

CHAR DEVELOPMENT AND SETTLEMENT PROJECT II

চর উন্নয়ন ও বসতি স্থাপন প্রকল্প ২

BANGLADESH

**Summary of
Overview of the Gender Aspects
In CDSP**

Technical Report No. 17

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May, 2004

CDP

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(Source : Boyer Char : The untold story June, 2001 – Community Needs Assessment of Boyer Char through PRA).

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Gender Aspects in CDSP

1.1.1 Gender Concerns

The field experience of CDSP-I has shown that most women in the Char areas recognise the problems and needs of their own areas. Many of them participate in NGO community development programs such as group savings, health education and income generation. The project initiative was to select and train women as caretakers of deep tube wells, toilets and as community health workers. Women have been found to possess a keen interest and willingness to take responsibility and perform the tasks that best serve their basic needs. They are still performing these jobs consistently. The water and sanitation monitoring report shows that the trained caretakers have been repairing tube wells in 75% of cases in at least two of the three polders and maintenance is done satisfactorily.

At the beginning of the CDSP-II project, it was believed that women were rarely involved in planning, implementation and monitoring of activities, which was shared by most stakeholders at different levels of the project. To challenge this belief and attitude, the project initiated dialogue with field level institutions and project staff whereby an acknowledgement was established of the importance of the women's contribution to improve socio economic conditions of the coastal community in a sustainable way.

Recognising the importance of involving both men and women in its effort to bring an improvement to the lives of the Char population, CDSP II has adopted gender concepts that concentrate on ensuring participation of both sexes in all of its activities. Also taking into account the fact that female interests are not undermined in favour of male interests and vice versa. Therefore CDSP-II has adopted a strategy where gender issues are not set apart from its activities but are mainstreamed into them.

It became clear that an important aspect of mainstreaming gender issues¹ is by ensuring the active involvement of women and men in the planning and decision-making processes. The challenge then became how to work out practical methods for ensuring the women's participation. In this respect, women and men's involvement has to go beyond the participation in equal numbers of the beneficiaries, to form an active consultation and participation. This enables women as well as men to influence the entire development effort and basic priorities of the project. This is most important because women and men need to be involved in identifying their individual needs, and since the motivation and resources to support and sustain project intervention are not the same, it is necessary that both be involved in setting their respective priorities and expectations.

CDSP-II is committed to the inclusion of gender perspective in all of its activities to enable the women to make appropriate contributions to the development process, and

¹ Mainstreaming gender is to integrate gender concerns into every aspects of project / an organisation's priorities and procedures. The precise concept of 'mainstreaming' includes both an aim and the ways in which this can occur. Moreover, mainstreaming means making gender concerns the responsibility of all in an organisation and ensuring that they are integrated into all structures and all work

therefore enable them to benefit from the results of project intervention (Technical Report No. 1). But there are several difficulties in involving the women in these project activities, and these relate to the men folk of the area, and are encountered at household as well as community level. Women's participation in activities beyond the home compound is seen as a threat to family values in the Coastal Char areas. The segregation of male and female is one of the fundamental norms governing social organisation of the Char communities. It manifests itself in the distinction between the social roles assigned to women and men. In other words, this standard eliminates any opportunity for women to ascertain socio-political roles other than those of wife and mother within the home compound. Social respectability depends entirely on the women fulfilling the traditionally prescribed social roles, and the Pardah system has played a part in this regard. Pardah is a special garment that has to be used by women, although, Pardah literally means curtain or veil it represents the system of isolation of the Charwomen from outside influence and imposes high standards of female modesty. At the physical level, it requires women to be veiled when moving outside the homestead. Moreover the movement of women outside the homestead requires the permission of the household head. Thus the Charwomen's ability and opportunity to explore the outside world other than their neighbourhood remains limited.

Both at the family and community level, the majority of men are not interested in letting women speak and may indeed fear that consultation with women would be to their disadvantage. They prefer to participate themselves, to take the lead in discussion and speak on behalf of their women. When they do let women speak for themselves they insist on being present during the discussions. Often men in the community express a lack of trust in the women's physical and mental capabilities to carry out tasks, and to identify problems and earn cash. In addition, there is an unexpressed fear of losing authority.

An additional difficulty related to the women is their tendency to accept the male valuation of their work, although very often-empirical evidence shows to the contrary. The Charwomen are often convinced that they are mentally and morally incapable of dealing with the male world. The non-participation of women in public sphere leads to a hierarchical ordering of a superior-subordinate relationship between men and women. This relationship is again reflected in the practice that the leadership of the society of women are dependent on men for any type of decision. This notion of dependency on men stems from her ascribed role in the family and the society that creates values which leads to a secondary, dependent and disadvantageous position of women in the Chars.

However, due to severe poverty, women have had to enter the male sphere of work such as the collection of shrimp fries, plantation of seedling, thatched house construction etc. This has resulted in the traditional gender division of labour changing in the Char areas.

To some extent the women exercise the decision-making element of the family. During the sowing and harvesting season on the mainland, the Char areas have virtually no male population. This happens more than once in a year; and at this time the Chars remain under the supervision of women. Moreover, due to flood or river erosion at this time it is left to the women to make the decisions, and take the responsibility to move to another place if necessary. As the male members have to go out to earn enough for their livelihood, the women have to face the hard days alone. During this time of male out migration the entire household activities from earning to expenditure is being governed by the female members of the household. From the newly migrated poor households,

women are able to exercise the right to choose their employment during the out migration period. Women also have control over the homestead produce such as vegetable gardening and livestock etc. However, other than in these limited aspects, there are some strong patriarchal phenomenon existents in Char society. Men still exercise control over social power, assets, market and economy. The decisions regarding choices of marriage and divorce, control over sexuality and women's mobility are also under the control of men.

Another practical difficulty related to the women's involvement is their unequal access to training, information, and knowledge, which often results in a limited vision of what they can do or may achieve as women. In the beginning women were uninterested in the planning aspects of the project, and usually they preferred to be involved in activities that served their practical needs. This meant that they lacked a long-term view of the project and its potential benefits. They were more concerned with the practical aspects that would create facilities for reducing the hardship of their daily lives.

1.1.2 Gender Mainstreaming Strategy in CDSP II

To address the above-mentioned difficulties faced by the women in the Char areas and to improve their situation it was necessary to identify and fulfil these needs. Because they are different from the needs of men CDSP-II pursues gender mainstreaming as a strategy. This gender strategy is not aimed at empowering women through creating community awareness regarding women's socio cultural, economic, political and legal rights. Rather it is aimed at providing both males and females with equal opportunities and access to knowledge of and participation in project activities. In other words, the gender focus of the project is as much on men as on women, although at times and in view of the restrictions on women in the Char areas, separate techniques were employed to ensure participation of the women. It is aimed at ensuring that, at least, female interests and status in society are not undermined as a result of its interventions. Therefore, CDSP-II gender mainstreaming strategy has implications for institutional and project procedures. It means that a gender perspective is an integral aspect of all planning, implementation methodologies, monitoring and analysis that are undertaken. It reflects needs and priorities of both women and men in the project area, in the steps needed to enable women and men to participate, benefit and receive equal information and opportunities to prevent gender disparities.

Although it has been found that women's primary interests are centred mostly on the practical needs, this is not the only area of participation encouraged by CDSP-II. Even more significant is the emphasis on regular and adequate dissemination of information to women as well as men through their involvement in all field level institutions such as Sub-Polder Committee (SPC), Polder Committee (PC), Local Area Development Committee (LADC), Water Management Committee (WMC), and Tubewell User Groups (TUG). It seeks to ensure that any information regarding project activity that is communicated to the men is also made accessible to the females, and that they are convenient and acceptable to them. This principle is based on the premise that if women do not have access to information regarding project activities in their areas, it might be very difficult for them to undertake an active role in these activities. The gender strategy for equal information dissemination is also applicable for information collection. Any information required by the different sectors of the project would be gathered from both male and female settlers of the project area.

The field staff of the project includes females to facilitate organisation and communication with the women. The Gender Adviser was part of six sectorised working groups that contributed in the formulation of gender sensitive policy and program design to reach the women in project area.

The following is a list of general strategies that are considered worthwhile in pursuing mainstreaming gender within the existing policy framework of the project.

- Provide both males and females with equal opportunities and access to knowledge of and participate in project activities.
- Reserve a percentage of membership of each field level institution for women.
- Train both male and female members in gender roles and interests. Often there is a tendency to inform only women about their role and rights, but men cannot be expected to understand women's demands if they do not know on what they are based. Thus training for male members of different institutions was emphasised to generate their support in mainstreaming gender.
- Educate men and women to recognise the value of women's productive, reproductive and communal work.
- Create an understanding regarding women's practical needs and strategic interest among project staff and members of field level institutions.
- Ensure that the project's team members including line agencies are gender sensitive and eager to allow women to speak in mixed meetings.
- Ensure that women's demands are incorporated in sectorised action plans.
- Adopt a gender perspective in all analysis in any study undertaken.
- Collect information from both sexes during any study undertaken
- Be aware that barriers are extremely difficult to overcome in the prevailing socio cultural context of the Char areas (such as expecting women to attend meetings, at night), alternative solutions need to be found.
- A quarterly women's desk operates in each area of the project to listen to the women's problems related to land as well as any other component of the project. The local level staffs of the Consultant team and line agencies attend this desk to respond to the women's queries along with The Gender and NGO Adviser of the project.
- Create community awareness on gender issues through organising mass meetings at Polder level on the occasion of international events such as International

Women's Day, International Rural Women's Day and International Literacy Day etc.

- Organise study tours to gender sensitive projects and examples of successful implementation of gender policy in Bangladesh and possibly in the subcontinent.
- Arrange gender training for all Senior Consultants and district level officers of involved line agencies.
- Arrange gender training for field level officers of the Consultant team and line agencies.
- Network with other sister projects to share experience about gender plans and programmes.

1.2 Results

- At the beginning of the CDSP-II, twenty-seven village meetings were conducted specially for women to introduce its goals, objectives, components and activities.
- Twenty-nine women's meeting were held to explain land settlement procedures in Moradona, Gangchil-Torabali, South Hatiya, Bandartila and Nijhum Dwip.
- Twenty-eight women's meeting were conducted in twenty-eight villages of four unions under local level planning to explain participatory planning process to women.
- Eleven participatory planning meetings were carried out with women in South Hatiya, Bandartila and Nijhum Dwip during the formation of the final plan under local level planning.
- Two hundred and three female members of local level institutions participated in a five-day long training on basic gender issues.
- One hundred and eighty one members of five LADC and six WMC attended a five-day long training on gender issues.
- Gender training was also conducted for four Union Parishads (3 female members, 9 male members, 1 chair person and secretary of each Parishad) for five days under local level planning.
- Women commented on the design of infrastructures such as cluster village houses, cyclone shelter and toilets. The design of cluster village houses, cyclone shelter and toilets was reviewed to incorporate women's comments. They proposed the sites for deep tubewell installation.
- Women's involvement was ensured in physical planning of the Polders and unprotected areas through their participation in LADC, SPC and PC.

- Information was collected from both sexes during various surveys such as Rapid Water Management Appraisal, Fresh Water Survey and Union Data Collection under local level planning.
- Appropriate techniques were adopted to reach women in different sectorised activities in terms of personnel, places and timing.
- Except in a few cases, gender specific questions and considerations were systematically integrated into the sectorised action plans, implementation procedures, monitoring and evaluation.
- An environment was created that the gender expert could raise any issues related to women's interests, but decisions related to that aspect were made by the team.
- 63 quarterly women's desks were organised in the project areas. The female members of SPCs and LADC invited the women from the different parts of the protected and unprotected areas, to visit the desk. The idea was to find out the women's concerns and respond to their queries about project activities. The main issues raised by the women were related to land settlement, construction of cluster villages, tubewell installation, community pond excavation, pit-latrines distribution, price and quality of seeds, women's and children health and abuse of women. The sectorised specialist and NGOs were informed of the concerns of the women. After being given feedback through the desk, NGOs followed strategies to distribute seeds after checking the quality through germination tests throughout the year. In a few cases, line agencies also responded. For example, the Civil Surgeon sent a mobile clinic to within the project area, and personally visited a project area in South Hatiya that helped to improve the health services in that area. The LGED issued a circular to involve women in PICs and one third of PIC chaired by the female members of UP were persuaded by the LGED in collaboration with the Consultants.
- Some of the demands of the women of the project areas remain unmet, such as excavating community ponds, establishment of high school and the creation of health facilities etc. These are the most popular desire of the women.

1.3 SWOT Analysis – Project as a Whole

CDSP II

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An environment of mutual respect between men and women was developed in the project office. Male colleagues have been changing their attitudes towards women and working to develop a friendly work environment. ● Leadership has demonstrated a commitment in incorporating gender perspective in all sector activity. ● There is an understanding that both women and men’s participation improves the project’s performance. Women’s access to productive resources, land, water, and agriculture technologies were increased. During the change processes, CDSP-II recruited female field coordinators to support and protect the interests of women in the project area. In this way, it has demonstrated enough flexibility to adopt its structures and operations to meet women’s needs. ● Women’s political role was accelerated in local communities. They assumed leadership positions in their communities. ● Women became equal partners with men in development planning for their communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gender mainstreaming strategy was adopted on an adhoc basis. The consultants took the initiative to incorporate gender perspective at the activity level. ● Funding was limited to the proposed tasks for promotion of gender mainstreaming. ● Women’s advancement requires an inter-sectoral approach with various programmes needing to mutually reinforce and support each other such as land, agriculture, water management and health. In CDSP II it is one of the weaknesses that the lack of coordination between sectors and other involved parties such as local and national NGOs. There is also a lack of communication among sector staff, concerned line agencies and persons who are promoting gender aspects. ● The Project Management Committee (PMC) meetings are held to review the progress of the project periodically. Gender issues were not part of the agenda. Involvement of gender specialist was not sought and gender mainstreaming was not given much importance. ● No policy was formulated on equal pay and affirmative action to encourage women to work in Char areas.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☀ More awareness about women’s development among involved agencies i.e. BWDB, LGED, MoL, DAE, DPHE, UP, SPC, LADC, WMC etc. ☀ Knowledge has increased on gender sensitive policy formulation and setting implementation methods to reach the Char women. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Law and order situation has been deteriorating. ■ Land grabbing for shrimp cultivation reduces the opportunity of rehabilitating landless poor on the newly accreted char land.

CDSP II

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CDSP-II addresses women’s practical needs as well as strategic gender interests: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practical gender needs: - Safe drinking water, - Pit latrine promotion, - Availability of fresh water in dry season (community ponds), - Food diversity, - Seed availability, - Access to technologies, - Cluster village houses Strategic Gender Interests: - Safety (prevention of tidal surge) - Security (social stability) - Female leadership development (house wives to decision makers) - Land rights - Right to be informed - Control over communal resources i.e. tube wells, ponds, cyclone shelter, canal, and sluices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assessment was not done on gender related aspects of the prevailing practice in concerned sectors of the project areas. ● Although the field level institutions were the focal point of all activities at the polder level, there is no mechanism of sharing among line agencies, field level institutions (in where 30-50% female membership is ensured) and NGOs (who are mostly working with women). ● Enabling environment was not created to ensure the spontaneous women’s participation in all development efforts in the area. ● Follow up or refresher courses on training on gender issues were not done.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☀ Women’s interests have been generated to participate in community development activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Politicisation of Char development issues have created debate on coastal development as a whole.

* **Note :** See Appendix-3 for definition and purpose of SWOT Analysis.

1.4 **Lessons Learnt: Project as a Whole**

- ☛ The project objective should explicitly reflect on women's needs and interests, priorities and concerns.
- ☛ Gender needs, interests, priorities and concerns should be identified in detail during the project formulation period.
- ☛ Gender equitable model of policies, systems, procedures and ways of functioning should be incorporated in all sector PP.
- ☛ Specific amount of funding should be allocated for gender mainstreaming activities in all sectors.
- ☛ There is a need to explore constraints that hinder women's participation in a meaningful way and possible improvements.
- ☛ There is a need to set up indicators to measure the sector activities impact on women explicitly.
- ☛ Field experience on gender should be documented in time and be shared with all involved parties.
- ☛ Personnel of line agencies, consultant team members and numbers of field level institutions should be trained in the gender skills and desired gender sensitive behaviours.
- ☛ There is a need to assess the impact of gender training at the beneficiaries level.
- ☛ Line agencies lack the skills to pursue gender mainstreaming at all levels.
- ☛ Interests are too limited in gender planning and practice at all level of all involved parties.

2. MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN SECTORAL PROGRAMME

In CDSP II, mainstreaming gender has been described as a lens through which the project strategies and approaches have been examined. Women's needs and interests were not considered as separate issues. Instead women centred policies, and gender perspective became an integrated part of all policies, strategies and activities of each and every sector of the project. Women's involvement has not only been treated as adding women's input, rather it means the creation of an enabling environment to make contributions in all sectorised activities and having this contribution recognised and valued. Involvement in the context of the Charwomen therefore means participating in decision-making in all program related planning, not just areas of the community which are accepted as the women's place. This is also created from the women's perspective and is recognised and respected as an equal contribution of women in the protected and unprotected areas of the project. Moreover, being aware of the position and condition of the women in the Char areas, a number of affirmative actions were required in order to ensure equal involvement of the women in all sectors.

Depending on the user's perspective on women's development, the term "mainstreaming gender" is used in different ways. For those who interpret women's development as being merely concerned with improving women's access to resources and productivity, the strategy is interpreted in the minimum sense of adding gender objective to existing programmes. This involves some adaptation, but not transformation of the process of development. By contrast, the term mainstreaming gender is used by those who see women's involvement as being essentially concerned with women's participation to address issues of gender equality. From this perspective, the mainstreaming gender issues in CDSP-II entail the transformation of the development process and of involved institutions themselves.

2.1 Gender and Agriculture

2.1.1 Gender Concerns, Activities and Implementation Strategies

The agricultural component of the project has two main activities

- a) Research on various crops and technologies suitable to the Char areas, to reach a higher level of agriculture production
- b) An extension service to stimulate the adoption by farmers of the suitable crops and appropriate technologies for the Char land.

The agricultural research focuses mainly on field crop cultivation in Kharif-I, Kharif-II and Rabi/dry season.

The extension service consists of the demonstration of crop variety, fertilizer application, farm management and pest/insect control. To begin with, good quality seed are distributed.

Similar to other parts of the country, women play multiple roles in the agricultural sector in the project areas. They are actively involved in pre-planning skilled activities such as seed collection, seed preservation, drying and re-drying, seed treatment and the germination of seed. They participate together with the men in preparing seedbeds,

seedling transplanting, weeding and watching the field. Women also work in the field on farms, which may sometimes be owned by both spouse but more frequently sharecropped. They are involved in crop processing activities such as threshing, parboiling, drying, husking, storing, preserving seeds and crops. Women also hold the major responsibility for homestead gardening and perform all tasks including land preparation, sowing, and fertilizer application, irrigation and harvesting the homestead production. Often children assist their mothers in doing home gardening.

In general, the on-farm research and extension effort of DAE are mostly directed towards men. Most of the Block Supervisors worked with male farmers, firstly because they do not admit that women do work in the field of agriculture. Secondly, often it is considered impossible for a male extension worker to visit lone women in the prevailing socio-cultural norms. However, CDSP-II decided on the following strategies to provide agriculture extension services to the women of the project area.

- The women would be treated as farmers instead of farmer's wives.
- The women would be assisted by NGOs in homestead crop production.
- The women who are the head of the household, with land suitable for field crop production would be supported by the project.
- 75% of the selected farmers for home site production and 25% of the selected farmers for crop demonstration would be women.
- The selected female farmers would be trained in the same way as male farmers.
- NGO and DAE would have to employ female field workers to maintain direct communication with female farmers.

The role of CDSP-II agricultural unit is to coordinate with line agencies and NGOs to better perform their role in the improvement of field crop and homestead production in the project area. The technical and methodological results and experience of LRP/CDSP-I was the starting point. It was decided that there are two participants intervening in field crops and homestead production, each with their specific responsibilities.

- Consultants are responsible for the technical input to the farmers, both directly and through line agencies, specifically for field crops.
- BRAC staff takes care of grass root mobilization for the rapid adoption of appropriate technologies related to field crops and providing technical support in home site production.

