTHER AGED 15-49 BY TYPE OF PERSONNEL ASSISTING AND PLACE OF DELIVERY

Delivery Care	2011
1. Assistance During Delivery	
Medical Doctor	22.2
Nurse/Midwife	8.9
Traditional Birth Attendant	11.2
Community Health Worker	0.3
Relative Friend	3.8
Other	52.9
Any Skilled Personal	0
2. Place of Delivery	
Home Delivery	71
Govt. Health Center	11.8

Private (NGO) Health Center	17
Others	0.2

Source: Gender Statistics Bangladesh 2012

3.2.10 Social protection programmes

TABLE 11: COVERAGE AND FUND ALLOCATION OF SELECTED WOMEN TARGETED PROGRAMMES

Name of Scheme	Coverage		Allocation in Crore Taka	
	2010-11	2014-15	2010-11	2014-15
Allowance for Widow, Deserted and Destitute	9.20	10.12	331.20	485.76
Maternal Health Voucher Scheme	1.79	-	66.20	-
Maternity Allowance Programme for Poor Lactating Mothers	0.80	2.20	36.96	132.00
Vulnerable Group Development	88.33	91.33	729.92	886.92
Rural Employment and Rural Maintenance Programme	0.46	0.46	140	235.00

Source: Ministry of Finance, website

3.2.6. Political empowerment and participation

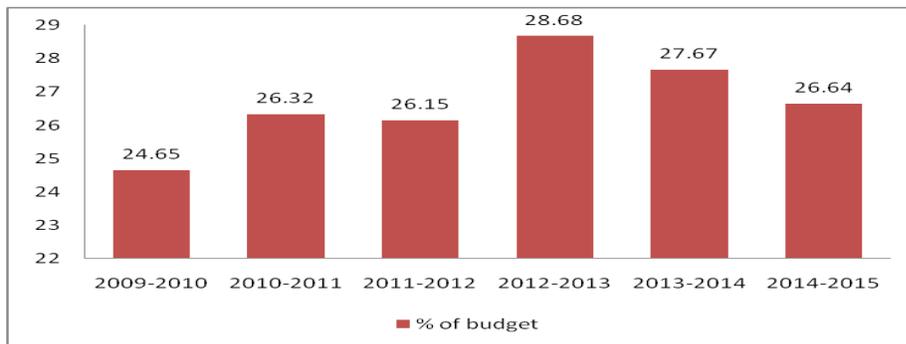
TABLE 12: WOMEN'S POSITION IN MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES

Name of Party	Committees	Total Members	Female Members
The Bangladesh Awami League	Presidium Member	12	4
	Central Working Committee	131	7
	Advisory Committee	34	2
The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)	Advisory Council to the Chairperson	33	0
	National Standing Committee	16	2
	Central Executive Committee	380	46
Jatiya Party	Presidium Member	41	4
	Executive Committee	89	6

Source: Political Parties' Websites.

3.2.10 Integrating gender issues in planning and budgetary processes

FIGURE 5: ALLOCATION FOR GENDER AS % OF TOTAL ANNUAL BUDGET



Source: Compiled from Website of Ministry of Finance

Annex 04: References

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