

Char Development and Settlement Project Phase IV

Gender Development in CDSP IV

Gender Development

The overall goal of the Gender action plan in CDSP IV is to make stakeholders in the project more gender sensitive and to ensure sufficient women participation in the field level institutions established by the project. Ultimately the gender action plan aims to reach a gender balance in the distribution of the project benefits, and improve the socio-economic position and status of women in the chars.

Gender policies

In 2006 the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) finalized its Gender Equity Strategy and related action plan for 2006-2011. These aimed at increasing gender equality in the water sector in Bangladesh and underlined the importance of topics such as: Equal participation of women in all stages of water management, gender equality in the work place, support facilities for female staff, integration of gender issues into training programs, gender sensitive communication and sex-disaggregated data collection and M&E.



The Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) also developed a Gender Equity Strategy and Action Plan for the period 2002-2007, which provided guidelines to address gender equity issues within the organization as well as in their projects and programs.

The Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) has not yet produced gender specific policy documents. However in the 'National Drinking Water and Sanitation Policy' of 1998, DPHE identified women as important stake holders at user level of water, sanitation development and management. Women are increasingly organized in Tube-well User Groups (TUG's) and are made responsible for the operation and maintenance of these wells.

The Ministry of Land (MoL) has recognized women's land rights in its 'Agricultural Khas Land Management and

Settlement Policy' of 1997, by providing the official land title in the name of both husband and wife.

The Forest Department (FD) in its social forestry rules of 2004 mentioned that at least 30% of the Social Forestry Group members have to be female and that women have the right to half the benefits of their husbands if they are members of SFG. Furthermore, destitute women are to be treated as a priority category in social forestry.

In the 'New Agricultural Extension Policy' (NAEP) of 1996 from the DAE, the Ministry of Agriculture acknowledges women's role in agriculture and the need to provide extension services to female farmers. In its 'Agricultural Extension Manual' of 1999, it is mentioned that DAE will start to consider gender as part of its extension approach.

Although most government agencies have formulated promising gender equity strategies and action plans, and others have incorporated gender into their existing policies, there is generally a significant gap between policy and practice. The implementation of plans and policies at the local level is usually poor, which can primarily be explained by an overall lack in commitment and monitoring of gender issues.

To bridge this gap it has been crucial for CDSP IV to strictly monitor and evaluate the implementation of plans and activities that are gender related. This contributes to the achievement of higher levels of gender equality and hence make gender mainstreaming more successful.

To ensure women participation in the project, CSP IV has set targets for participation with each of the different Field Level Institutions (FLI's). Table 1 provides an overview of these targets and their status.

Table 1. Women participation in FLI's

Field Level Institution (FLI)	Target	Status
Water Management Group (WMG)	50%	46%
Water Management Association (WMA)	33%	33%
Farmers Forum (FF)	33%	42%
Social Forestry Group (SFG)	30%	37%
NGO Group	100%	100%
Labour Contracting Society (LCS)	30%	26%
Tube-well Users Group (TUG)	100%	100%



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Responsibility for this successful achievement success lies with all involved, the Implementing Agencies, the Technical Assistance Team and the involved NGO's.

Gender focus

Gender issues are an integral part of all policies and guidance of CDSP IV. Gender specific questions and considerations have been systematically integrated into the programme planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Gender inequality poses a major impediment to achieving sustainable development. Hence in CDSP IV the gender related goals are:

- provision of awareness creation on gender issues at all levels of all sectors, agencies and NGOs;
- appointment of sufficient female staff, especially at the field level to promote better communication with women;
- pursuing sufficiently representable percentage of women in all level groups and committees, and their opinions and views have to be taken into consideration;
- women are provided with equal chances and their access to knowledge and opportunities are similar to men;
- incorporation of gender training and gender sensitization programmes at all projects levels on a regular basis.

The concept of 'gender mainstreaming' in the project has been ensured through active participation of men and women in all project activities during planning, implementation and for operation and maintenance.

Major areas of action

As there are many aspects to gender development in CDSP IV, there are several major areas of action in the struggle for gender equality:

- initiatives continue to increase awareness of gender issues among all sectorial staff;
- creating a favourable atmosphere for inter-agency interaction on gender;
- practicing gender balance recruitment and zero tolerance for gender discrimination within the project;
- organising gender campaigns and exposure visits to utilize different media and messages on gender equality;
- provision of training and periodical orientation to both male and female staff on gender, of all CDSP IV involved agencies and NGO's;
- dialogue is open with the involved agencies and NGO's for continued assessment and improvements of a women friendly working environment in the field;

- pressing past the gender targets for group composition of the established Water Management Groups, Water Management Associations, Farmer Forums, Social Forestry Groups, Tube-well User Groups, Labour Contracting Societies, and Micro Credit and Savings Groups;
- provision of gender awareness training for the communities, field level institutions, implementing agencies and NGO staff;
- including gender appraisal into participatory approaches, monitoring and evaluation;
- organising cross and exchange visits for female members from different relevant groups;
- organising experience sharing workshops and consultations for female community leaders;
- CDSP coordinates with other organizations on gender issues. One of these is the Gender & Water Alliance of Bangladesh (GWAPB) project. The GWAPB offers different types of trainings to CDSP IV staff.



Latest information and contact details

If interested in the latest CDSP IV news and progress updates, please visit our website on www.cdsp.org.bd.

For questions or comments please contact us directly through:

Project Coordinating Director (Md. Mahfuzur Rahman)

Char Development and Settlement Project IV – BWDB
Office: 23/1, Motijheel Commercial Area, Hasan Court (2nd floor), Dhaka 1000 Bangladesh.

☎ (+880)-2-9559298

✉ cdsp.noa@gmail.com