The idea behind this arrangement is that there is a low level of organization among farming communities in the Chars, and they lack the skills in formulating their problems. NGOs assist them to formulate their needs, to which the line agencies and other participants respond according to their mandate. In other words the farmers assisted by NGOs are the 'demand side' for the services while the line agencies assisted by CDSP provide those services i.e. they form the supply side – although the farmers forum was organized by NGOs to formulate their own agricultural development priorities and interests. Unfortunately the parties involved in assessing the farmer's needs did not explore this matter to its full potential, and in particular the needs and interests of the female farmers in field crop production.

However, the role of women in the Char areas as farmers is recognized in all extension activities. The different studies show that 25% of total families in the coastal belt is

female headed. Due to the work exodus of males, the females remain *de-facto* leaders of the households at least on some occasions during the year. Hence they have to take care of their farms. This provides the rationale to decide that 25% of field crop farmers should be female, although it took time to motivate the staff of NGOs, DAE and the Consultant team to involve women in the farmer's forum. But, gradually women were included in the farmer's forum as farmers.

Under the supervision of BRAC, local NGOs trained home site crop growers, and all of them are women. They have received formal and informal training and input support from the NGOs. The objective of the homestead crop cultivation was to provide nutritious food and generate employment, goods for trading and income earning opportunities for the women. Traditionally women have an active role in cultivating homestead crops with the assistance of their children. The NGOs selected interested women, and they then received three day in-house training on vegetable cultivation during the year.

The women who have developed a year round vegetable garden on their homesteads are called model farmers. General producers have also received a one-day training course on vegetable cultivation. Both the model farmers and general farmers collect seeds from the local NGOs and the BRAC sectoral specialists provide technical supervision to the growers.

2.1.2 Results

- Forty-six NGO staff members received formal training on how to identify and organise female farmers so that they can participate in the farmer's forum.
- Out of 37 farmers forum, only one is a female farmers forum.
- Approximately 19% of the members of the farmer's forum are women.
- Out of 303 demonstrations, 42 were done on female farmers fields.
- In total 262 training course were organised, where 7805 farmers participated, of which 838 were female farmers. This means 11% of total trainees were women.
- A total of 5410 settlers participated in the field day programmes; out of that number 1413 (26%) were women.
- A total of 16650 Kg. of HYV seed was distributed amongst the farmers; out of that 1688 Kg. of seed was given to the male farmers, only 10% of supplied seed was distributed amongst female farmers
- A total of 45400 Kg. of fertilizer was supplied to the farmers, out of that 6442 Kg. (14%) was given to the female farmers.
- By December 2003 approximately 1014 model female farmers were involved in intensive vegetable cultivation. Another 3676 general female farmers are also producing vegetables for their home consumption.
- The NGOs employ female field workers for communicating with female farmers. However, it proved to be difficult for DAE to attract female block supervisors, in particular for the Char areas.
- In past years the Char dwellers have produced a few indigenous varieties of vegetables on their homesteads. They used to eat rice, fish, and pulses, green and red chilly. But nowadays they are producing broccoli, cauliflower, tomato, and spinach, as well as red-spinach. It has become usual to include vegetables in their daily meals because the settlers can produce them in quantity; this also has the added advantage of bringing down market prices and increasing availability. Home gardening is meeting their nutritional requirements and helps them earn more cash from their agricultural enterprises.

2.1.3 Case Studies

Sakura Khatun
Birbiri, Jahajmara Union
Hatiya Thana
Noakhali District.

I am 35 years old. My husband is working in the Middle East. I now have three daughters and one son. I actually gave birth to several more children but only four of them survived. My eldest daughter is 17 years old and she is in class X. The younger two are also going to school. One of them is in Class VIII and the other is in class VI. Since the last five years, my husband is abroad, but he is unable to send money as much as we need. For this reasons, I was unable to maintain my family properly. Consequently, I was always thinking about the future of my children.

We have 1.80 acre of land. My husband rented it out earlier for 25,000 Taka. He used the amount in arranging his job in The Middle East. I decided to take the land back by paying the parties who were rented in the land. I had started paying them a bit by bit. In only two years I got back the land and I have started cultivation. Unfortunately farming was not profitable. In the mean time, I heard that a farmer's forum was organised in my neighbourhood. Once I discussed with a farmer of the forum and showed interests to be involved in this forum. He told CDSP personnel about my interests and he came to me one day. I explain to him my problems in farming. He listened to me and asked me to be in the next training course.

I attended the training on T-Aus, BRRI-27 and have received two and half Kg seed of that I sowed that with great care; the result was that at the end, the production was enormous. It was a great surprise to my son. He encourages me to learn about T-Aman cultivation. At the beginning of next season, I attended the training on BRRI-30 variety of rice and I have received 10 Kg Seed, 25 kg Urea, 16 kg TSP and 16 kg Phosphate. Later, I harvested at the expected level. I invested the profit in mortgaging in 3.60 acres of land. I participated in block demonstration of T-Aman BRRI-30 with the other two male farmers. I now cultivate the land in all three seasons: Kharif-I, Kharif-II and Rabi crops. At this moment I have eight different crops on the farm: these are chilli, eggplant, spinach, radish, onion, garlic, sweet potato and pumpkin etc.

I hope there will be a great improvement in the situation of my family. I am able to farm the land and I have also been able to mortgage in 3.60 acres of land. I wish to purchase some new land in the future.

I believe in working hard, and I have always worked with my hands, as you can see I am constructing a drain. I do all sorts of farming activities. I also have proved efficient in the gardening of fruits on the homestead. In addition, I also work as teacher of non-formal education centre of DUS.

I never went out of the house before, when my husband was home. He went abroad but he could not support us to survive. As my children grew, they needed to eat more and what little I had got was no longer enough. I then decided I had to work to earn money. I don't mind whether it is on the homestead or outside. My neighbours told me that I would loose social respect but I did not care. It was a matter of sustenance and also brought up my daughters. I wish to educate them like you. I do not worry about social respect and honour any more.

Amena Khatun
South Char Majid, Char Bata Union
Shudharam Thana, Noakhali District

I am Amena Khatun. I am 50. I was born in Shahbajpur Union under Upazila Doulat Khah of Bhola District. My father had two acres of land. He sold it gradually to feed the family, which was big with six sons and four daughters. When he died, we were already fully landless and I was only 9 years old. I started to work at one of my neighbour's house. I used to go in the morning and return late after sun set. My brothers migrated out in search of a job. They were very irregular in visiting home. We had no land except homestead that made my mother's life very difficult to live alone. As my mother was a widow, she had to face many problems living in a village with young daughters. My uncle was the only person extended support for her. But he could not take full responsibilities, as he also had no land. He was acting mainly as guardian of the family to protect from social problems. My uncle was able to arrange my marriage. After marriage I moved to my husband's house an extended family in South Hatiya. They also had no agriculture land except homestead. The river eroded all the land. It was in Nilokhi. Within few years, our homestead was also eroded.

We came to Amtolli and built a house on the slope of embankment. The life was not smooth but comparatively better as my husband was earning. After two years we moved to South Char Majid. My husband occupied two acres of land. He bribed local leaders in managing possession over this land. At the beginning, the char was barren and naked. We were scared of tides and cyclones. We came to the char facing the challenging of death. At night we slept in the attic from where we could hear the whistle of approaching water. Now a day, the land is high enough, as the rivers died and new chars are accreted.

We have suffered a lot. For several years we failed to get crops. Harvest has increased little by little. As we do not have enough to eat, we eat less. Adequate food would be rice with different curries, but we have only red chillies to eat with the rice.

Since last 3 years I have joined a group of NGO named UPOMA. I have received training on vegetables cultivation. In the first year I got seeds of vegetables and fertiliser from UPOMA. I grew tomato, carrot, cabbage, broccoli and sweet potato. Salinity was the major problem. Thereby I failed to earn much as I expected in the beginning. However I did not give up trying and I sowed the seeds of summer vegetables. I found that soil condition has improved a little bit. I could not remember what I earn by selling vegetables. But I tell you on what I spent money. I bought a cow for 3000 Taka in the year of 2001 and I sold it for 8000 Taka in 2002. We eat enough vegetables every day. Earlier it was luxury to have it once a week even sometimes once in a month. I also gave my neighbours. They feel encouraged to farm and I collected seeds for them. This year 3 of my neighbours have prepared land to grow spinach, cabbage and tomato.

I bought pit latrine from UPOMA. During the last *Eid-ul Fiter* I spent at least 900 Taka for clothing for family members. I have not taken a loan from any one else. I managed to survive without a loan by selling vegetables, eggs, chicks etc. I grow vegetables around the year. UPOMA call me Model Farmer. I earn more money by selling vegetables than anything else.

2.1.4 Effects on the Condition and the Position of the Female Farmers of Farmer's Forum in the Project Area

A focus group discussion with female farmers was held to assess the effects on the condition and the position of them at Char Mohiuddin under Char Jubilee Union of Sadar Upazila of Noakhali District on 30th December 2003. (See appendix -3 for FGD procedures and checklist).

Effects on the women's condition: The women are proud to be known as farmers and have acquired this status through the training and resources provided to them by CDSP/DAE. They mostly cultivate rice, corn and various types of vegetables. Most female farmers are able to discuss the newly introduced technologies. They know about high yielding varieties of rice such as BRRI-11, BRRI-12 and BRRI-30. Their interest and knowledge is very much apparent in their lively discussion regarding agricultural activities and their knowledge on various technical aspects such as new ways to germinate seeds and venture into new crop management. The information is that this year, the yield of BRRI-11 and 12 is much higher than BRRI-30. They point out that on average they have reaped a harvest of 50 mounds of rice grain per kani (1.60 acres). Their food security is improved, as part of this provides them with their annual food, and by selling the rest they get cash for basic needs. Predominantly the income of the women is used to pay off debts, to buy clothes and books for children and put into weekly savings with the group. Their husbands or sons assist them in their work, and they also employ daily labourers. Tilling is the work that they find hard to do and they receive help from the men folk of their extended families or employ labourers and also hire tractors.

Although the opportunity for the production of high yielding varieties of crops is expanded, the women also stress in FCD that the female farmers have to work very hard. They have to devote much more time and energy than before. They are also using pesticides without necessary information or methods to select or use those properly. This could create a risk to health and pesticide generated problems.

Economic Position: On these issues, the female farmers present agreed on their emancipated positions. All of them are happy to generate a cash income of their own. They are also able to make choices about utilisation of this in their household needs, children's education and health care.

Political Position: Through discussion it became clear that the women regard access to and control over an income and the other resources as a good condition and it is also a strategy to increase their power and status in the household as well as in the community. Ms. Ayesha Khatun a female farmer explains the effect of her work in the field *"My workload has increased since I am farming. But now I am earning more money than earlier. I feel much free now in talking with my husband. Before my joining the Farmer Forum I used to do household work. No body value those, but now work in the field with my husband. Makes him realise how I use my time. He has become much more calm and quite, not shouting so much all the time"*.

Women do more work than men. Ms. Rajia a female farmer said, *"তারা ঘুমর থেকে উঠতে উহাতে আমাদের এক বদলার কাজ হয়ে যায়"* meaning *"we do work equal to one labour by the time men are just awaking up in the late morning"*. However, it is said that with the

women's participation in crop cultivation so began the transformation of traditional gender division of labour. Men have been changing their attitude towards work in the household. Whenever possible, most of the men try to assist women in fetching water, minding children and drying and redrying crops. Ms. Monoara Begum a female farmer says, “আমি ও আমার ছেলে এক সাথে মাঠে কাজ করি। ঘরে এসে সে চুলায় আগুন দেয়। আমি মরিচ বাটি। সে বাড়ী ঘর ঝাড় দেয়, আমি হাঁড়ি পাতিল ধুয়ে নেই” – “My son and I work together in the field. On returning home, he does put on the fire in stove and I do grind chilli. Sometime he cleans the house and yard and I wash utensils”. The female farmers present feel that they have earned respect from the family and community. However there are a group of people who ostracise and discourage them from attending training and other field activities.

Socio-Cultural Position: All participants agreed that their self-image had improved. They are not treated as a burden in the family anymore. Rather, their contribution is seen as a great relief to the absolute poverty they endured before. This matters a great deal to them in times of severe emergency.

Some of the socio cultural improvements stated by the women in their lives are:

- ♥ Improved financial conditions at present
- ♥ The men help in house work and are much more caring
- ♥ Women share their knowledge in agriculture with the men and ideas on farming are improved.
- ♥ They feel less constrained in their work in the field to grow crops
- ♥ There is now no restriction for women in carrying out market work and going out of the house for any work.

Physical Integrity: Women are in a very vulnerable position socio-politically, particularly the landless group of female farmers. Although most of them have been selected as landless, settlement is not finished yet legally. Therefore, their crops, money and goods are being taken away by the so-called ‘jotdars’ and other powerful groups who do not want them to have land rights. Their houses are being torn down and a number of court cases filed against them. Ms. Rahala Khatun cries saying □পুলিশের ভয়ে আমি বাচ্চকে দুধ দিতে পারি না। এ ঘরে ওঘরে পালাই থাকি। বাচ্চা কাঁদলে তারা টের পাইবো□- I am afraid of being caught by the policeman. I cannot breast-feed my child. I hide here and there. I left breast-feeding girlchild. If she cries, they will catch me. They are fighting these circumstances with their lives. Almost all of the 25-30 women present talk about such repression. They brought their neighbours and women known to them who have been tortured with the purpose to make them leave the area, to demonstrate this point. The general nature of threats reported by these women is listed below:

- Terrorist activities against some homesteads. Police also join with these groups in torturing and looting.
- Young girls are always threatened by abuse or kidnapping.
- Powerful muscle men torture the landless and tear down their homes.
- Reports of abduction and killing of the landless poor by powerful landowners.
- False accusations against the landless to force them to leave the area.

2.1.5 Effects on the Condition and the Position of the Female Model Farmers in the Project Area

Home Gardening: The focus group discussion with female model farmers was held to assess the effects on the condition and position of them at Jahajmara site offices in South Hatiya on 4th January 2004. The participants reflect on their experiences as model farmers. (See Appendix-3 for FDG procedures and checklist).

Effects on the condition of Female Model Farmer: The women introduced themselves as model farmers, and are proud to be known as vegetables growers. Their status has been uplifted through training and resources provided to them by BRAC/CDSP-II. They are growing vegetables on the homestead around the year. They reported that they are cultivating the following vegetables:

Red Amaranth (Lal Shak)
Sweet Potato and Leaves (Mishti Alo and Shak)
Coriander Leaves (Dhania pata)
Spinach (Plaong Shak)
Radish and Leaves (Moola and Shak)
Carrot (Gajor)
Bottle Ground and Leaves (Lau and Shak)
Pumpkin (Mishti Koomra)
Local Bean (Deshi Sheem)
Tomato (Tok Begoon)
Cabbage (Badha kopi)
Cauliflower (Phool kopi)
Khol Rabi (Ol kopi)
Green Amaranth (Data Shak)
Bitter Gourd (Korola)
Egg Plant (Begoon)
Yard long Bean (Borboti)
Indian Spinach (Pui Shak)
Ash Gourd (Chal Koomra)
Snake Gourd (Chichinga)
Ridge Gourd (Jhinga)
Okra (Dherosh)
Cucumber (Shasha)
Taste Gourd (Kakrol)

The model farmers present do not all grow all types of the vegetables that are mentioned above. Different model farmers produce different varieties, and make a choice depending on several issues such as soil condition, soil salinity, availability of fresh water and quality seed. They reported that some of them have also planted the following fruit trees on their homestead:

Banana (Kola)
Papaya (Pepe)
Custard Apple (Ataphol)
Pomelo (Jamboora)
Bilimbi (Kamranga)

Wood Apple (Bel)
Lemon (Lebu)
Black Berry (Jam)
Mango (Am)
Coconut (Narikel)
Jackfruit (Kathal)

The model farmers reported that a large variety of vegetables and fruit could be grown during the year in the home garden. Some vegetables, such as tomato, cabbage and cauliflower are grown in the winter season. Others, such as pumpkin, bottle gourd and data shak can be harvested over a long period of time. A few can be grown throughout the year such as lal shak. They claimed that they are able to grow and harvest 5 to 7 different vegetables and fruits throughout the year. They explained that the model farmers present understood the need to grow vegetables and fruit on their homesteads. They explained how easy it is to obtain nutritious food from their surroundings with only a small garden. Some of them also mentioned the issue of income generation and how it is contributing enormously to their sustenance.

They were able to discuss technologies that have been newly introduced by BRAC/CDSP programs such as –

- Seed collection
- Storage of seed
- Seed germination
- Method of controlling insects and diseases
- Compost preparation
- Demarcation of plots
- Developing drainage systems
- Techniques of inter cropping to grow more on a small piece of land
- They also described the benefits of using compost described as follows:
 - * Increase soil fertility
 - * Improve physical condition of the soil, making it easy to cultivate
 - * Also helps to reduce soil salinity.

Ms. Jiban Ara a Model Farmer from Moktaria village stated, *“My mother grew vegetables traditionally. Most of that cultivation however, was seasonal or occasional. Till to date, most of the women in char area are doing like my mother did. The main reasons why home gardening is not practiced to a greater extent are problems relating to inputs such as quality seeds, fertilizer and lack of motivation or awareness on the part of women in char area. Many women from neighbourhood visited my garden and they became interested in cultivating vegetables through out the year. They have collected seeds from me”*.

Economic Position: All the Model Farmers agreed upon the fact that they provide an income flow by cultivating vegetables as well as rearing animals and poultry and selling them or their produce. They also mentioned that they earn much more by selling vegetables than anything else. It helped them earn an additional income that gives them a small amount of economic security. Male-female earnings are perceived as complementary in their family’s sustenance. The Model Farmers stated that they do not

hand over all their income to their husbands. They keep some cash with them, and this gives them a greater say in the spending of this income than earlier.

Political Position: The Female Model Farmers felt that they have earned respect from their family and also the community. Both male and female members of their community appreciated their work as vegetable producers. They are frequently asked advice on what to do and how to establish a successful home garden, and are able to assist in the requests for help and advice. They stated that they are able to participate in decision making about any family affairs, and that they are allowed to attend training and talk to male staff of BRAC/CDSP-II. It was also claimed that they are now able to decide on personal expenditure such as buying ornaments, clothes, utensils, betel nut and leaves and also able to visit the doctor.

Socio-cultural Position: The Female Model Farmer showed a high level of self-esteem as vegetable growers. They understood the importance of their contribution to family income as well as the improvement to the health situation. They stated that their husbands and the other family members also recognised their contribution as a matter of relief from absolute poverty. However there is still a lot of restriction on their movement outside the home compound. Although they are allowed to visit DUS, a local NGO office alone, when in the past they would have had to inform the household head. They are still not allowed to market their produce, and most have to depend on their husbands and sons to carry out market work. Some of them are able to sell their produce to moving traders.

Physical Integrity: The Model Farmers claimed that involvement with home gardening has brought about some positive changes in their lives, and made their lives as women more valuable. Many of them expressed a desire to educate their daughters and to prevent their early marriage. They expressed this in various ways, such as “

“ I want my daughters to go to school. I don’t want her to marry before she is twenty”. (Rahela Begum, Model Farmer, Nutun Shukchar).

“ I want my daughter’s face and eyes to bloom first, before she marries”. (Dulupernessa, Model Farmer, Birbiri).

The model farmers have gained an insight into their own personal worth and ability. They understand their contribution to their family and to society. They are also aware of their social status, and this is why they are active in planning their daughter’s lives.

They have also presented some challenges for CDSP-II. They want CDSP-II to train them also on field crop cultivation and legal rights of women. They made an earnest request to finish land settlement as soon as possible, and hoped that it would bring about social stability so enabling them to maximise benefits from the emerging new possibilities in their locality.

2.1.6 SWOT Analysis – Agriculture Extension

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Women were recognised as female farmers instead of farmers wives; ● Women’s access was increased to agriculture technologies in the project areas.. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☹ The personnel of DAE, sector staffs of consultant team and NGOs are not sufficiently aware of and sympathetic towards women’s needs in agriculture. ☹ Female staff was not used to deliver inputs and services to female farmers.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☼ Enabling environment was created for women to attend farmers’ forum meeting with male farmers. ☼ Female farmers were allowed to participate training with male farmers. ☼ DAE have shown patience in delivering services to female farmers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☹ Female farmers workload have increased. ☹ Female farmers interests might not be considered in a non-project situation.

2.1.7 Lessons Learnt: Agriculture Extension

- ☛ It is necessary to prepare an Activity Profile related to agriculture practice in the project area in order to identify women's needs and interests during project formulation period.
- ☛ Women's needs and interests should be incorporated in PP of agriculture sector.
- ☛ It is necessary to formulate the roles of various participants (DAE, NGOs and consultants) in this sector during inception period.
- ☛ A clear guideline on field operations and methods of implementation of each and every activity should be formulated and participants should be agreed upon.
- ☛ Training should be organised for the staff of involved organisations in gender skills.
- ☛ Female staff need to be recruited to reach female farmers.
- ☛ Despite the gender sensitive strategies adopted in National Agriculture policy (1990), the extension strategies which are followed by DAE, are gender blind (See Appendice-2).
- ☛ There is no internalisation of gender specific approach to agriculture extension by all involved parties (DAE, Consultants and NGOs).

2.2 Gender and Land Settlement

2.2.1 Gender Concerns, Activities and Implementation Strategies

In the agrarian economy of Bangladesh, arable land is the most valued form of property for its economy as well as its political and symbolic importance. In the rural area of Bangladesh it is the only productive, wealth creating and livelihood-sustaining asset. Traditionally it has also been the basis of political power and social status, and for many it provides a sense of identity and roots within a particular village. Often in people's minds land has a sense of permanence, which no other asset possesses.

Like all other Char land in the river basin of Bangladesh, the land of the CDSP-II area was gradually raised on the riverbed of the Meghna estuary and came into being over 15 to 20 years. None of the people of these Char lands or the outsiders could say the exact time when the Chars were first seen. However, settlers normally occupy these Chars, when they are high enough to be free from frequent flooding by seawater.

The newly accreted Char lands are low lying, which makes them vulnerable to floods and cyclones from the Bay of Bengal. Their soils have a relatively high salinity with relatively low contents of organic materials, which causes low fertility compared to older land. The Chars come under a dynamic physical environment that changes over the seasons and over the years, and saline intrusion is a continuous threat. Even then the settlers make their home in these marginal and disaster prone Char areas for economic reasons. The Chars can be used for agriculture, although salinity limits the agriculture potential, for livestock and for fisheries, particularly open fisheries harvesting fish from small channels, canal, river and sea.

The plot-to-plot survey of CDSP-II shows that the settlers in the Char areas originated from the adjacent coastal districts and offshore islands. There are different categories of settlers who occupy the land in these Chars. There are many settlers who have no land, in most cases because they have lost their land somewhere else because of river erosion or other socio-economic reasons. There is also a group of well off people who are living outside the Char land who have occupied a large mass of the land. To maintain their rights on this land, they usually hire poor families from their area to look after their land. Once this well off group manages to get a legal entitlement to the land, in most cases, the hired poor families are evicted. In a few cases they are given a small piece of land to build a house but it is only usufruct right, ownership is not transferred legally. In some cases, a number of well off families are living in the Char areas with a similar lifestyle to the poor.

The women play an important role in the creation of homes in the newly accreted Char land. The women of the absolute landless poor families migrate into the new Chars areas almost empty handed. Their only belongings are the newly occupied land, children and a few old utensils.

To ensure possession over the land the women of migrant families start living in the Chars, even when it is desolate and without trees. Even a couple of decades ago, the Chars were cultivated for some years before being permanently settled by dwellers, but over the last 5-7 years dwellers have settled in the Chars while the land surface is still under accretion process. Even at risk to their lives, women start living on low lying strips

of Khas land next to the government owned coastal mangrove forest. They are frequently oppressed by the officials of The Department of Forestry (see case studies below).

In the new Chars, women frequently face trouble in the collection of drinking water and the basic daily supplies. Sometimes women have to travel 10-12 kilometres to fetch safe drinking water from settled villages in the surrounding areas. If there is no such village, even when they are aware that open water such as from canals or rivers are one of the causes of diarrhoeal diseases, they still consume water from these sources. The women do not get a chance to bath even once a week during the dry season. Moreover, no health care facilities exist in the new chars, and no doctor or medicine is available in such area. The dwellers are totally dependant on traditional healers. Traditional birth attendants provide pre-natal and post-natal care to mothers and newborn babies. All the latrines are open and entirely unhygienic. In addition to all of these difficulties, women still have to undergo further types of oppression, and are insecure and victims of sexual assault and other forms of repression and suppression in the newly settled society in Char areas.

Nevertheless, the women of the Char areas develop their own strategies to survive, for example when the male members go out to earn, the women from the neighbouring families come together to sleep during the night. The women continue to live with all these difficulties and bear the burden of all types of oppression, in the hope of getting a piece of land. Without the woman's presence within a small hut on this occupied land, it is not easy to prove the possession or the necessity for land. Being in possession of the land become a very important issue in order to get a legal document to the ownership of the Khas land. In the face of all these problems the women manage to survive in the new Chars and ensure the legal rights to a piece of land for their families.

However difficult it is to establish legal rights to land for the poor in the Coastal Chars, CDSP-II as a bilateral project of the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) and the Government of the Netherlands is not in a position to go beyond national policies on land distribution of the GoB. Land distribution under CDSP-II has been carried out according to the Khas land Distribution Act 1997. Within the framework of this Act, CDSP-II makes an effort to maximise the benefit for women from land settlement. The following has been the main focus of these attempts:

- The women of the polders are made aware of their role in land settlement and of their rights to land.
- The women of the project area are kept informed about land settlement procedures and the plot- to-plot survey results are shared with them.
- The land title is provided in the names of both spouses.
- Landless female-headed household are treated as a priority category of target groups in terms of land settlement.
- In the case of the women who are widows or who have been deserted, lacking an able bodied son or any children, attempts have been taken to give them a bigger homestead (at least 0.50 acre per women) assuring them of shelter is not prohibited by the law, though they are not entitled to arable land.
- A list of female headed households are prepared and these families are assisted by NGOs in order to make them familiar with all stages of land settlement and to prepare them to take action whenever needed at all stages of land settlement.
- The women's presence in hearing sessions is ensured.

- The women who are in a conflicting or problematic position are listened to carefully and feedback is provided to them within two weeks.
- Local female Union Parishad members are trained to play an active role in land settlement. They are actively involved in the preparation of the list of landless and finalize the selection of landless in locally organised hearing sessions.
- The land settlement process is monitored through a gender lens from proposed allotment sheet to the hand over of the title deed including procession over land.

2.2.2 Results

- In total, 38 information dissemination meetings for women were organized in all the concerned project areas (Gangchil-Torab Ali, Moradona, South Hatiya, Bandar Tilla and Nijhum Dwip) on land settlement laws and procedures. To make it convenient for women to participate in these meetings, 2-3 meetings were organised in different areas of the big villages, while one meeting was conducted in small villages. Feedback to the women on the progress of this component was started when the field hearings were began, and will continue throughout, providing information to SPCs and LADCs up to the end of the settlement programme.
- The principle of treating landless female headed households as a priority group in the land settlement process is strictly followed. Overall, around 12% of the selected landless households are female headed. This is more or less double the percentage of female headed households among all of the households, based on the data provided in the baseline surveys. The impression of the project and partner NGO staff however feel that the figures in these surveys are lower than the actual situation. Around 14% of the selected landless households in Gangchil Torab Ali, 10% in Char Moradona and 12% in South Hatiya. The baseline surveys of the respective areas give an overall percentage of female headed households of 5%, 7% and 5% respectively.
- Around 900 acres of land under possession of 652 selected landless female headed households. Out of that, 117 acres in Torab Ali Gangchil is under the possession of 118 female headed households, 91 acres in Moradona under 135 female headed households, 180 acres of land under possession of 196 female headed households in South Hatiya and 10 acres of land under the possession of 15 female headed households in Nijhum Dwip. Another 29 acres of land is under the possession of 31 female headed households in Bandartilla. Upon the handing over of the title deeds, an average per household ownership would be 1.40 acre.
- Conventionally, the name of the male spouse is put first in the Khatian. This gives males a favourable position to exercise the power of ownership. For example, a land title is used to secure a bank loan; the bank manager usually checks only the first name. This means that in practice one of the owners can mortgage the land, without the consent of the partner. In the prevailing social system, men exercise ownership of the land; hence putting the wife's name first in the Khatian would benefit them. The Consultants in meetings at Upazila, District and Ministerial level raised this issue. Officials of the Ministry of Land (MoL) confirmed that there is no legal impediment to such a procedure. The local MoL staff fully support the idea and have promised to pursue the office of the Secretary of the MoL to issue a circular to this effect. However, no firm decision has yet been taken, but this matter should be pursued at a higher level of the MoL.

- According to the Khas Land Distribution Act 1997, widowed or deserted women without an able-bodied son are not entitled to get agricultural Khas land. However, this restriction does not apply in the case of victims of river erosion. Because river erosion is a common feature in CDSP-II areas, widowed or deserted women, lacking an able-bodied son, are listed as erosion affected families. In this way they are entitled to participate in the land settlement process as any other landless household. This strategy indeed proves easy and successful, as no deviation from the settlement procedures is needed to provide widowed and deserted women with larger homesteads as it was planned in the beginning of CDSP-II.
- After the plot-to-plot survey, the list containing all the names and addresses of female-headed households were prepared and given to the concerned NGOs, SPCs and LADCs to assist them in all stages of the settlement procedures.
- Two training courses of two weeks were organised at the Bangladesh Institute of Administrative Management in Dhaka on laws, circulars and procedures of land settlement and land management in October and November 2000. Women's rights in land issues were included in this training module. Twenty government officials attended the courses from District and Upazila level (four ADC(R) s, six UNOs, four RDCs and six AC (L) s.
- A session on women's right to land and the social aspects of it were incorporated into the orientation workshops for the members of the Upazila Agricultural Khas Land Management and Settlement Committee of Sudharam, Companiganj, Hatiya, Mirsharai at Upazila head quarters.
- Fifty local MoL officials attended a five-day training course on the law and circulars related to land settlement in two groups at the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development, Comilla. Women's rights to land and gender issues in Khas land distribution procedures at the field level were incorporated in this training module. The Gender and NGO Adviser facilitated a half-day session on the same subject. Six Kanungos, six Surveyors, six Office Supervisors from UNO offices, twelve Office Assistants of AC (L) offices, eight Tahsildars and Ten Assistant Tahsildars and two staff of CDSP-II land unit participated in these courses.
- Forty-two female Union Parishad members were trained on basic gender issues including laws, circulars and procedures related to land settlement. Thirteen female Union Parishad members from the project areas participated in the study tour to West Bengal, where land issues were discussed quite extensively. Most of the female UP members have indeed played an active role during the plot-to-plot surveys and the subsequent field hearings. Ms. Maya Begum, member of the Char Elahi Union Parishad under Companiganj Upazila of Noakhali District has become a role model for her active participation in land settlement in Gangchil-Torab Ali. The MoL officials and local community appreciated her role in the hearing sessions.
- The male members of SPC, LADC and UP were made aware of women's rights to land, and this issue was continually discussed in their regular meetings. This minimised the male leaders antagonistic role in ensuring the women's right to land.

2.2.3 Case Studies

Golap Bia
Nijhum Dwip
Hatiya Thana
Noakhali District.

I do not know how old I am. I was born in Horni on Hatiya, which has been eroded. I have had 13 children. Eight died when they were very young, five daughters and three sons. My husband died of dysentery 26 years ago. I have shifted my home five times in Hatiya. I came to Nijhum Dwip 12 years ago with the help of my sons and relatives. We bribed the staff of the forest department Tk. 700 so they would let us settle on a piece of land. We cultivated our plot for a whole year but the land was cover by sand. In the last two years we could not grow any crops. During the last year, we again bribed the staff of the same department. In the last season, we were able to cultivate three acres of land, half each for my two sons. But now the Forest Officials asked for more money. If my sons could not pay, cases will be lodged against all of us. I, as a woman, do not understand much about those issues, but the men do. My sons do not go to the market any more because they are afraid of being arrested. The staffs of Forest Department also come here often. They spoke bad words to us. They would not allow us to raise chickens, duck, or goats. We could not think what to do; we do not sleep at night. We have nothing to loose, as we are more scared of poverty than the staff of forest department or the tidal surge.

Ayma Begum
South Char Majid
Sadar Thana
Noakhali District.

I do not know my age. I was born in Nilokhi on Hatiya. I was married when I was 11 years old. When our homestead was eroded. I was a mother of nine children. In Nilokhi we used to work as sharecroppers. Later we settled in Amtali of Hatiya. The whole family was involved in mat weaving. My two sons and one daughter died of diarrhoea in the same year. I became sick and my husband was getting old and thus unable to carry mats to the local Bazar. My nephew took us to South Char Majid. Our life is not better in South Char Majid. First I shared my house with my nephew. But staying with him was not comfortable, when he has fights and quarrel with his wives. He has three wives. I left that home; at last I shared my house with my daughter and grandsons here. My daughter is a widow. Her husband died seven years ago from fever. I also lost one of my sons who was killed by Bahini in Ziar char because he denied joining that Bahini. I even did not get his dead body. We bought 0.25 acre of land from one of my neighbour but the man called Azad Mia from Atkopalia is claiming that land. We are under continuous threat from him. We have received many notices to leave our house. Sometimes he comes and starts shouting 'I shall burn your house'. My daughter is young and a widow. She has to sell labour for housework or paddy husking. I weave mats. But we are in a frightened situation, who knows what would happen to us. We put our name on plot-to-plot survey list. Could you tell us how we can get land soon?

2.2.4 Effects on the Condition and the Position of the Selected Landless Female in the Project Area

Land Settlement: The landless female headed households are categorised as a priority group in land settlement. The process of settlement was started with a plot-to-plot survey in CDSP-II areas in the year 2000, but achievements remain very limited due to the prevailing socio political and administrative complexity. However a focus group discussion was held with the selected landless females at South Char Majid Mouza of Moradona on 30th December 2003. Twenty seven selected landless women² were invited to share their experiences as they awaited settlement on Khas land. (See appendix –3 for FGD procedures and checklist).

Effects on the condition of selected landless female-headed household: There is some scepticism whether CDSP-II could proceed with its land settlement program or not. The women present stated that there is a rumour that CDSP-II has closed. ‘Jotdars’ and politically powerful people have become very active in the field. Often they threaten landless families with the purpose of evicting them from their occupied land. Out of 24 landless women, 15 of them came to this village as long ago as 17 years. Seventeen women have come from South Hatiya as they were affected by river erosion. The rest became landless due to various socio-economic reasons. All of them came here with their relatives. However, all of them had to bribe the local Jotdars to get a piece of land. Ms. Shamsun Nahar stated, “ It was impossible to get possession without bribing local ‘dalal’.” It was reported that before the start of the land settlement process by CDSP-II, they were forced to pay 18,000 Taka to 20,000 Taka per family to dalal. They have paid bit by bit; many of them have paid per month, while the others have done so occasionally. One and a half years ago, they were selected as landless to be settled on Khas land, but to date they have to carry on paying a bribe to keep the local elite in their favour. They have also bribed miscreants to escape being physically oppressed and harassed. Some of the women faced difficulties to be listed during plot-to-plot survey. Ms. Shahanaz Begum said, “*My serial number is 376 on the list of possession holders. The land that is possessed by me was survey thrice. During first survey, 1.50 acre was recorded against my name. A couple of month later, the second survey showed 2.00 acre under my possession. And now the third survey, recorded only 0.18 acre against my name. The rest of the land was recorded in the name a Jotdar. I did not understand what happened to me. I filed an objection. But nothing has been resulted.*”

The women present stated that the results of hearings of objections were not benefiting them, but they are waiting with patience to own a piece of land. They are hoping to get the land as well as legal documents to confirm ownership.

Effect on Economic Position: After selection as landless, the women managed not to pay bribes on a regular basis. They referred to an information dissemination session on settlement procedures, where they were warned not to pay out any more in the middle of the process of settlement. But they reported that Tahshildar asked them to pay as much as 6,000 Taka per family, otherwise he will not act to send the necessary documents to the office of the Assistant Commissioner (Land). They have not paid yet, and asked whether they should pay or not.

2

The women who are already selected as landless by the Upazila Khas Land Management and Settlement Committee. This means that the women are entitled to get Khas land.

Political Position: Although it is uncertain whether they will get a settlement legally under CDSP-II, they are still hoping to get the land. They appreciate the attempts that have been made by CDSP-II in this regard, as the last hope to ensure the rights of landless women to be settled on Khas land. Up until today their status is as follows:

- Most of them knew their serial numbers on the list of possession holders.
- They have specified forms and they have already applied for getting settlement on Khas land.
- Some of them were selected as landless but as yet they have nothing under possession.
- Powerful muscle men have been trying to evict them. They lodged a number of cases against the landless.
- They still felt threatened; the pressure has only reduced a little.

A lot of confusion arises in the field about settlement, and the women felt they were not kept well informed. They asked lot of questions, and discussion helped in clarifying several issues. They felt that there was very little contact between CDSP and beneficiaries.

Socio-cultural Position: Although the women were able to raises their voices to establish their rights to land. There is still an alarming amount of violence against them related to conflicts on land issues. Delay in land settlement has a destructive effect on the women's lives as well as on their livelihood.

Physical Integrity: The women stated, *“If CDSP could not make it possible, we will never get land. We have to leave this char. Jotdars will evict us surely”*

It showed their high level of dependency on the consultant team, as they are not yet united themselves to act as a pressure group to speed up the settlement. It was felt that there is a need to organise landless women and men and make them ready to fight in establishing their right to land. Otherwise, the net effect of land settlement will be to strengthen the existing power structure, not dislodged it. However depressed and oppressed the landless women felt, they valued the initiative of CDSP to promote land ownership rights for them.

2.2.5 SWOT Analysis – Land Settlement

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Women's land ownership was increased in the project area. ● Enhancing social stability through land settlement increased women's safety and their security. ● Female members of LADC, SPC and UP have been participating actively in the selection of landless and other procedures of land settlement. ● Women's knowledge was enhanced about land settlement procedures and their role in each and every step. ● Community awareness was built about the women's right to land. ● Gender segregated database was developed for the land sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☹ Women's vulnerability was increased in project areas due to delay in land settlement. ☹ No system was developed to continue feedback to women at each stage of land settlement. This raised a lot of confusion, and various interests groups, such as traditional community leaders and local MoL staffs, easily exploit the women.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☼ Proper land settlement contributes to poverty alleviation. ☼ It helps in establishing social stability and enhances social security, especially for women of the Chars. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☹ Too much politicisation / commercialisation of land settlement issues, particularly in coastal chars. ☹ Land grabbing in the name of shrimp cultivation reduces opportunities to settle landless on Khas land in Coastal Chars.

2.2.6 Lessons Learnt: Land Settlement

- ☛ There is a need to promote recognition of social benefits that are generated from equitable land rights within MoL.
- ☛ The settlement case of female-headed households should be started first in the procedures.
- ☛ It should be ensured that name of the female spouse put first in the Khatian.
- ☛ Special attention has to be given to the women who are in a conflicting or problematic position.
- ☛ Field experiences related to gender and land settlement should be shared with high officials of MoL, members of parliament, DKLMSC, UKLMSC, UP and other groups who are active in these fields.
- ☛ Developed gender segregated database can be used by MoL all over the country.
- ☛ Gender sensitive approach to land settlement procedures were not internalised by MoL

2.3 Gender and Institutions

2.3.1 Gender Concerns, Activities and Implementation strategies

Experience has drawn attention to the fact that neither giving things to people nor doing things for people will be to their benefit in the long run; they may even have a seriously negative effects. In terms of sustainability, development aimed by any project, should be understood as a process where people learn to participate constructively³ in finding solutions for their own problems. Ronald Bouch mentions in his book on participatory management of agriculture projects that development is occurring where people are gaining self-confidence, motivation and knowledge, needed to tackle and solve the problems they have, and actually tackling and solving those problems (Bouch, 1985, p-28).

Nowadays it is almost mandatory to all development practitioners to incorporate community views at all stages of a project in its command area. CDSP-II recognised that it was necessary to organise people in order to create a systematic pattern of field level institutions. Those would be used to plan with the targeted communities, involving them in identifying needs, choosing, designing, implementing and monitoring the interventions of its working areas.

In CDSP-II, the term field level institutions refer to those institutions that are composed of representatives of the Char population and give shape to the concept of people's participation. This is involved with the following institutions: Local Area Development Committee (LADC), Sub-Polder Committee (SPC) and Polder Committees (PC), Water Management Committees and Tubewell Users Groups (TUG).

As women account for half of the total population of the project area, CDSP-II committed itself to ensuring their participation in project activities. Being aware of the women's position and condition (for definition see appendix – 2), it was realised that some kind of affirmative action was required in order to facilitate a more equal representation of women in all sectorised field level institutions. The following is a list of strategies that were considered:

- A decision was made to reserve a percentage of membership of each institution for women. The senior consultants of the project held a meeting in Char Majid site office (one of the field offices) to discuss gender aspects in its activities. This meeting decided that at least 40% of the total membership of LADC, SPC and PC would be reserved for women and in the case of WMC that would be at least 50% of total membership. It was also decided that female members of tubewell users families would form tubewell user groups and amongst the members of those groups two people would be selected to be caretakers of those tube wells.⁴

³ According to David Werner, Constructive participation means the process of people's participation through which the people gain self-confidence, pride and the satisfaction of having made significant achievements. They can also develop ingenuity and creativity that will enable them to continue improving life of their communities (Help Health Worker Learn, 1982, page-110).

⁴ To create much more accountabilities to the specific needs and interests of women, a critical much of about of about 30-35% women representation is essential in any type of organisation. However, it is important that the larger presence of women has to be matched with commitment to put gender policy in practise.

- The issue of women's membership in LADC, SPC, PC and WMC was discussed in project introduction meetings at village level.
- A woman's expected role in field level institutions was explained in formal and informal gatherings at all levels.
- A methodology was developed to select female members in such a way that cover all categories of women in the concerned area.
- A budget was allocated to hold separate meetings for women, and trained selected women continuously to increase their ability in performing their role in a meaningful way.
- A budget was also made available to train all male and female members on basic gender issues to create an environment of mutual trust and respect between men and women members of all institutions.

2.3.2 Ways of Ensuring Women's Participation in the Field Level Institution

Area Development Committee (LADC)

Five Area Development Committees were formed in the unprotected areas: Char Gangchil-Torab Ali, Char Lakshmi, Char Moradona, Nijhum Dwip (Bandar Tilla) and Nijhum Dwip (Char Osman). The process of the formation of LADC started with organising issue-based mass meetings such as information dissemination sessions on land, discussion on drainage and water logging problems in the unprotected areas. A series of separate meetings were organised for women in each mouza. These meetings were used to explain the role and responsibilities of LADC and inform everyone about the expected role of female members in these institutions. In the first meeting, the participants were requested to think about their representation. Several small group discussions were held in different clusters in the village. Two weeks later, another meeting was organised in the same mouza. In that meeting, one female representative of each mouza was selected by the women of that mouza. The men of that mouza selected one male representative in the same way, but in a separate meeting. All mouza representative become members of LADC in their respective areas. In addition, male and female elected members of Union Parishad became ex-officio members of these committees.

Sub-Polder Committee (SPC)

Sub-Polder Committees were formed in the areas that were empoldered as a CDSP-II activity: Muhuri and South Hatiya. Organising issue based mass meetings in the area also started the formation of these committees. First of all, each mouza was divided into a number of clusters, depending on both population and area. A women's meeting was organised in each cluster to explain the objective and role of SPCs in project activities as well as to discuss the idea behind the involvement of women in these committees. Next the participants nominated their female cluster representative to the SPC. Male cluster representative to the SPC were selected in separate meetings. Special attention was paid to include women from the various interest groups such as economic class, occupation and social position during the selection of female members of the SPCs. Lastly a general mixed meeting was organised at mouza level in which all cluster dwellers were invited to

participate. Both male and female nominees of each cluster were introduced and people's consent to their membership in SPC was checked and finalised in this meeting. Although women face constraints from traditional customs that prohibit them from being involved in activities of a public forum on the grounds of socio-cultural and religious taboos, their interests in community activities were reflected by their presence in mixed meetings in large numbers.

Polder Committee

A Polder Committee was formed for each polder, and each SPC nominated two members, one male and one female, to represent them in PC. A person from the partner NGO of each polder is also a member of the committee, whilst a representative of all other line agencies (BWDB, LGED, DPHE, DAE and MoL), including consultants of CDSP-II are observer members of the committee. Both male and female members of Union Parishad in the project are ex-officio members of the polder committee. The chairpersons of Union Parishad also played the role of chair of the Polder Committees.

Water Management Committee (WMC)

A Water Management Committee was organised for each system that covers the whole drainage area of a sluice. A system is divided into smaller hydrological units, which are called water management areas. One female and one male member from each water management area are selected in a similar way to the selection of sub-polder committee members. The chairperson, both male and female members of Union Parishad within the concerned system play advisory role to the WMC.

Tubewell Users Group (TUG)

The women of the households around each tubewell were organised into a Users Group (UG) and these groups are made responsible for the operation and maintenance of all installed tubewells. Each group selected two caretakers; one is the woman of the household where the tubewell is installed and the other woman among the other UG members. Both of them are trained on techniques of minor repairs and proper maintenance of tubewells and pit latrines. In addition, all members of UG are made aware of the technical and general issues of safe water and sanitation through informal courtyard sessions.

Information on LADC in Five Different Areas from starting to December 2003.

Sl. No.	Name of LADC	Date of formation	Member			Total No. of meeting held	Attendance in %			Remarks
			Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
1	Char Moradona	Dec. '03	11	8	19	16	59	65	62	
2	Char Lakshmi	-do-	14	9	23	11	57	67	62	
3	Gangchil – Torabali	-do-	8	4	12	16	61	82	71	
4	Bandartila	-do-	7	6	13	15	57	69	63	
5	Nijhum Dwip	-do-	7	6	13	15	67	65	66	

Information on SPC in Muhuri starting to December 2003.

Sl. No.	Name of LADC	Date of formation	Member			Total No. of meeting held	Attendance in %			Remarks
			Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
1	Pachim Ichakhali	19-12-01	7	6	13	10	76	74	75	
2	North Ichakhali	10-12-01	10	6	16	8	78	67	73	
3	Banshkhali	09-12-01	10	6	16	3	65	61	63	

Information on SPC in South Hativa starting to December 2003.

Sl. No.	Name of LADC	Date of formation	Member			Total No. of meeting held	Attendance in %			Remarks
			Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
1	Bordail	7-01-02	6	5	11	15	66	78	72	
2	Sonadia	7-01-02	5	4	9	14	72	83	77	
3	East Char Birbiri	8-01-02	6	5	11	16	74	59	67	
4	Mohammad pur	6-01-02	8	7	15	15	79	68	71	
5	Machpherson	6-01-02	6	5	11	18	70	76	73	
6	Nuturn Sukchar	8-01-02	5	4	9	12	79	80	80	
7	Muktaria	8-01-02	4	3	7	11	70	82	76	

Information on WMC and WMF in the Project Areas since inception to December, 2003

Sl. No	Name of WMC	Date of formation	Member			No of meeting held since formation to December 03	Attendance in %		
			Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Average
1	CBD-I	24/4/1998	9	8	17	26	78%	74%	76%
2	CBD-II	18/5/1998	10	10	20	28	74%	71%	73%
3	CM	12/5/1998	10	10	20	28	76%	75%	76%
4	CBT- Nabagram	1/6/1998	4	4	8	26	76%	84%	80%
5	CBT – Kolmi	7/5/1998	4	4	8	24	77%	83%	80%
6	CBT - Gangchil	1/1/2000	9	9	18	20	75%	68%	71%
7	Montaz	23/7/2001	6	5	11	10	67%	74%	71%
8	Gopal	23/7/2001	5	5	10	11	86%	69%	78%
9	Karim	23/7/2001	5	5	10	10	60%	81%	71%
10	Zillar	11/12/2001	7	7	14	12	78%	78%	78%
11	WMC-1, Bamni	16/3/2003	8	8	16	9	87%	70%	79%
12	WMC-2, Bamni	27/4/2003	12	11	23	6	71%	73%	72%
13	WMC-3	12/8/2003	12	12	24	3	72%	75%	74%
14	WMF, P-59/3C-Bamni	14/9/2003	11	4	15	2	82%	88%	85%
15	WMF, P-59/3B	9/4/2003	8	3	11	4	88%	66%	77%

2.3.3 Results

- In the LADCs and SPCs, female membership is between 30-40% and male – female membership is 50-50 in WMC.
- The attendance rate for female members of all field level institutions continued to be higher than their male counterparts.
- It is the first time that there has been any involvement in community activities for most of the female members of all field level institutions. Hence, to increase their ability in performing their expected role, all female members of LADCs (33), SPCs (98) WMCs (72) were trained in basic aspects of mainstreaming gender in development activities. Forty-two female members of Union Parishad (UP) in the project area were also trained on the same subject.
- In CDSP-II field level institutions are responsible for the preparation of planned internal development in their respective areas. To enhance capability in developing gender sensitive proposals, it was planned to train all field level institutions on basic issues of incorporating gender in planning. Up until December 2003, 5 LADCs, 6 WMCs and 4 UPs (under local level planning) were trained on the subject.
- To create gender awareness among local leaders, 24 display boards and posters on women's development were supplied to 24 UP to demonstrate in the village court within the UP complexes.
- Booklets, leaflets and posters on gender issues were distributed amongst all members of field level institutions.
- A review of the resolutions of the meeting of field level institutions shows that women's needs were discussed in these forums, including the sensitive subject of women's oppression in their respective areas.

2.3.4 Case Study

Amena Khatun
Member of SPC
East Birbiri, Jahajmara Union
Hatiya Thana,
Noakhali District.

We proposed to build a cluster village in East Birbiri. There are many river erosion affected families in this area. Most of them are destitute in the real sense and have nothing to survive. Some of them are female-headed households, living on the slope of embankment in small huts. We explained the needs of the people. Our proposal was accepted and the Assistant Commissioner (Land) in Hatiya issued a letter to LGED by mentioning sites to dig a community pond. On the bank of this pond, houses will be built. But Mr. Khaleque, Secretary of my sub-polder committee claimed his right over the same piece of land. Most of us did not agree with him. Because we know that the land is under Khas Khatian. We put pressure on the secretary to give up his claim and allow contractor to dig the pond. He was not convinced. On the way back home, I was walking with Ms. Nahid Farhana Sumi, Female Field Coordinator of CDSP, she told me that you should go to Tahshil office and have to collect mouza map in order to confirm that the land is Khas. I did not mention anything to anybody. The next morning I walked to the Tahshil office. I bribed Taka 100 to the Assistant Tahshildar and I bought the mouza map. The Assistant Tahshildar marked the proposed plot for cluster village with red marks. I took it to CDSP office in Soudia Bazzar and I gave to Sumi Apa. She sent it to LGED engineers. After two days, Engineers and contractor came to the village with that paper and started digging the pond. Again the secretary threatens them. But this time, they show the mouza map and the villagers present there confirmed about the government ownership over the land. Later the villagers stopped the secretary, while he was shouting. Excavation of pond had been completed. The houses are yet to be built. This is the way we struggle with male members. In many cases, they value their personal wish while we the women serve the community.

2.3.5 Effects on the Condition and the Position of Female Members of Sub-Polder and Local Area Development Committee in South Hatiya

A focus group discussion was held with the female members of the Sub-Polder Committee and Local Area Development Committee in South Hatiya on 4th January 2003. Twenty-four selected members of these committees were invited to share their experience as they have served in these institutions for 3 years. (See appendix-3 for FGD procedures and checklist)

Condition: All the female members agreed upon the fact that the communication network had been extended due to the construction of roads and culverts. The women point out that with the construction of embankment regular intrusion of saline water has stopped. It has reduced the tension regarding tidal surge. The construction of cyclone shelters is perceived as a last hope for survival during dangers like a tornado, or cyclone. Easy access to safe water is seen as a life saving effort, and has reduced health hazards in the area as well as women's hardship in fetching drinking water. They express a high demand

for pit latrines, but it is not planned to cover all the families that are residing within the project area. They emphasised that the poorest of the poor should be prioritised as a target group for latrine distribution. They feel that the selection of households is not done properly for the installation of latrines. They stated that up until today, most of the latrines were distributed among the well-off families in the area.

They express great concerns about the delay in both land settlement as well as the completion of construction of sluices. Both issues are felt as ways of improving their livelihood and ensuring stability of the newly developed habitation, without these none could enjoy the benefits from other interventions including those that have already been done. With the construction of embankment, drainage has become a big problem in several parts of the polder, and it is necessary to complete the sluice construction as soon as possible.

The women involved in LADC/SPC consider themselves to be aware of various development issues related to their socio-economic improvement in the community and also as human beings. It has also increased their access to wide-ranging information. The women have gone to considerable lengths describing how various types of information have positively impacted on their lives and also livelihood. A long list of outcomes were cited by them as follows:

- We became aware of the importance of education to the children, and now send them to school. There are lots of women who do not yet understand the necessity of education, thereby are not interested in sending their child to school;
- We have become aware of women's rights;
- We understand our contribution to family income;
- We learnt to value our household work and also role in society;
- We have developed the courage to be in the public spheres which is seen as a man's world;
- We participate in planning a better future for the family with other members;
- We have gained the ability to explain the bad effect of early marriage and divorce;
- We are in savings group and we earn more from household enterprises. We don't waste our time and energy in gossiping.

Economic Position: All the participants claim that access to knowledge; new skills and the wider society have brought various opportunities to them. With a view of increasing bargaining power, all of them have been trying to be self-reliant. Their involvement in local leadership has brought a life of dignity and independence within their reach. Ms. Sufia Begum, one of the members of East Birbiri Sub-Polder Committee stated:

My husband left me and our son and daughter. I have lost my boy. I have sent him to live with his father, so he will share in his property. The girl stays with me but cries for her father. I was in a desperate situation until I joined SPC about 3 years ago. I am slowly learning to make my own way. I never married again, nor did I want to. If I had married and had more children, would not my present children have suffered a lot. Instead, I have learned to earn my own living and to be independent. I got participant allowance after completion of gender training. I bought 8 ducks. Later I have gone into raising poultry and horticulture with the assistance of “Dwip Unnayan Sangstha”.

However Ms. Piara Begum a Member of Mohammadpur SPC says “ *We could earn more if we had a chance to implement any schemes as PIC. Instead, we bear expenses to be in the SPC meetings. We pay one person to watch our houses in our absence and also spend on rickshaw to be in time in the meetings*”.

Political Position: The participants perceived their involvement in SPC and LADC as an opportunity to widen their role in public activities. They mention the fact that CDSP-II has created an opportunity for them to share leadership in their communities. Otherwise, it would take a couple of decades to claim their rights to participate in those activities in which men usually participate. They refer to gender training and mention that this enables them to take a more active role in claiming and establishing their rights. They are vocal, more outspoken and have developed a strong feeling of dignity. Ms. Zannat Ara from Nijhum Dwip LADC says, “*We were housewives. Now we become leaders*”. Ms. Nayan Begum from Bordail SPC adds, “*The important thing I learned from the committee is that I am strong as a member of SPC. I can withstand pressure but as housewife I was nothing. Once I saw a house that is newly built on the land that is demarcated for Burir Dona sluice. I visited owner of the house and showed him the boundary of the area of sluice. But he was not convinced. I informed UP Chairperson and he sent UP members to me. They went to the site with me. The man listened to us and he was forced to apologise. It was a great surprise to me that UP chairperson and members respond so quickly*”.

The participants are happy in explaining their experiences of enjoying equal status with men as members of SPC and LADC. They claim that they are able to propose and freely exercise voting rights in making decisions.

Socio-cultural Position: The women present are self-conscious and showed a feeling of dignity in spite of their violation of norms regarding Pardah. It is observed that the women derive a feeling of pride and an enhanced status from their participation in LADC and SPCs. On the other hand they have had to learn to deal with the hostility they encountered while encroaching on male spheres. Ms. Shahinur Begum, a member of Macperson SPC describes her perception: “*Pardah is a good thing. I wear a big Orna. There is good in it but on the other hand, if I am good, why should I remain at home. I don’t think I am doing anything wrong by participating in SPC. I told the community, if you want to ostracise me wait till I do something wrong first*”.

Physical Integrity: The participants expressed the view that they experienced a feeling of increased freedom and power. One of the members of Bandar Tilla LADC Ms. Bipul Akter says, *“I feel so free that I am not afraid to talk with BWDB and LGED officials”*. A member of Muktaria SPC Zannatunnur expresses her views in saying, *“Isn’t my soul the equal of a man’s soul? Don’t I work as hard as any men? I have always felt this deep within me but I have the courage to say it now, and I did not before joining the SPC and getting gender training”*.

The women perceived benefits moving from the private to the public sphere. They acknowledge that in spite of less privacy, by exposing the painful and abusive treatment often experienced by them, their role in society has slowly received public recognition. People come to them to discuss needs and problems, and they are treated as wise women in the area. The relatives of female members and also others bring information about SPC/LADC meeting date, time and place, this has prompted them to state that there has been a change in attitude towards the women’s role in their community. However, there is still a long way to go to reach the state of equality. Ms. Rokeya member of Nijhum Dwip SPC reminds us of this when she says *“ We are allowed to attend LADC meeting, but we have to seek permission whenever we need to go outside home”*.

2.3.6 SWOT Analysis - Institution Development

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Women's participation was enhanced in community decision-making bodies (SPC, PC, LADC and WMC). ● The processes have started to achieve equitable power relations between male and female members of field level institutions, as they both had to undergo a similar selection process and have enjoyed equal voting rights. ● Female staffs were recruited by CDSF to reach women in the project area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☹ A fund is not allocated to undertake activities for creating gender sensitivity in implementation and monitoring among involved parties (BWDB, LGED, Consultants and Field Level Institutions). ☹ Female members have fewer leadership positions in the executive committees of field level institutions. ☹ An institutional culture is not yet fully implemented that promotes both male and female members to express their opinion and to be heard equally.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☀ Social acceptance to women as leaders have increased in Char communities. ☀ Women's knowledge has increased on local politics and leadership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☹ No plan to ensure continuity of the field level institutions. Temporary arrangement was made to involve local community in physical planning and in resolution of local conflict during project implementation period.

2.3.7 **Lessons Learnt: Institution Development**

- ☛ It is necessary to build capacity so that women will be able to perform managerial functions, which includes financial management, communication and leadership skills.
- ☛ A linkage should be developed with local government to ensure continuity of field level institutions. LADCs and WMC should be supported in this regard.
- ☛ **Both male and female members of field level institutions should visit engendering development projects around country.**
- ☛ It is necessary to build capacity so that women will be able to perform managerial functions, which includes financial management, communication and leadership skills.
- ☛ A linkage should be developed with local government to ensure continuity of field level institutions. LADCs and WMC should be supported in this regard.
- ☛ Both male and female members of field level institutions should visit engendering development projects around country.

2.4 Gender and Water Management

2.4.1 Gender Perspective in Water Management

The Char Land in the river basin of Bangladesh has gradually emerged from the sea, and each Char is a newly emerged area formed from silt deposits. Emerging coastal mudflats are submerged twice in 24 hours during high tide but these remain visible the rest of the day. Slowly the low-lying Chars are covered with grass and attract people to cultivate them. People start living on unprotected cultivable Chars with very few belongings while they try to yield sustenance. Within a few months, small huts are visible all over the chars, often-great distances apart. Although water creates lives in the Chars, it remains as great a threat in so many ways. The most critical of these are:

- Alternating floods and water scarcity during the wet and dry season;
- Saline inundation causes infertility in the soil.
- Scarcity of fresh water makes it almost impossible to grow crops year around;
- Unequal social structure denies equal access to limited fresh water;
- Non-availability of safe water causes much disease, such as diarrhoea, cold/cough, typhoid and hepatitis etc. Water resource management in the Chars remains a challenge to resolving many diverse problems of inter-related sectors, such as land, agriculture, fresh water, drinking water and sanitation.

Water rights and land rights are typically very closely linked. Access to water depends on access to land, and the control of other resources such as canal, communal ponds, development of capacity and social networks. Such access is often more severely restricted for women than men in Char areas. Although land title is issued in the name of both spouses, there is little evidence that there is a change in the balance of power in gender relations to land and water. While it is slowly recognised that policies to promote inclusion, participation and equity are needed, the gender inequities in the water sector cover an extensive range of issues. These includes

- Access to water in which women have low expectations and influence. This is because of land tenure, in which men and women have different expectations regarding inheritance of land and the social reality of who exercises ownership power over the allotted land.
- Participation in which men and women have different expectations, experiences, perform different responsibilities and respond to different time schedules, social networks and meeting plans.
- Resource control that accepts and reinforces stereotypical roles and social norms, directing technical and financial control to male farmers.
- Capacity and skill development influenced by established social roles and reinforced by gender insensitive educational and economic policies and established civil society structures.
- Marketing and commercial linkages that follow a well established, male dominated path.
- Male biases in the labour market, regulation in property rights and inheritance laws continue to restrict and shape the activities of women in agricultural fields, which is by far the largest user of fresh water (GWA: 2003, p-30-31).

In its Background Document for the Gender and Water Session in the first world water forum summit presented by GWA (2003, p-23)⁵ also mentioned is:

Mismanagement of water resources and narrow sectoral approaches of water development are causing loss of fresh water and coastal biodiversity. Local communities suffer as a result of diversions of water, canalisation, draining of flood plains wetland drainage, and agricultural chemical discharges. This has profound effects on people who depend on fisheries and wetlands for their survival. It is estimated that between six to seven million hectares of irrigated land are going out of production each year due to soil erosion, water logging and salinization. De-forestation, degraded range lands, depleted soils, salinized land and depleted aquifers impairs the lives of 100 million people and threaten another 900 millions people. Dry land degradation is a moderate to serious concern on every continent. Desertification is estimated to affect about 3.6 billion hectares on 70 percent of all dry lands as a results of excessive livestock grazing, cropping methods, irrigation schemes and fuel wood harvesting, (p-23).

The same document quoted UNDP (2003, p-27) that a significant trend in the water sector is the Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) approach to water. IWRM is a cross-sectoral policy approach in response to the growing demands for water in the context of finite water supplies. It is an approach that aims to ensure the coordinated development of water, land and related resources to optimise economic and social welfare without compromising the sustainability of environmental systems. The GWA (2003, p-27-28) identifies the following principles on which IWRM is premised.

- that water is a finite and vulnerable resource and engagement with it should be guided by economic efficiency in its use, equity, access for all and sustainability of vital ecosystems.
- that it is vital to look at the entire hydrological cycle and the interaction of water with other natural and socio-economic systems. Engagement needs to be guided by a focus of integration, participation, consultation, gender awareness and consensus.
- the need to highlight the economic value of water with an emphasis on demand management and attention to cost recovery with concern for affordability and securing access for the poor (Adapted from Global Water Partnership Tool Box).

On top of all other issues related to water management, in the last few years, a new insight was developed that sustainable water management and gender equity are mutually supporting and interdependent. In supporting this statement, strong arguments were established such as

- a) Involving men and women in influential roles at all levels can ensure the achievement of sustainability in the management of scarce water resources.
- b) Managing water in an integrated and sustainable way can contribute significantly to better gender equity, by improving the access of women and men to water and water related services to meet their essential needs.

⁵ Gender Perspective on Policies in Water Sector is background document presented by Gender Water Alliance (GWA) in first world water forum summit.

These arguments influenced the national government, inter and intra-governmental organisations, institutions and agencies to demonstrate a greater commitment to environmental sustainability, gender equity and social justice in IWRM.

The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) adopted National Policy for Safe Water and Sanitation in 1998. As a policy principle it states, “Since women play a crucial role in water management and hygiene education at the household level, recognition of women’s role will contribute to the overall development of the sector”. In this policy, references are also made to inequalities between rich and poor in access to water and sanitation services and the text assigns priorities to under served and un-served areas. However, it only emphasised the traditional reproductive roles and tasks of women in household water management and hygiene education, but it failed to recognise women’s productive role in the family and men’s role in water management and hygiene education. The Ministry of Water Resources of GoB has published the National Water Policy in 1999; its objectives explicitly include women in three places:

- i) to take women’s and children’s needs into account when providing water for all;
- ii) to bring institutional changes that will help to decentralise the management of water resources and enhance the role of women in water management;
- iii) to make gender equity part of national knowledge building (sections 3b, d and f).

Under public and private involvement, the policy mentions the specific roles and interests of women in water management. It stresses that an “enabling environment will be created for women to play a key role in local community organisations in management of water resources” (section 4.4h)

2.4.2 Creation of One Category of Stakeholder in Water Management: The Char Women

As a multi-sectoral project, CDSP-II have been active in four major interdependent and closely linked sectors involved in the promotion of sustainable water management, such as water, sanitation, land and agriculture. No integrated approach was adopted in planning and implementation of sectoral activities. Whenever needed, different sectoral specialists and officials of line agencies were working together either to identify the complexity of the interdependence of the sectors or to solve the problems related to activities between / among the sectors. However all sectors made an effort to incorporate gender issues in their action plans (see 2.1 to 2.3), those create a base for women to ask for their share in water and to be involved in water management.

Land sector ensures land titles to both spouses as the provision was made in the Khas Land Settlement Act 1997, prioritised access for female led households in Khas land and special provision made for female led households to be settled in cluster villages. CDSP has created female ownership over land, but obviously they need water to cultivate their land.

The drinking water and sanitation sector has made considerable efforts to incorporate gender in provisioning safe water and promotion of pit latrines for safe disposal of human excreta. The engineering and technical part of deep tubewell installation and design, production and installation of pit latrine remains in the hand of the Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) of GoB, while participatory planning and community based operation and maintenance was done by local NGOs under the supervision of BRAC. Traditionally as women are the main users of tubewells and have the maintenance

responsibility of latrines, it was the intention to involve them intensively in this sector. They were targeted to be

- members of the users group
- care taker of tubewells and pit latrines

The women of the households around each tubewell were organised in a User Group and these groups were made aware of the technical and general issues of safe water and sanitation. Each group selected two caretakers, and both of them were trained on the techniques of repairing tube wells. This job used to be done by male mechanic of the locality. The women of the users families also select the installation sites of each and every tubewell. The following issues were taken into account during tubewell site selection:

- How safe is the site for women? Would they feel free to come and use the tubewell in the proposed site?
- Is the tubewell accessible to women during the rainy season?
- Is it an appropriate place where women can take a bath in the dry season?
- Do the male members of the household where the tubewell is installed have a bad name in the community?
- How social is the family on whose courtyard the tubewell is to be installed?

Women's relationship to drinking water is not only acknowledged in the domestic spheres along with hygiene and health, their position is also promoted as managers for drinking water. Now-a-days many women in Char areas are active leaders in promoting the use of safe water and pit latrine.

The responsibility for the construction of water infrastructure lies with the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) such as the construction of embankments, sluices and excavation and re-excavation of canal. The Local Government Engineering Department also has a role in digging community ponds, culverts and bridge construction. Although the Ministry of Water Resources published the guidelines for participatory water management as approved by the Executive Committee of the National Water Council in November 2000, no initiative was taken by the BWDB to start a process to ensure a participatory water management in CDSP-I and CDSP-II areas. The participatory water management in the project areas of involving "local stakeholders"⁶ is an initiative of the Consultant team. The short term backstopping missions played a pivotal role in pushing forward it's progress. However, CDSP-II made a success of ensuring equal membership of women in each and every water management committee.

It promotes women's leadership in water management and it supports women's rights to knowledge of the technical aspects of water management in their locality. The female members of WMC are now apparently active in participating in the formulation of operation and maintenance plans for each system area. Levels of gender awareness, participation and motivation have increased women's self esteem and self-confidence and

⁶ Inhabitants of an area who are directly or indirectly affected by water management are referred to as "local stakeholders" in guidelines for participatory water management. Any individual or group who, in one-way or another is favourable influenced by water resource project is a beneficiary. Any individual or group who adversely affected by the intervention of water resource development project is being known as the Project Affected Person (PAP). The beneficiaries and PAP's can be women and men belonging to the households of farmers, fishermen, small traders, craftsmen, boatmen, landless people, destitute women or any other members of local community. (GWPM, p-21)

some are now even actively participating in typical male activities like operating sluices and supervising cross-bandh removal etc.

All efforts made by CDSP-II in land settlement and the water sector is meant to boost agriculture production in project areas. Empirical evidences (studies/documents) show a higher productivity of small owner farms than that of absentee large farmers. The construction of water infrastructure and the initiative for participatory water management were done for the efficient use of water resources in order to increase productivity in the agriculture sector. Although no study has been done to understand the women's role in the agriculture sector in a systematic way, it is noted by the involvement with the community that there are two types of women managed farms in char areas: *de-facto and de-jure*.

In the de-facto system, men work away from the household for days, weeks or even months, leaving the women to manage in their absence. In some cases, men work off-farm but return each evening. In other cases, women manage farms during the weeks their husbands work as labourers on fishing boats for weeks in the sea. In many cases, the male migrate out for several months.⁷

It is observed that while in some households, farm management remains in the hand of older men such as father-in-law, brother-in-law etc. in many other families women become effective farm managers, but they are not entitled to make decisions about mortgaging in and out, or selling farm production. Either they have to wait until the men return or they have to seek permission by sending messages to them.

De-jure women headed households are those led by widowed, divorced, abandoned or separated women. They tend to be amongst the poorest farming households, under resourced and suffering serious labour constraints. Yet there are many who depend on them for survival. CDSP-II prioritised this group for women's access to service delivery in its land, agriculture and water sectors.

Field experience also reveals that in most agricultural based households in Char areas, men and women do separate tasks, and these are assigned by gender. Common tasks assignments include the following:

- Usually seed selection and storage is done by women
- Women grow home site crops and men produce field crops.
- Ploughing is done by men
- Men prepare the fields, plants or transplants seedlings
- Women prepare food for hired labour, sometimes help in uprooting seedlings and weeding the fields.
- Certain kinds of harvesting tasks are assigned by gender, such as climbing trees to harvest crops is usually done by the males. On the other hand, post harvest processing and storage cereals, vegetables, tree crops are often women tasks.
- Care for animals where they are young or sick is often women's work.
- Watching around is the responsibility of women and girls.
- Men and boys often supervise grazing animals far from home.
- Milking is often assigned to one sex or the other.

⁷ NGO's have tried to organise male groups. The attempts were not successful. They did informal survey to understand the reasons. It is found that the males remain absent from home to earn cash for a long period. They visit their families whenever possible.

However, the experience mentioned above, gives a rationale to treat women in Char area as farmers, instead of only farmers wives. Although this awareness does not help in ensuring equal membership of both sexes in the farmer's forums, it does positively change sector staff attitude toward female farmers. The idea is established that indeed female farmers are in need of access to technology, inputs and water to increase their productivity. As members of the farmer's forum, they have been participating on the same training courses as the male farmers. The female members of WMC have also participated in orientation workshops on water management and agricultural aspects at the field level. All these courses considerably assist in enhancing women's knowledge and skills about possible agriculture practice in their areas during the wet and dry seasons. Thus women become a separate category of stakeholder in water management in the project areas. However, they should not be regarded as a collective stakeholder group as "women", this is because they belong to different socio-economic classes such as absolute poor, landless poor, poor and medium farming household. (See appendix-5).

2.4.3 Results

- Women are treated as more equal partners in water management with men,
- Male-female equal membership (50-50) was ensured in water management committees,
- Agenda on Water Management has broadened by including issues of water for domestic use such as functioning of tubewell, water retaining capacity of community ponds and retention of fresh water in canals during dry season,
- The women of the project area recognise water as "resource" instead of only threat to life (see case study and outcome of FGD below),
- Seventy-two female members were trained on basic gender aspects. They were from 10 water management committees. All members (male and female together from 4 water management committees) were trained on basic issues of integrating gender perspective in water management.

2.4.4 Case study

Afroza Begum
Assistant Sluice Operator
Gangchil, Char Elahi, Companiganj Upazila
Noakhali District.

I am Afroza Begum. I am about 35 years old. I got married when I was 13 years old to a Policeman. He is still doing job in Chittagong. I have four daughters. All of them are grown up now. I live in a village of Char Elahi Union under Companiganj Upazila of Noakhali District.

I came here to live since 1985 as we lost all of our lands and houses by river erosion in Nalchira of South Hatiya. I have also experienced natural disaster several times in this area. The cyclone of 1991 was very hard hitting. I was alone in home. No male relatives with me at that day. My husband was in Comilla. I did not understand what was going to happen. I was doing regular work. The weather became bad. It was raining and the wind was so strong. I tried to contact my neighbours I could not understand what to do. Suddenly I saw water entering in my house. I just thought of protecting my two daughters. One of my neighbours came and brought us in a safer place. In the next morning I came home and saw that there was nothing. My husband thought that all of us might die. He came back home and we rebuilt our house. But no embankment was there. I did not know about sluices. I was afraid of high tide when it rolled. It sounds like a bellowing buffalo. My house was highly exposed to the danger of tidal surges. My yard flooded during the rainy season. It is only few years (6-7 years) this embankment and sluice was constructed. Since then, we do not see water twice a day. The river has gone far.

Three-four years ago a group of people came to our cluster. I forget all the issues they talked to us. But I remember they were talking much about water. Later I heard about formation of water management committee. ***I decided to try to be a member of this committee. I visited different clusters in my block. I discussed with them about my wish to join water management committee. There were three candidates in my block including me. At the end I was elected from my block. I got 213 votes. The other two female candidates got less than 50 votes.***

I as a woman did not understand much about water management and sluice operation in the beginning. But now I know the whole system area, I learnt how to explain maps. I was given the responsibility of Assistant Sluice Operator. Mr. Mohammad Hossain was the main operator. He is not in the area for several months. There is a case against him. Hence I have to operate sluice whenever needed. I learnt how to open and close the gates of sluice by using handle. For the first time, it was difficult for me. But I have tried again and again. It becomes easy now. I got training on sluice operation as well as on gender.

At first some persons in the area were teasing me and laugh at me. One day while I was on the sluice to open the gates as my committee decided. They said it was not the job for a women like me. I did not tell them anything; I just run away and hide in a house besides embankment. After a while all the men has gone from the sluice area. I came again with a few women from my neighbourhood. With their help I managed to open the gates. Yes, it was difficult, I understood it could be easy if we use grease on hoisting arrangement of lift gates regularly.

No one likes me in doing this job. I do because I am responsible for that. I do not hesitate to take responsibility as Assistant Sluice Operator. We, as women, need to understand all matters related to water management. My home is very close to sluice. Though it is not problematic for me to take care of operating sluice, all the time, but no one will allow me to move to the sluice in dark during night. Therefore, we still need a male operator who can act on emergency. We are in the process to select a male operator.

I enjoy my work as Assistant Sluice Operator. My daughters encourage me to attend WMC meeting in time. All of them are going school. One is in class IX and another is in class VII. Due to deteriorating law and order situation in the area, I have sent them to their father in Chittagong. Two are here in Primary School. I wish my daughters would be highly educated. Many women in my society reduce mine, as I am not mother of son. A few other console me for that. I would like to tell them once, it does not matter whether I am mother of son or daughter but I am a mother of educated persons. That is my only dream.

My neighbour attitude toward my role in the community has been changing. They asked me to be mediator in conflicting situation. A man in my village divorced his wife before a few weeks. It happened once that the man's clothes were stolen while put to dry on the slope of embankment. This angered him to the extent that he divorced his wife at local marriage register office. The woman came to me. I also heard that the man was searching woman to marry again. I advised the divorced women not to leave the house and resist if he tried to forcefully evict her. In the mean time, I managed to convince the man of the unjustness of his actions and forced him to remarry her. He did it. Now a day local *Shamaj*⁸ treat me with respect.

⁸ *Shamaj* means local community, but it also refers to local traditional judicial body

2.4.5 Effects on the Condition and the Position of Female Members of Water Management Committees in the Project Area

Introduction

A focus group discussion was held with the female members of four Water Management Committees in the Bhatirtek site office on 29th December 2003. Twenty six selected female members were invited to share their experiences as they were involved in this committee for several years. (See appendix-3 for FGD procedures and checklist).

Effects on the condition of Women :

Knowledge and skill: When the women gain knowledge on water management issues they are able to understand the technical aspects of water management such as maintenance of sluice, system of sluice operation cross-bandh removal from the canals, seasonal variation of saline water intrusion etc. They are very active in resolving conflict amongst various interest groups in water management in their locality. One major issue of conflict is the use of water resources by both fishermen and farmer's simultaneously. But there are also innovative in suggesting solutions. Ms. Sribala Khatun, one of the members of Nabagram Water Management Committee stated that she was able to convince the fishermen in her area to use a different type of fishing net that does not create water blockage in the canals. She adds that a particularly period is specified for fishing, from May to September, and that anyone who is interested can use this for catching fish without blocking water flows.

Availability of Fresh Water: The participants stated that the availability of fresh water has increased. Fresh water is available for domestic use such as cleaning, washing, cooking and bathing. It is also used for productive purposes, and has made it easier for women to promote household enterprises like vegetable gardening, raising chickens, ducks and nutrients, pond fisheries and cultivating Rabi crops. Amina Begum one of the members of Nabagram WMC said, “পানিটা নিকটে হয়েছে” meaning “water is so close to us now”.

Health Problem Reduced: It is reported that in the last 2-3 years no diarrhoeal epidemic has been observed in the area, as earlier it was always a threat to health in this community. Women were found to suffer severe problems in managing water born diseases around the year, and the same with animal health. Fatema Khatun, one of the members of the WMC of Zillar Khal system said, “কত অরুণমা রাত কাটাইছি, অসুস্থ বাচ্চা লই বসে রইছি, কত পয়সা ডাক্তারকে দিছি, এখন এত বেশী সমস্যা নাই” meaning: “I passed many sleepless night, sitting besides ill children and watching them. A lot of money was given to doctor but this problem is not severe now a days”.

Women's Income Increased: Women earn from different household enterprises. Availability of fresh water makes it possible to grow vegetables in the kitchen garden around the year. It also reduces the loss of poultry birds and animals by stopping the outbreak of seasonal diseases. Ms Momena, one of the members of Gangchil WMC said, “আমরা আগের চাইতে বেশী আয় করতে পারতেছি”- meaning, “we are earning much more than earlier”.

Economic Position: The participants stated that they earn more from household enterprises and they are able to keep a part of their earnings in their hand. They claim that they are contributing 30% - 50% to their family income. They were happy in expressing their feelings that their families have started to recognise their contribution in making their lives free from poverty.

Political Position: Out of the total of the 22 women members present in the discussion, the community elected 18 members. The others were selected with full support of their society. They are very much aware of their role and responsibilities as members of the water management committees. The participants claim that they are able to propose and to suggest solutions in the meetings, and some of them are now executives of the committees such as vice-president, secretary, cashier, assistant operator etc. But they are as yet to assume top leadership positions in the committees. Women's control has developed in the household as well as in water management areas. Most of the women members present stated that they are now able to take part in household decision-making processes. It is not only children's education, and marriage but also about household expenditure, investments and production plans.

They understand the benefits of the water management committee, and also the functioning of WMC as an independent organisation. They described various social benefits that have lifted their position in the communities.

The participants put forward the following ideas for increasing the effectiveness of WMC's:

- Duration of the WMC should be 5 years instead of 2 years.
- WMC should be registered in order to obtain legal identity.
- A strategy should be determined for fund raising.
- Mechanical fitness of the sluices should be maintained by BWDB.
- Sluice Operators should be trained on the technical aspects of sluices.
- Both BWDB and LGED should implement schemes through WMC.
- Canals and different water bodies within the system areas should be leased out to WMC.
- Cooperation and coordination should be extended between UP and WMC.
- WMC should take initiative to issue a passbook to each and every member.
- Female members of WMC should be trained on legal rights.

Socio-cultural Position: All the women members present were talking freely, and showed a high level of confidence about their role as members of their committees, and their duties in the water management in their areas. They described with practical examples of how by carrying out water management they are able to reach individual households and convince people to share these resources. Eventually it is hoped all will share in helping to achieve a sharing of this resource. Their pride and confidence in their roles is very inspiring. Moreover, water management activities have brought a new dimension to the life of the Char communities. By sharing water and managing this resource, they do not feel suppressed by the more powerful people. At the same time the improvement of relationships amongst stakeholders has given them scope to achieve other developmental benefits. They described their present status as a positive improvement where they have a role in developing their lives and also livelihood. They discussed various aspects of their roles as leaders as well as enlightened women in the

Char area. Ms. Sayeda, one of the member of Zillar Khal sluice told “এখন মহিলা কথা বলার জায়গা হইছে। গরীবেরা প্রয়োজনের কথা বলতে পারছে”- *meaning*, “*Now the women have place to talk. The poor also can express their needs.*” Most of the people seek assistants / help from the members of WMC instead of UP.

Physical Integrity: The participants referred to CDSP as a torchbearer for women’s development in the area, and how gender training has helped them in explaining their situation. They stated that their lives over the past 8-9 years in the CDSP programme had been as an awakening from darkness. They discussed changes in their family lives, and social lives that have taken place over this period and the respect that they now receive as a participant of resource management. They proudly expressed their present role as decision makers in family affairs and their confidence for the future of all the women in the Chars. One of the women Ms. Fatema Begum, a member of Kalmi WMC stated that her eldest daughter got married at 11 years, but her younger daughters are in school. One is in class X and another is in class VII. She does not intend to allow them to marry before they are eighteen years old. The women present felt that their bargaining power had increased. Male-female equal membership creates an environment that encourages female members to raise their voices. They compare this to Union Parishad where female members are a minority and are less powerful in claiming their share.

2.4.6 SWOT Analysis – Water Management

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Male-female equal membership was achieved in WMC (50:50). ● Female members technical knowledge was enhanced on water management. They became aware of various issues that are related to water management such as water levels, land types, canal management, sluice operations, maps and boundaries of system areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☹ Funds were not allocated to undertake activities for creating gender sensitivity in implementation and monitoring among involved parties (BWDB, LGED, Consultants and Field Level Institutions). ☹ Female members are yet to be in top leadership positions in the water management committees. ☹ An institutional culture is not promoted yet that allows both male and female members to express their opinion and to be heard equally.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☀ The community has become aware of the women’s role in water management. ☀ Women’s knowledge has increased on global, national and local water management issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☹ Present set up of BWDB has no mechanism to include gender perspectives in water management.

2.4.7 Lessons Learnt: Water Management

- Women's managerial skills should be developed so that they will be able to assume leadership positions.
- Both male and female members of WMC should get orientation on global and national perspective about gender and water management.
- The links should be developed among women's groups with over-lapping interests to share information on rights, strategies, success and failures within locality and around the country.
- There is no recognition of gender dimensions in National Water Policy (NWP) and other related documents by BWDB, LGED and the other involved stakeholders such as DAE, UDCC, and DDCC and UP.
- No change in beliefs of gender neutrality of water infrastructure development activities.

2.5 Gender And NGOs Programme

2.5.1 Gender concerns, approaches and activities of NGOs

In the first phase of CDSP (now referred to as CDSP I), the NGOs had contract with the consultants that were hired by the Dutch Government to provide technical assistance. The NGOs were supported and monitored by the consultant's team. In CDSP II, the decision was taken to uncouple the governmental and consultant supported project from the NGO involvement. The main aims were to give NGOs a prominent and more independent place in overall effort and at the same time to increase the efficacy of NGOs interventions by improving the support giving to them.

With these aims in mind BRAC was approached in the latter part of 1999 to sound out its interest in being involved in char development and, more precise, to take up the role of monitoring and supporting institution of local NGOs that would actually interact with the char settlers. BRAC responded positively with a view on the enormous development needs of the char population and because of BRAC's interest to spread its activities to areas where the organization was historically thinly represented.

To formalise the NGO part, an agreement was arranged between the Royal Netherlands Embassy (RNE) and BRAC for BRAC's involvement, with the understanding that BRAC would select local NGOs as partners. According to this agreement, BRAC is assisting to five local NGOs in the project areas and simultaneously continue to work with a number of government agencies i.e. DAE and DPHE.

BRAC identified and selected this partner local NGOs considering their experience and activities in the coastal areas.

Table 1: BRAC Partner NGOs in CDSP working area.

SI No.	Implementing NGOs	Selected working area
1	Dwip Unnayan Sangstha (DUS)	South Hatiya, Bandartila (east Nijhum Dwip), Char Osman (south Nijhum Dwip)
2	Young Power in Social Action (YPSA)	Muhuri Accreted Area
3	Sagarika Samaj Unnayan Sangstha (SSUS)	Char Majid, Char Gangchil –Torabali, Char Lakshmi, part of Char Moradona
4	Unnayan Parikolpanay Manus (UPOMA)	Char Bagga Dona-II, part of Char Moradona
5	Noakhali Rural Action Society (N-RAS)	Char Bhatirtek

BRAC is one of the largest national non-governmental development organizations in Bangladesh. Since its inception in 1972 it has been endeavouring to engender a participatory process of development and succeeded in pioneering an approach that puts human development at the centre of its vision.

In practice, BRAC has innovated a process of group formation and training among landless labours, peasants, rural workers of different trades, and women from the households of these socio-economic groups. Through both formal and non-formal training, these groups learn practical training as well as human development skills. While the former helps in improving group members in various earning skills and trades, the latter addresses something more fundamental changing the attitude and the consciousness of the rural community.

BRAC has specific gender policy and this is seeking gender equity through the empowerment of women and the transformation of gender relations within village households and communities (BRAC Gender Policy, 1998). In CDSP areas, BRAC has directed its programme toward achieving that goal by targeting women's basic needs and strategic interest (see appendices-2) such as health care, legal education, access to credit and technical skills, gender awareness and training.

Under the supervision of BRAC, partner NGOs have formed 550 Village Organization (VO). Out of them, 500 are women's Village Organization. After organizing VO, two activities start simultaneously a conscientization programme and compulsory savings. Through the conscientization programme, the women are made aware of the society around them. They analyse the reasons for the existing exploitative socio-economic and political system and what they could do to change it in their favour.

A formal course of Human Rights and Legal Education (HRLE)⁹ is provided to the VO's members. Most of the recipients of training as health and poultry worker are women.

Besides BRAC/CDSP-II, BRAC has made significant contributions in the field of education among the char communities. In CDSP areas the Non-Formal Primary Education (NFPE) is providing education to 2550 children, who would otherwise be left out of schooling. Out of them, 1870 are girls.

Partner NGOs have been sensitive to the question of gender equity. All efforts they have made in credit, children's education, or health, are designed to benefit women thereby reducing the gender gap in the society.

⁹ The HRLE covers the following : Constitutional / citizens Rights, Family Law, Inheritance Law and the Land Law.

The following tables will show women's involvement in NGOs activities.

Table 2: Women's participation in Village Organization and saving management.

Sl No.	Particulars	No. of Beneficiaries			
		Male	Female	Total	% of Female Participant
1	No. of Group	58	500	558	90
2	No. of Member	1,377	11,588	12,965	89
3	No. of Meeting conduct	8,335	71,854	80,189	90
4	Total Savings (TK)	883,934	10,485,774	11,369,708	92
5	No. of Loanee	-	12,713	12,713	100
6	Total Loan disbursement (TK)	-	53,488,200	53,488,200	100
7	Total Loan Realization (TK)	-	43,803,721	43,803,721	100
8	Total Outstanding (TK)	-	9,684,479	9,684,479	100

Table 3: Women's Involvement in Home Garden Development.

Sl No.	Particulars	No. of Beneficiaries			
		Male	Female	Total	% of Female Participant
1	Model Farmer	-	1,014	1,014	100
2	General Farmer	-	3,676	3,676	100

Table 4: Women's Participation in Poultry and Livestock Programme.

Sl No.	Particulars	No. of Beneficiaries			
		Male	Female	Total	% of Female Participant
1	Poultry Worker	2	113	115	98
2	Key Rearer	-	3,874	3,874	100
3	Cow Rearer	-	323	323	100
4	Goat Rearer	-	346	346	100
5	Sheep Rearer	-	50	50	100

Table 5: Women's Participation in Social Forestry.

Sl No.	Particulars	No. of Beneficiaries			
		Male	Female	Total	% of Female Participant
1	Horticulture Nurserer	20	45	65	69
2	Homestead Plantation	-	2,775	2,775	100

Table 6: Women's Participation in Health Programme.

Sl No.	Particulars	No. of Beneficiaries			
		Male	Female	Total	% of Female Participant
1	Shastha Sebeka	-	44	44	100
2	Traditional Birth attended	-	105	105	100
3	Mason & Private Producer	21	4	25	16

Table 7: Women's Participation in HRLE Health Programme.

Sl No.	Particulars	No. of Beneficiaries			
		Male	Female	Total	% of Female Participant
1	Paralegal Sebeka	-	45	45	100
2	Legal Awareness Training	3,000	11,525	14,525	79
3	L.C.L. Workshop	547	217	764	28

Table 8: Women's BRAC's Education Support Programme in CDSP working area.

NGO	No. of school	Teacher			Students		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1. YPSA	10	-	10	10	80	220	300
2. SSUS	16	-	16	16	128	352	480
3. UPOMA	16	-	16	16	128	352	480
4. N-RAS	16	-	16	16	128	352	480
5. DUS	21	-	21	21	168	462	630
6. HASI	06	-	06	06	48	132	180
Total :	85	-	85	85	680	1870	2550

2.5.2 Case Study

Female Farmer's Forum
Char Mohiuddin, Char Jublee Union
Shudharam Upazila, Noakhali District.

In the village of Char Mohiuddin in Sadar Upazila of Noakhali District, 18 women formed a Farmer's Forum of which thirteen members received training on legal rights from a local NGO, named UPOMA. Besides this there are three other women's savings groups in the village. This case study illustrates how actions taken by female farmers resolved a social injustice and prevents a woman from being assaulted.

One of the members of female Farmers' Forum has access to a small plot of land (.60 acre), which is owned by her husband. He has no legal documents for this land. He bought it from a dalal (the word used to refer to groups that like to live in the char but work on behalf of outsiders, particularly for land grabbers). It was disputed land between a land grabbers and her. In the last Aman (a local variety of paddy normally it grows at the beginning of monsoon) season she managed to cultivate it as her husband is ill and her children too young. She cultivated a high yielding variety called BRRI-40 and used newly learnt technologies in managing paddy field. She was looking forward to harvest it. At harvest time the man came and cut all the crops. The woman went to her neighbours and sought support from her group. All the members of her group and many other women from the neighbourhood went to the paddy field and discussed with the man about her situation. They showed all the papers she had as selected landless family by land settlement unit of CDSP-II. But the man neither listened to them nor saw any papers. At last she was offered five hundreds Taka, but she refused to accept the payment? The women realised that he intended to cheat her out of her right to land. Demonstrating solidarity and unity the members of neighbouring groups including farmers' forum marched to her paddy field to establish her right to land. When he saw a large group of women approach with bamboo sticks he fled from the paddy field. The interesting point to note in this case was that the men of her surrounding area did not come to help, because the man might bring a case against them. This illustrates an instance of women fighting for the rights and dignity of one of their kind through group action and gaining social empowerment in the process.

2.5.3 SWOT Analysis – NGO

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Women are involved in each and every activity. ● Women become much more visible than earlier in social activities in char areas. ● Women’s social-political role accelerated in local community. ● Target achieved according to plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Systematic measures were not adopted to strengthen gender policy and strategies of local NGOs.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☼ Knowledge has increased about women’s right in local community. ☼ Enabling environment was created for women to participate in development activities. ☼ Opportunities have been created to continue social movement on gender issues (4500 settlers had gathered to celebrate International Women’s Day on 8th March 2003 in Char Majid. 40% was women.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Law and order situation has been deteriorating. ☐ Non continuation of the NGO activities due fund constraints.

2.5.4 Lessons Learnt: NGO

- Local NGOs need technical assistance to formulate their gender policies and strategies.
- They also should be assisted to develop appropriate tools and technical capabilities to operationalise gender policies and strategies.
- Adequately defined strategies were felt need to be developed for maintaining close working relationship between the government and consultant supported project activities and NGOs activities.
- Instead of uncoupling the project and NGOs effort, both parties should work together to achieve the objective of gender equity and equality.
- The project's support should adequately be extended to NGO for playing complementary role and sharing field level experiences.

3. The Path Forward

The strategy of mainstreaming gender is to achieve equality between men and women in their enjoyment of social, economic and political rights and opportunities. Achieving it means entailing changes in social attitudes towards women as well as cultural practices of institutions, to create mutual respect between men and women. Although processes can be started it is almost impossible to ensure the achievement by a single project like CDSP-II. At least, this project ensured that the resources and opportunities created through its interventions did not by pass the women of working areas. There is also recognition of the need to consider women's participation in its different sectors, but concerns about women's empowerment are generally not recognised in sectoral policies and strategies. A number of women focused initiatives are designed and implemented at activity level. But those are not linked to the broad trends and objectives of sectoral development planning. Gender mainstreaming was not treated as an important aspect of the project during the preparation of Project Proforma, Project Document and Inception Report of CDSP II. It is essential to identify the steps required to build the capacity of different line agencies to integrate issues of women's equality and empowerment into their policies, strategies and action plans during the project formulation period. Moreover they should formulate ways of functioning that ensure equal access to the resources and the services they deliver.

It is understood that much could not be done on an ad-hoc basis, but there is an opportunity for developing a gender equitable model within the mandate of each sector of the project. These can be used as case studies to learn more and could be replicated in other project situations. If the project seeks gender equity through the empowerment of women and the transformation of gender relations within communities and within involved institutions, it has to direct its policies and programmes towards achieving that goal. This kind of commitment involves long-term perspectives, and its strategies should be able to seek appropriate ways of engaging women and encouraging their participation in the development process in their locality. The ultimate goal is empowering them economically, socially and politically. Throughout the process it is necessary that both men and women collectively and in partnership be involved in implementing the institutional and social changes.

To seek greater gender equity, the project should consider two main policy objectives:

- i) to integrate a gender mainstreaming approach in all sectoral policies and programmes and ensure gender equitable outcomes;
- ii) to create an enabling environment within involved agencies for women and men to work on equal terms at all levels.

The project should adopt strategies for the realisation of its objectives by removing all kinds of discriminatory barriers against women at all levels, and promoting their full and equal participation so that they benefit equally from development processes at all levels. This includes at both grass root and institutional levels. In addition, it is necessary to look not only into staff, communities and policies but also the formulation of its various programmes, and examine critically whether or not gender perspective is being implemented. Ultimate gender equality should be achieved in three areas individual attitude and behaviour; programme outcomes and management systems of involve institutions.

Another important wisdom is that in prevailing socio-cultural systems, a number of affirmative actions are required in order to address gender inequality at different levels. The

project should strive to develop appropriate strategies and mechanisms to address women's practical needs and their strategic interests. Factors that might increase the likelihood of integration of gender mainstreaming include:

- The project objectives should reflect the thrust of gender mainstreaming as a major development concern;
- During the project formulation period, an assessment should be done on prevailing practice (by using gender segregated data) in each and every sector related to the project in order to identify women's needs and interests.
- Women's needs, interests, priorities and concerns should be incorporated in all sectoral Project Proforma (PP) as well as consolidated PCP.
- Gender equitable policies, systems, procedures, ways of functioning should be incorporated in all sectoral strategies. It would enable the involved agencies to address women's needs, interests, priorities and concerns. A clear conceptual base and interpretation among staff should be developed of what mainstreaming gender means and how it is related with the sectors concerned. Clear conceptual base and working definitions of key terms related to gender mainstreaming have to be developed and used by involved agencies.
- A separate budget should be allocated for gender mainstreaming and gender specific activities under each and every sector. A committee needs to be set up to review the programs and procedures to ensure their effectiveness in women's advancement in the project area. It should be comprised of representative of line agencies and consultants and headed by the Project Director.
- A number of orientation sessions have to be organised to create awareness about the cross cutting nature of gender aspects.
- All involved staff of different agencies should be aware of their role and responsibilities in furthering advancement of women within their institution and programmes.
- Adequate and experienced personnel should be recruited to pursue gender mainstreaming at all levels.
- Female staff should be recruited to reach women folk of the project area.
- Supportive facilities have to be ensured for the female staff-members.
- Participation of female field officers and gender specialists in different level coordination meetings (DAE, Land Settlement and Water Management) has to be ensured regularly.
- An agenda should be included in review meetings to discuss problems that are faced by female staff as well as women in the project area and how to solve them.
- Staff strengths as well as training needs have to be identified regarding gender aspects.
- Gender training should be organised to serve multiple purposes that includes:
 - To generate support for gender mainstreaming policies and strategies;
 - To provide staff of the involved institutions and beneficiaries with a common understanding and vocabulary to facilitate discussion and policy implementation;
 - To provide the staff of the involved institutions and beneficiaries with specific skills in the use of planning, implementation and monitoring;
- Gender issues should also be incorporated into the regular training curriculum under each and every sector;
- Monitoring systems should be improved with gender analysis;
- During preparation of the Inception Report, indicators should be set to measure gender impact of all sectoral programmes as well as project as a whole.

Appendix Item -1

INTRODUCTION TO THE CHAR DEVELOPMENT AND SETTLEMENT PROJECT-II.

The Char Development and Settlement Project-II (CDSP-II) is a coastal development project involving the Government of Bangladesh, the Netherlands and the World Food Programme (WFP) established in July 2000. The project's antecedents can be traced back to 1978 when the two governments (Bangladesh and The Netherlands) embarked on a Land Reclamation Project (LRP). The project was involved in the development of a portion of newly accreted land called Char Bagga Dona-I in the South of Noakhali District. This project, implemented by the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB), has a fairly long history of evolving from a basic engineering mono agency concept (1978-91) to a multi-sectored rural development thrust.¹⁰

One of the objectives of LRP was the development of the area by the empoldering and development of existing Chars. However, in operational terms, the change of emphasis from a technical to a more holistic rural development approach necessitated certain institutional changes that LRP was not mandated to execute. Hence the need for a new project set-up that took some time to materialise; while LRP was formally terminated in June 1991, an interim management oversees its operation until August 1994.

On September 1, 1994 CDSP-I officially came into being with a view to “designing and testing a generally replicable approach for Char development that is economically viable, socially and environmentally acceptable and technically feasible.” The project chose as its area of operation three Chars of South Noakhali namely Char Bagga Dona-II, Char Bhatirtek and Char Majid all lying to the south of Sudharam and Companiganj Upazila of Noakhali District. These were relatively small Chars varying in size from 1400 to 2000 hectares housing some 5000 to 6000 families. CDSP-I was operated up until September 1999 and the next nine months were a bridging period used for the preparation of CDSP-II. Officially, the project was started on July 1, 2000.

Development objective and purposes of CDSP-II

The long-term objective of CDSP-II was to bring about an improvement in the economic situation and in the living conditions of the population in the coastal areas of South Eastern Bangladesh with special reference to the poorest of the population. The project was supposed to achieve its long-term objective by realising the following more short-term purposes:

- Promotion of an institutional environment that sustains CDSP-II and similar interventions.
- Accumulation and dissemination of data and knowledge on the coastal area.
- Direct improvement of the economic and social situation of people in a number of coastal Char areas in a sustainable way.

¹⁰ (CDSP-I Inception report, March 1995)

The first two purposes, institutional improvements and accumulation and dissemination of knowledge, were meant to influence a positive change to the situation of the population in the Chars, only in an indirect way (by actions of the institutions concerned, by improved policies, by improved design of interventions due to a better database). The third purpose has a direct link with the long-term development objective.

Components

Each of the three project purposes has led to a component around which clusters of activities were implemented. These components were:

- Capacity building of government agencies, and non-government organisation (NGOs), local government bodies and field level institutions;
- Study programs of data collection and monitoring;
- Concrete interventions at field level in the project area.

Target Group

Although the ultimate target group of the project was made clear in the long-term development objective, it consists of the settlers in the Char areas, with special reference to the most vulnerable groups (landless households, very small farmers, daily labours and **destitute women**). However, the project activities were addressed to a variety of groups.

The capacity building of institutions was geared towards government institutions and their staff that were directly interacting with the people in the Char, also institutions at lower levels of government such as Districts and Upazila. Considerable attention was given to the members of Union Parishad (UP) and to the functioning of the UPs as an institution. Staffs of local NGO's were meant to benefit from the involvement of BRAC in CDSP-II. The support to the field level institutions implied support for representative of the settlers themselves.

The project component focusing on accumulation and dissemination of knowledge addressed all aforementioned groups as well as policy makers at the national level. The policy makers (and opinion farmers) targeted not only the people who are working with government agencies but also in donor agencies, in NGOs and in civil society.

Project Areas : Location, Size and Families

The following are the 13 specific areas in where CDSP-II aimed at direct improvement of economic and social situation:

Sl. No.	Area	Location	Size	No. of Family	No. of F/H Family
1	Muhuri Accreted Area		1,981	545	62
2	Catchments Area	Bamni River	12,825	13,289	N/A
3	Char Gangchil – Torabali		743	317	16
4	Char Lakshmi		944	N/A	N/A
5	Polder 59/3B	South eastern side	3486	N/A	N/A
6	Char Moradona		1,793	2,950	208
7	Char Bagga Dona-I	LRP area	1,688	930	148
8	Char Bagga Dona-II	CDSP-I area	2,065	2,267	128
9	Char Majid	CDSP-I area	1,320	2,283	131
10	Char Bhatirtek	CDSP-I area	1,748	2,445	152
11	South Hatiya Polder		2,759	3,335	182
12	Nijhum Dwip	Char Osman	650	784	37
13	Nijhum Dwip	Bandartila	591	1,160	65
14	Boyer Char		6,500	N/A	N/A
Total :			39,021	30,305	1,129

Appendix Item -2

Key Concepts

Terms and concepts explained briefly, as they are understood and used in the main text.

Gender

Gender refers to socially constructed roles and socially learned behaviours and expectations associated with females and males. Women and men are different biologically, but all cultures interpret and elaborate their biological difference into a set of social expectations about what behaviours and activities are appropriate, and what rights, resources and power they possess. While these expectations vary considerably among societies, there are also striking similarities. For example, nearly all cultures place the primary responsibility for the care of infants and young children with women and girls.

Like race, ethnicity and class, gender is a social category that in large establishes one's life chances, shaping one's participation in society and in the economy. While some societies do not experience racial or ethnic divides, all societies experience gender asymmetries, differences and disparity to varying degree. Gender intervenes in all spheres of life and regulates women's lives. Any number of areas can be named but for easy understanding, the following are a few categories which gender defines in a society:

- a) Dress code - What to wear and what not to wear.
- b) Attitudes - Domineering and docile
- c) Behaviour - How to talk, walk, laugh and not to run etc.
- d) Right - Right to property, right to expression, right to vote etc.
- e) Responsibilities - House work, cooking, cleaning, washing, child rearing for women and earning cash for men.
- f) Roles - Social notes, what to do and what not to do, to work or not.
- g) Mobility - To move about freely, at what time, brothers and other relatives to accompany as escorts etc.

The main difference between the terms "sex" and "gender".

Sex	Gender
Sex is natural (Man and Women)	Gender is socio-cultural construction of men and women and it is man made. (Masculine and feminine).
Sex is biological. It refers to visible difference in genitalia and related difference in procreative functions.	Gender is socio cultural and it refers to masculine and feminine qualities, behaviour pattern, roles and responsibilities etc.
Sex is constant, it remains the same every where	Gender is variable, it changes from time to time, culture to culture, even family to family
Sex never be changed	Gender can be changed.

Gender Relations:

Gender relations are the relationships between men as a sex and women as a sex. These are simultaneously relations of cooperation, connections, mutual support and conflict, separation and competition of difference and inequality. Basically, gender relations are about power relations. Gender relations are concerned with how power is distributed between sexes. The whole question boils down to who has more power and who has less power?

Gender relations create and produce systematic differences in men and women's position in a given society. They define the way in which responsibilities and claims are allocated and the way in which each is given value. Gender relations vary according to time, place, and between groups of people. They also vary according to other social relations such as class, race, ethnicity, and disability.

Gender Analysis:

Gender analysis explores and highlights the relationship of women and men in society and the inequalities in those relationships by asking: Who does what? Who has what? Who decides? How? Who gains? Who loses? When asking these questions, it is also necessary to elaborate on? Which men? Which women? Gender Analysis breaks down the divide between the private sphere (involving personal relationships) and the public sphere (which deals with relationships in wider society). It also looks at how power relations within the household interrelate with those at the international, state, market and community level.

Gender Division of Labour:

Gender division of labour is the work division along sex lines. In all societies men and women are assigned tasks, activities and responsibilities according to their sex. In general, it is demarcated that while girls have to confine themselves to housework, boys will handle outside work. The division is much deeper than that. Men's employment is regarded as essential to the household and they are designated as 'sole bread winners' etc. Women are supposed to be employed in generating only supplementary income to help family expenses. In most societies, gender power relations are shown in favour of men, and different values are described to men's tasks and women's tasks.

Gender division of labour varies from one society and culture to another and within each culture; it also changes with external circumstances and over time. All types of activities done by men and women, can be grouped under three categories:

Productive Activities: Productive activities include the production of goods and services for income or subsistence. These are the work that are mainly recognised and valued as work by individuals and societies. These are most commonly included in economic statistics. Both men and women perform productive activities but not all of these are valued or rewarded in the same way.

Reproductive Activities: Reproductive activities encompass the care and maintenance of the household and its members, such as cooking, washing, cleaning, nursing, bearing children and looking after them, building and maintaining shelter etc. These are necessary, yet these are rarely considered of the same value as productive work. These are normally unpaid and are not counted in conventional economic statistics. Women mostly do these.

Community Activities: Community activities are the organised activities and services considered necessary for a proper functioning of the society. These include welfare activities, attending religious and cultural functions like marriage, childbirth celebrations, death ceremonies etc. All these activities celebrated collectively by the people keep the community strongly knitted together.

Gender aware policies recognise that women are treated as people as well as men. The nature of women's involvement is determined by a gender relationship that makes their involvement **Gender Aware Policies:** different and often unequal. Consequently women may have different needs, interests and priorities, these may sometimes conflict with those of men.

Gender Specific Policies: Gender specific policies use the knowledge of gender difference in a given context in order to respond to these genders practical needs of women or men. They work within the existing gender division of resources and responsibilities.

Gender Redistribution Policies: Gender redistribution policies are intended to transform existing distribution power and resources to create a more balanced relationship between men and women, touching on strategic gender interests (see below for a full definition of this term). This type of policy may target both sexes, or women and men separately.

Gender Neutral Policies: Gender neutral policy is intended to target and benefit both sexes simultaneously. They do not use knowledge of gender difference to overcome gender bias in development interventions. These policies work within the existing gender division of resources and responsibilities.

Gender Blind Policies: Gender blind policies recognise no distinction between the sexes. They make assumptions that interventions automatically reach target groups irrespective of their sexes. This leads to a bias in favour of existing gender relations. Therefore, gender blind policies tend to exclude women.

Gender Mainstreaming: Mainstreaming gender means integration of gender perspectives into all structures and all activities and making gender concerns the responsibility of all in institutions. It is an aim and it is also the ways in which this can occur. Therefore, mainstreaming gender is both a technical and political process, which requires shifts in institutional cultures and ways of thinking, as well as in the goals, structures and resources allocation. Maya Buvinic stated that the task of mainstreaming gender in institutions means that attention must be paid to the following three issues:

- The internal and external processes in which a particular development organisation and its members may be organised.
- The setting up of the 'machineries' entrusted with the task of incorporating women and gender issues into design and implementation of policies.
- The development of appropriate 'tools and technical capabilities' (Buvinic, 1984:21)

Practical Gender Needs

Practical gender needs are the needs of daily life. If these were met, the lives of women (or men) would be improved without changing the existing gender division of labour or

challenging women's subordinate position in the society. Meeting practical gender needs is a response to an immediate perceived necessity. Interventions to do this, are typically concerned with inadequacies in living conditions such as food and water provision, health care and employment etc.

Strategic Gender Interests

Strategic gender interests are related to empowerment of women (or men). If these were met, the existing relationship of unequal power between men and women (or between powerful and powerless men) would be transformed. These interests are often related to gender division of resources, responsibilities, power and control. These refer to the issues such as legal rights, domestic violence, security and safety, equal wages, equal opportunities and women's control over their bodies etc. It may be difficult for women to articulate their strategic gender interests. This is because, many of these issues are perceived as 'natural order.' Women may need exposure to wider society (regional, national and international) to be able to formulate strategic gender interests. In depth gender analysis also can help in identifying the strategic interests. Men also have strategic interests. They may aim to change their own roles (in order to share domestic and child-care responsibilities). On the other hand, they may resist women's demands for more control over their own lives.

Some people argue that practical gender need and strategic gender interest cannot be so neatly separated. They point out that every practical development intervention will have an effect on power relations, whether it is intended or not.

Condition

The term 'condition' describes the immediate, material circumstances in which men and women live. It is related to their present workloads, responsibilities and level of meeting basic needs to survive. For example, installing tubewell and providing stove for cooking may improve the condition of women by reducing their workload.

Position

The concept 'position' describes the status of women in society relative to that of men. Changing women's position requires addressing their strategic gender interests. These include equal access to decision making and resources, getting rid of discrimination in employment, land ownership, leadership and so on. In order to change women's position, it is necessary to address the way biological sex determines power, status and control over resources.

Access to and Control over Resources

When considering the way in which resources are allocated between women and men (the 'gendered' allocation of resources), it is important to look at the difference between access to resources and control over them.

Access is defined as the opportunity to make use of a resource.

Control is the power to decide how a resource is used and who has access to it.

Women often have access but no control.

The Activity Profile

The activity profile identifies all relevant productive and reproductive tasks and answers the question who does what? How much detail is needed depends on the nature of interventions. Those areas of activity that the interventions are intended to be involved in require the greatest detail. For example, an activity profile of an agricultural related intervention would list each agricultural activity according to gender division of labour. Depending on the context, other parameters may also be examined.

- **Gender and age denomination:** Identifying whether adult women, adult men, their children or the elderly carry out an activity.
- **Time allocation:** specifying what percentage of time is allocated to each activity and whether it is carried out seasonally or daily.
- **Activity location:** specifying where the activity is performed, in order to register the people's mobility. Is work done at home, in the family field, the family shop or elsewhere (within or beyond) community?

Appendix Item –3

SWOT Analysis :

SWOT stands for strength, weakness, opportunities and threats. The SWOT analysis reveals the strong and weak points within an organisation with respect to the project and the opportunities and threats that the project can face from outside the organisation.

A SWOT analysis is carried out to provide insight into the strong and weak points of an organisation and opportunities and strengths outside the organisation with respect to its capacity to deal with the gender issues in the project.

Appendix Item -4

Focus group discussion: Method and Checklists.

It was decided at the outset that five focus group discussions on five different issues would be carried out. The intension was to obtain a first hand understanding and insight into the changes women had been experiencing in various spheres of life as an effect of project intervention. The number of focus group was determined on the basis of different sectorred activities in which women were involved. The main reason for this deliberate sampling is to select those groups, which can provide the most useful information on the issues in question. It is thought that the holding of FGDs with specialised groups is vitally important, because specialised information is needed for assessing the effects of CDSP-II intervention that can only be provided by relevant groups. The FGDs were organised with the help of local NGOs (Sagarika, UPOMA and DUS) as well as Field Coordinators of CDSP.

The five different groups of women and their location were as follows

1. Twenty -five female members of four different water management committees from Bhatirtek and 59/3B polder.
2. Twenty -four female farmers of five different farmers forums in Moradona.
3. Twenty-four selected landless female headed households from sheet number one in South Char Majid Mouza under Moradona.
4. Thirty female members of seven SPCs in South Hatiya as well as two LADCs in Bandartila and Nijhum Dwip.
5. Thirty female Model Farmers from seven Mouza of South Hatiya polders.

By using a checklist (these are given below) Mr. Shafiul Alam, Local Planning Adviser and Mr. M.A. Latif, Socio Economic Adviser of CDSP facilitated the focus group discussion. Ms. Salma A. Shafi, Managing Director of Sheltech Consultants Private Ltd. was also present in two discussion sessions. The checklists were prepared by using the following framework:

Condition	Economic position	Political position	Socio-cultural identity and opportunities	Physical integrity
Change in the condition: - Ability to fulfil basic needs - Availability of safe water - Access to information etc.	Change in women's control over: - Productive resources - Knowledge and skills - Employments opportunities - Income	Change in women's - Participation in decision making at household community and society levels - Organisational capacity - Legal rights	Change in: - Women's control over social resources - Images of gender identities - The gender division of labour and workload	Changes in women's rights: - Fertility and sexuality - Health - Freedom from violence

Ms. Nujulee Begum, Gender and NGO Adviser and Md. Samsul Arefin, GIS Analyst of CDSP-II recorded the discussion in detail. Recording of FGDs was very difficult because too many people were trying to give their opinion at the same time. Therefore two people were needed to record the question and answers in long hand. After each session, the proceedings of the discussion were written in as much detail as possible by using both reporters' notes. When all the records were ready, the raw data was edited then organised and classified. Once all the data was in an organised form, one final session was conducted with team members to comment on the recorded information. The final report of FGD is the combination of all these interpretations.

A: Checklist for FGD with the Members of Local Institution

Condition

- আপনাদের কি কি সামাজিক পরিচিতি আছে?
- SPC ও LADC এর সদস্য হয়ে আপনাদের কি কি উপকার / ক্ষতি হলো?
- আপনার এলাকায় মহিলাদের জন্য আপনারা কি কি আদায় করতে পেরেছেন?
- LADC এবং SPC তে আসার আগেও আপনারা আপনাদের এলাকা চিনতেন এবং এখনও চিনেন। এই যে আগে চিনতেন আর LADC / SPC এর সদস্য হয়ে চিনেন এ দুটোর মধ্যে কোন পরিবর্তন আছে কি?

Economic Position

- LADC ও SPC এর সদস্য হিসাবে কি কি নতুন অভিজ্ঞতা হয়েছে?
- যদি থাকে, নতুন অভিজ্ঞতা আপনাদের পরিবারে, সমাজে কি কাজে লেগেছে?
- আপনি কি আগের চেয়ে বেশী কর্মঠ? কিভাবে?
- কোন ভাবে আপনার আয় রুজি কি বেড়েছে?

Political Position

- LADC ও SPC তে আপনাদের ভোটের কোন মূল্য আছে কি? কিভাবে বোঝা যায়?
- LADC ও SPC মিটিং এ আপনারা কি কোন দাবী তুলতে পারেন? সে দাবীর বিষয়ে কখনও সিদ্ধান্ত হয়েছে কি?
- আপনারা মহিলা? আপনারা কি মানুষ?
- মানুষ হিসাবে আপনাদের কি কি অধিকার আছে? LADC ও SPC তে আপনাদের কি কি অধিকার আছে?
- LADC ও SPC এর সদস্য আপনারা? আপনাদের সমাজ কি আপনাদেরকে নেতা হিসাবে মানে? কিভাবে বোঝেন যে মানে?
- LADC ও SPC এর নেতা হিসাবে আপনাকে নানান কাজ করতে হয়, আপনার পরিবারের সদস্যরা এটা কিভাবে দেখে?
- পরিবারের লোকেরা আপনাদের সাথে কোন বিষয়ে বেশী আলাপ আলোচনা করে?
হাট বাজার কেনা বেচা (সম্পত্তি, ফসল)
বিয়ে শাদী
যৌতুক
সন্তানের শিক্ষা
চিকিৎসা (পরিবারের সদস্যদের + নিজের)

Socio-cultural

- আপনারা LADC ও SPC এর সদস্য, পুরুষদের সাথে মিটিং করেন, প্রশিক্ষণে যান - আপনাদের পরিবারের সদস্যরা এটা কিভাবে দেখেন? তারা কি আপনাদের সহযোগিতা করেন? কিভাবে?
- কমিটির সদস্য হিসাবে সমাজে আপনাদের সম্মান মর্যাদা বেড়েছে কি? যদি হ্যাঁ হয়, কিভাবে বুঝতে পারেন?
- সমাজে নারীদের মান মর্যাদা বাড়ানোর জন্য আর কি করা যায়?
- কমিটির সদস্য হিসাবে কি ধরনের সমস্যার মুখোমুখি হন?
- আপনাদের সমাজ আপনাদের কাছে কি আশা করে?

Physical Integrity

- পরিবারে কারো অনুমতি ছাড়াই কি আপনারা কমিটির কাজে আসতে পারেন? আর কোথায় যেতে পারেন?
- সমাজে নেতা হিসাবে আপনাদের মূল্যায়ন করে কি? কিভাবে বুঝেন?
- আপনাদের জন্য সামাজিক নিরাপত্তা পরিস্থিতি কেমন?
 - ক) মান ইজ্জতের নিরাপত্তা
 - খ) চলা ফেরার নিরাপত্তা
 - গ) অন্যান্য ভয়ভীতি ।

B: Checklist for FGD with the Female Farmers

Condition

- ১। আপনারা কি পরিচয়ে এ মিটিং এ যোগ দিয়েছেন?
- ২। আপনারা কৃষক, কি কি ফসল চাষ করেন?
- ৩। তিন চার বছর আগের তুলনায় আপনার পরিবারে খাবারের অভাব কমেছে না বেড়েছে?
- ৪। কমলে / বাড়লে - কেন কমলো? / কিভাবে বাড়লো?
- ৫। জমি চাষের কাজ, ফসল তোলার কাজ বা ফসল বিক্রির জন্য লোক লাগাতে হয় কি?
- ৬। না হলে কাজগুলো কে করে?
- ৭। এ কাজগুলো না থাকলে, আপনারা কি করতেন?
- ৮। ফসল বিক্রি করে কিছু আয় হয় কি?
- ৯। জমিতে লাঙ্গল দিতে হয়? আপনারা কিভাবে এ কাজ সমাধা করেন?
- ১০। বীজ, সার ও ঔষধ কিভাবে যোগাড় করেন?

Economic Position

- ১। কৃষক হিসাবে আপনারা কি কি শিখলেন?
- ২। কার কাছ থেকে শিখলেন?
- ৩। যা শিখলেন, সে অনুযায়ী চাষ বাস করতে পারছেন?
- ৪। ফসলের উৎপাদন বাড়ানোর ব্যাপারে কার কার কাছ থেকে সহযোগিতা পান?
- ৫। সরকারের পক্ষে কে গ্রামে কৃষকদের বুদ্ধি পরামর্শ দেয়?
- ৬। যে জমিতে শাক শজি করেন তার মালিকানা কার?
- ৭। যে আয় হয় তা কার হাতে আসে / যায়? কে খরচ করে? বেশীর ভাগ কি কাজে খরচ হয়?

Political Position

- কি কি চাষ করবেন তা কিভাবে ঠিক করেন?
- কি বিক্রি করবেন এবং কোথায় বিক্রি করবেন এটা কিভাবে সিদ্ধান্ত নেন? কে সিদ্ধান্ত নেয়?
- একজন কৃষক নারী হিসাব, পাড়া প্রতিবেশীরা আপনাকে প্রশংসা করে কি?
- তারা আপনাদের ফসলাদি দেখতে আসে কি?
- শুধু কি মহিলারা আপনাদের কাজের প্রশংসা করে? পুরুষ সমাজ কি বলে?

Physical Integrity

- আপনাদের নিজ পরিবারে, আপনাদের ক্ষমতা কতটুকু?
 - কেনাবেচা
 - বিয়ে শাদী
 - যৌতুক
 - সন্তানের শিক্ষা
 - চিকিৎসা

- পরিবারের সদস্যদের অনুমতি ছাড়া আপনারা কোথায় কোথায় যেতে পারেন?
- পরিবার পরিকল্পনা পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার সম্পর্কে আপনারা কি চিন্তা করেন?
- নারীদের সামাজিক নিরাপত্তা পরিস্থিতি কেমন?
 - মান ইজ্জতের নিরাপত্তা
 - চলাফেরার নিরাপত্তা
 - অন্যান্য ভয়ভীতি ।

C: Checklist for FGD with the Selected Landless Female

Condition

- ১। কিভাবে আপনারা এ চরে আসলেন?
- ২। কেন আসলেন?
- ৩। যে জমিতে বসতি গড়লেন এটা কিভাবে পেলেন?
- ৪। সিডিএসপি কিভাবে জমি বন্দোবস্তের কাজ করেন? এ ব্যাপারে মিটিং করে, সে মিটিং এ আপনারা ছিলেন, কতজন ছিলেন?
- ৫। জমি জরিপের সময় আপনার জমি সনাক্ত করেছে কে? জরিপে নাম উঠানোর সময় কোন অসুবিধার সম্মুখীন হয়েছেন কি?
- ৬। যদি হ্যাঁ হয়, কিভাবে সেগুলো মোকাবেলা করলেন?
- ৭। আপনারা জমি পাওয়ার জন্য ভূমিহীন নির্বাচিত হয়েছেন, কিভাবে হলেন?
- ৮। জমি পাওয়ার জন্য নির্বাচিত হয়েছেন, এতে আপনাদের কি কি সুবিধা হলো?
- ৯। যদি জমি পাওয়ার জন্য আপনারা নির্বাচিত না হতেন, তাহলে আপনাদের কি ক্ষতি হতো?
- ১০। সিডিএসপি জমি বন্দোবস্তের কাজ না করলে জমি পাওয়ার জন্য কার কাছে যেতেন?
- ১১। তাদের মাধ্যমে জমি পাওয়া যেতো কি?
- ১২। বিধবা মহিলারা নিজের নামে জমি পাচ্ছে, সধবারা স্বামীর সাথে অর্ধেক হারে জমির মালিকানা পাচ্ছে, এতে চরাঞ্চলে মহিলাদের কি কি সুবিধা হচ্ছে?
 - সমাজে মর্যাদা বাড়ছে
 - মারপিট কমছে
 - তালাক কমছে
 - বহু বিবাহ কমছে
 - পারিবারিক সিদ্ধান্তে মতামত দিতে পারে
 - পরিবারে মূল্যায়ন হয়
 - শিক্ষা খরচ
 - চিকিৎসার খরচ
- ১৩। এখন জমি আছে। আপনারা জমির মালিক, এখন আপনাদের পরিবার নিয়ে আপনাদের কি আশা?
- ১৪। ছেলে মেয়ে সম্পর্কে কি আশা করেন?
- ১৫। সিডিএসপি জমির মালিকানা নিশ্চিত করতে না পারলে আপনাদের কি ক্ষতি হতে পারে।
- ১৬। জমি বন্দোবস্তের কাজে দেরী হওয়াতে
- ১৭। আপনাদের কোন অসুবিধা হচ্ছে কি?
- ১৮। এগুলো ঠেকানোর জন্য কি কি ব্যবস্থা নিচ্ছেন?

D: Checklist for FGD with the Female Model Farmers

Condition

- ১। শাক সজি আগের চাইতে বেশী খাওয়া হয় কিনা ?
- ২। আয় করা যায় কি ?
- ৩। সজি বাগানে চাষের কাজ, ফসল তোলার কাজ বা বিক্রির কাজে লোক নিয়োগ করতে হয় কিনা ?
- ৪। তা না হলে কাজগুলো কে করে ?
- ৫। এ কাজগুলো না থাকলে আপনারা কি করতেন ?
- ৬। বীজ, সার ও ঔষধ কিভাবে সংগ্রহ করেন ?
- ৭। দু-চার বছর আগের তুলনায় স্থানীয় হাটে বাজারে শাক সজি বেশী পাওয়া যায়, না কম ?

Economic Position

- ১। মডেল কৃষক হিসাবে কি কি শিখলেন ?
- ২। কার কাছ থেকে শিখলেন ?
- ৩। যা কিছু শিখলেন তার মধ্যে কি কি কাজে লাগাচ্ছেন ?
- ৪। বাড়ী বাগান করার ক্ষেত্রে কার কার কাছ থেকে সহযোগিতা পান ?
- ৫। সরকারের পক্ষে কে গ্রামে কৃষকদের বুদ্ধি পরামর্শ দেয় ?
- ৬। যে জমিতে শাক সজি চাষ করেন তার মালিকানা কার ?
- ৭। যে লাভ হয় তা কার হাতে আসে / যায় ? কে খরচ করে ? বেশীর ভাগ কি কাজে খরচ হয় ?

Political Position

- ১। কি কি চাষ করবেন - তা কিভাবে ঠিক করেন ?
কি বিক্রি করবেন এবং কোথায় বিক্রি করবেন এটা কিভাবে সিদ্ধান্ত নেন ? কে সিদ্ধান্ত নেয় ?
- ২। পাড়া প্রতিবেশী শাকসজি চাষী হিসাবে আপনাকে প্রশংসা করে কি ?
- ৩। তারা আপনার বাগান দেখতে আসে কি ?
- ৪। শুধু কি মহিলারা আপনাদের কাজের প্রশংসা করে ?

Socio Cultural Position

- ১। মডেল চাষী হিসাবে আপনি কোথায় যাওয়ার সুযোগ হয়েছে কি ?
- ২। কারও অনুমতি ছাড়া আপনি কোথায় কোথায় যেতে পারেন ?
- ৩। এন জি ও অফিসে যাওয়া বা অন্যান্য জায়গায় আপনি যাতায়াত করলে সমাজে কোন চোখে দেখে ?
- ৪। আপনাদের কাজ কি দু-এক বছর আগের তুলনায় কমেছে না বেড়েছে ?

Physical Integrity

- ১। দু-এক বছর আগের তুলনায় রোগ ব্যাধি বেড়েছে না কমেছে ?
- ২। সামাজিক নিরাপত্তা পরিস্থিতি কেমন ?
- ৩। মান ইজ্জতের নিরাপত্তা পরিস্থিতি কেমন ?
- ৪। পরিবার পরিকল্পনা পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার বিষয়ে আপনারা কি চিন্তা করেন ?

E: Checklist for FGD with the Members of Water Management Committee.

Condition

- ১। প্রকল্প পূর্ববর্তী সময়ের তুলনায় ব্যবহার যোগ্য পানির প্রাপ্যতা বেড়েছে কিনা ?
- ২। মহিলারা কি কি কাজে পানি ব্যবহার করছে ?
 - ❖ ধোয়া মোছা
 - ❖ রান্না বান্না
 - ❖ ক্ষেত খামার চাষ
 - ❖ শাক সজ্জি চাষ
 - ❖ পশু পালন
 - ❖ মাছ চাষ

Economic Position

- ১। কিভাবে মহিলারা পানি ব্যবস্থাপনা কমিটির সদস্য হলেন ?
- ২। এর সদস্য হয়ে মহিলাদের কি উপকার হলো ?
- ৩। আপনারা বলতে পারেন আপনাদের এলাকায় কোন মৌসুমে কি রকম পানির সমস্যা হয় ?
- ৪। এ সব সমস্যা দূর করার জন্য কি কি ব্যবস্থা করা হয়েছে ?
- ৫। কারা করেছে ?
- ৬। পানি ব্যবস্থাপনা কমিটির সদস্য হিসাবে মহিলারা নতুন কি কি শিখেছেন ?

Political Position

- ১। মহিলা সদস্যদের মধ্যে কেউ কি কার্যকরী কমিটিতে আছেন ?
- ২। থাকলে আপনাদের দায়িত্ব কি ?
- ৩। মহিলা সদস্যদের বিশেষ কোন দায়িত্ব আছে কি ? থাকলে তা কি কি ?
- ৪। মহিলা কি কমিটিতে কোন প্রস্তাব তুলতে পারেন ?
- ৫। মহিলা সদস্যদের মতামতকে পুরুষ সদস্যরা কিভাবে দেখে ?
- ৬। পানি ব্যবস্থাপনা কমিটির সদস্য নির্বাচিত হওয়ার পর আর কোন সামাজিক কাজে জড়িত হয়েছে কিনা ? হলে কি ধরনের ?

Socio Cultural Position

- ১। আপনারা পানি ব্যবস্থাপনা কমিটির পুরুষ সদস্যদের সাথে মিটিং করেন, প্রশিক্ষণে যান, শিক্ষা সফরে যান, আপনাদের পরিবারের সদস্যরা কিভাবে আপনাদের সহযোগিতা করে / দেয় ?
- ২। কমিটির সদস্য হিসাবে সমাজে আপনাদের সম্মান / মর্যাদা কি বেড়েছে / যদি হাঁ হয় কিভাবে বুঝতে পারেন ?
- ৩। সমাজে নারীদের মান সম্মান আরো বাড়ানোর জন্য কি কি করা যায় ?
- ৪। কমিটির সদস্য হিসাবে কি ধরনের সমস্যার মুখোমুখি হন ?
- ৫। আপনাদের সমাজ আপনাদের কাছে কি আশা করে ।

Physical Integrity

- ১। পরিবারের কারো অনুমতি ছাড়াই কি আপনারা কমিটির কাজে আসতে পারেন ? আরও কোথায় যেতে পারেন ?
- ২। সমাজে নেতা হিসাবে আপনাদের মূল্যায়ন হয় কি ? হলে কিভাবে বুঝেন ?
- ৩। মহিলাদের জন্য সামাজিক নিরাপত্তা পরিস্থিতি কেমন ?
 - ক) মান ইজ্জতের নিরাপত্তা
 - খ) চলাফেরার নিরাপত্তা
 - গ) অন্যান্য ভয়ভীতি ।

Appendix Item-5 :

Socio-economic status of the people of seven “Janapads” of new habitat of newly accreted Boyer Char.

Absolute landless poor	Landless poor	Poor	Show off poor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Migrated river-eroded people. ▪ Have lost entire land and all household belongings. ▪ Migrated almost with empty hand. ▪ Have managed and/or purchased a piece of land from Sub-Commanders and built a shelter. ▪ Do not have valid document of the land ▪ Always living in fear of losing their land and eviction from the charland. ▪ Very innocent, calm and quite by nature. ▪ Have no other property except the present land. ▪ Sources of income are mainly agriculture and day labourers. ▪ Engage them in different seasonal works like fishing, selling wood, boatman etc. ▪ Have 1½ acre of land but due to money cannot fully cultivate their land and somehow holding it to have ownership future. ▪ Cannot eat three times a day. ▪ About 50% of the people of this type are living in this char. ▪ Daily earning varies from Tk 50-60 per day for male, while a female earns Tk 20-30 (irregular) per day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Migrated river-eroded people. ▪ Have lost their every household belonging but have some cash money. ▪ Somehow have managed to buy 1½ of land directly from ‘Commander’. ▪ Do not have valid document for the land. ▪ Are not so scared of losing landed property. ▪ In the meanwhile have earned some extra wealth like cash money, cow, plough etc. ▪ Feel that if they are evicted from their land by ‘Commander’ and his people they will be able to fight back or will be able to migrate to another areas. ▪ Houses are relatively better at least not a hut. ▪ Agricultural day labourers but they adopt seasonal work ▪ For extra earning most of them migrate to other areas of the charland. ▪ About 25% people of Boyer Char are of this type. ▪ They earns about Tk 80-100 per day the female earns Tk 20-30 (irregular) a day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Migrated river-eroded people. ▪ Not entirely lost their household belongings or the landed property. ▪ Still have some wealth or landed property at the place their origin. ▪ Migrated at Boyer Char for better future. ▪ They also have 1½ of land. ▪ Do not have valid document for the land. ▪ Houses are relatively more better ▪ Are not in a fear of losing the land. ▪ Are not agricultural day labourers but they employ labours. ▪ Can cultivate their land. ▪ Some of them have shops and other business in the market. ▪ They normally do not migrate to other areas of the charland. ▪ The female normally do not go out for work. ▪ About 15% people belong to this type. ▪ Daily income is about Taka 150-200 per day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not river-eroded and actually they are not poor. ▪ They are the relatives of the “Commander” .or “Bahini”. ▪ They are not the migrant in this charland. ▪ They either resides in Noakhali or in other area of the district and have huge property. ▪ Just enhance their property they purchased a good amount of land in different name but they are living outside of Boyer Char. ▪ To look after their landed property they have hired poor people or they have temporary servants or relatives. ▪ Once they will get the valid document of the land. Then the people they have hired will be evicted or will be employed in other areas. The local people named them as “land hunter” ▪ About 10% people belong to this group.

(Source : Boyer Char : The untold story June, 2001 – Community Needs Assessment of Boyer Char through PRA).

Appendix Item -6

Perception of Field Level Institutions on women's lives in coastal chars in the south of Noakhali.

A few five-day long Gender training course was organised for different field level institution at different times. Small group discussions were held during these training sessions. The outcomes of the small group discussions are presented below in this section. It is to be borne in mind that the issues were brought up from the perspectives of the participants who came from different the Coastal Chars covered by CDSP II. These are their accumulated wisdom and their description of the women's lives in their own areas.

Outcome of small group discussions during basic gender training for 5 LADCs (Gangchil-Torabali, Char Lakshmi, Moradona, Bandartila, Nijhum Dwip), November-December 2000).

The condition of Women in the five different Coastal Chars

1. Do not get nutritious food.
2. Do not get necessary services in pregnancy.
3. Do not get additional food during pregnancy.
4. Do not get opportunity for amusement.
5. Deprived from love and affection.
6. Women are treated as burden.
7. No body expect girl child.
8. Women's free movement is prohibited.
9. Women are not permitted to attend social ceremonies.
10. The female folk are powerless and graceless in these areas.
11. Divorce is enormous.
12. Imposition of veil is strictly followed.
13. There are incident of rape cases, in few cases, women were killed after being raped.
14. Various kinds of oppression and tortures are committed on the women.
15. No marriage without dowry.
16. Polygamy has been increasing in the offshore-accreted land.
17. Victims of religious superstition.
18. Disparity exists between men and women in enjoying various social facilities.
19. The female is perceived as an enjoyable commodity by the males of the society.
20. Women are depressed and oppressed in each and every spheres of life.

The position of women in the five different Coastal Chars.

1. Women are not allowed to decide in having child. They are unable to enjoy reproductive rights.
2. Generally women do not participate in decision making on family issues.
3. No opportunity to gain skills.
4. Mother's opinions are not valued in the family while deciding her children's marriage.
5. Women are bound to seek permission in going out home.
6. Equal rights are not ensured in distribution of family property.
7. No control over own income.
8. If a mother gives birth a female child, both mother and child are being harassed.
9. Women are belittled in the society in comparison with men.
10. Women choices are not valued.
11. Women are not allowed to attend public meetings and processions.
12. Women never attend religious functions.
13. Women are not allowed to participate in decision-making at society level.
14. The girls are teased on the way to and return from school.
15. Women do not get equal wage to their male workers for the same labour.
16. Women do not enjoy freedom to be involved in political activities.
17. Women cannot make use of civil amenities.
18. In practical, women do not enjoy the rights reserved by the Family Codes.
19. The male do enjoy the rights of divorce.
20. Having an able son is made a condition for the women in getting settlement of Government owned land.
21. Agricultural credit is not accessible to women.
22. In spite of prevailing laws, women are experiencing various kind of oppression and disparity.

Outcome of small group discussions during basic gender training for newly elected female members of 7 SPCs in South Hatiya, September 2002.

Practical Gender Needs:

1. Safe drinking water
2. Pit latrine
3. MBBS Doctors
4. Trained Birth Attendants
5. Family Planning Service
6. Rice
7. Clothes
8. Homestead land
9. House
10. Vaccine for children
11. Vaccine for mother
12. Vaccine for poultry and duck
13. Repair Road
14. Quality seeds of vegetables
15. Health services
16. Nutrition's food

17. Fuel
18. Spices grinding stone
19. Fuel saving stove
20. Vaccine for domestic animals
21. Insecticides
22. Oil, soap, comb, mirror
23. Utensils
24. Electricity
25. Rice mills
26. Spices grinding mills
27. School
28. Vegetables
29. Fish and meat
30. House decoration items
31. Different tools for crop cultivation
32. Sewing machine
33. Fertilizer
34. Radio and Television
35. Clinic and medicine

Strategic Gender Interests:

1. Education and training for women
2. Women's unity
3. Women's awareness
4. Establish right to enjoy inheritance
5. Prohibition of polygamy
6. Prohibition of dowry system
7. Stop women's oppression
8. Ensure safety and security in home as well as outside the home
9. To create opportunity for women's employment
10. To ensure women's participation in local leadership
11. To create opportunity for women to be involved in politics
12. To gain control over owned property
13. To ensure equal wage for both male-female worker
14. To value women's opinion
15. To value women work
16. To establish girl's right to choose life partner
17. To develop culture of treating girls and boys equally
18. To develop culture of valuing women's choice
19. To establish women's right to cast vote at own will
20. To establish women's right of expression
21. To wipe out terrorist attack on women
22. To establish real justice in the society
23. To develop social consensus regarding women's development issues
24. To establish human rights of women
25. To increase legal awareness in the community
26. To ensure women's participation in environment and nature saving activities
27. To ensure male-female equal membership in various local committees
28. To create opportunity for women to be involved in development process
29. To take appropriate measures in facilitating privileges to the women in public and private transports
30. To ensure security to the women on the streets

Outcome of small group discussions during basic gender training for 4 Coastal Union Parishad (Saherkhali, Char Darbesh, Char Badam, Jahajmara union under Local Level Planning), August 2001.

Access to and control over Resources:

Sl. No.	Assets	Ownership	Control
1	Land	Male / Female	Male
2	Cow/Goat	<input type="checkbox"/>	Male / Female
3	Duck, Chickens, Pigeon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Van	Male	Male
5	House	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Home compound	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Fishery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Children	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female
9	Sewing machine	Male / Female	Male / Female
10	Shop	Male	Male
11	Buffalo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Pond	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Chair / Table	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Ornaments	Male / Female	Male / Female
15	Furniture	Community	Community
16	Tubewell	Male	Male
17	Watch	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	Clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19	Crops	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20	Madrasha	GoB	<input type="checkbox"/>
21	Canal	Wapda	<input type="checkbox"/>
22	River	GoB	<input type="checkbox"/>
23	Sea	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24	School / College	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25	WMC	Wapda	<input type="checkbox"/> /Female
26	Market Committee	GoB	<input type="checkbox"/>
27	Mosque Committee	Society	<input type="checkbox"/>
28	Bridge / Culverts	Wapda	<input type="checkbox"/>
29	Roads	GoB	<input type="checkbox"/>

30	Power Tiller	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>
31	Saw Mill	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32	Fishing Net	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33	Hotel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34	Bank	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35	Rickshaw	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36	Bicycle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
37	Boat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38	Bullock curt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
39	Taxi	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
40	Rice Mills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
41	Fish Farm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
42	Radio	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
43	Television	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44	Telephone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
45	Camera	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
46	Truck	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
47	Savings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
48	Tempo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
49	Motorbike	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
50	Pump machine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
51	Mobile telephone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
52	Computer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
53	Mandir	Hindu Society	<input type="checkbox"/>
54	Workshops	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>
55	Cinema Hall	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
56	Embankment	Wapda (BWDB)	<input type="checkbox"/>
57	Threshing machine	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>
58	Trees on home compound	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
59	Hospital	GoB	GoB
60	Market	<input type="checkbox"/>	Male
61	Cooperatives	NGO	Male / Female
62	Cyclone shelter	GoB / NGO	Male
63	Sluice	Wapda (BWDB)	Male / Female

Having no access to and control over resources, what type of problems women usually faced?

1. Women are perceived as burden
2. Women are not valued as human beings
3. Women do not get equal wage for equal work with the male counterparts
4. No affection and care from any body
5. Women have to live disgracefully
6. Women can not speak with boldness in the society
7. Women do not get proper treatment in sickness
8. No possibility to get real justice
9. Women can not work at their own will
10. The husbands do not value the wives in home
11. Women can not initiate any activity without husband's permission
12. Women can not entertain guest at their own choice
13. Women are not allowed to visit relatives at her own will
14. Women can not resist evil doing of husbands, if so they would be beaten
15. Women are not allowed to take part in open discussion
16. Women are not allowed to use contraceptives without husbands permission
17. Working all day long, women do not get change to enjoy leisure
18. If women give birth more female child than that of male, they are criticised by relatives and husbands.
19. Widows do not get proper rights in the society. Both widows and abandoned women pass their days in insecurity.
20. Women are unable to influence.
21. Women cannot attain income-earning skills.
22. Women are tortured in various ways.
23. The society does not show much respect to the women.
24. The female are often eye-browed.
25. Women cannot cast vote at their will.
26. Women have to pay dowry.
27. Women are not allowed to choose life partner.
28. No body listen women in judging right or wrong.
29. In general, women do not own house or any other assets. In prevailing situation, if any controversy arises, often husbands threatened wives to leave the houses.

Outcome of small group discussions during basic gender training for 4 Water Management Committee (Gangchil, Nabagram, Char Bagga Dona-1, Char Bagga Done-II), May-June 2003.

What types of women's oppressions exist in Chars?

1. Women are often beaten by their husbands as well as parent-in-laws.
2. Women do not get enough food and clothes.
3. Until giving birth a male child, women are not beloved parents-in-laws home. They do not get food, care and medicine in case of giving birth female child.

4. Often women are threatened to divorce.
5. If asked anything right or wrong, often husbands react and ridicule wives.
6. Forest terrors kidnap women and girls.
7. Women are being afraid of sexual abuse.
8. Girls are teased on the way to school and return home.
9. Under aged girls are given marriage.
10. Men marry twice or thrice, it creates anarchy in the family lives.
11. Land of destitute women usually grabbed by the powerful person.
12. Several types of indigenous techniques of torture are being applied on women.
13. Very often women feel threatened.
14. It is very much difficult to keep grown up girls at home.
15. Women are afraid to go out of the house at night in apprehension of being kidnapped / physical assault.
16. Women evict from their homestead and encircle the same with horvade wave.
17. The forest dacoits forcefully marry the girls.
18. Women do not get right share of inheritance as well as other assets.
19. In searching work, husbands leave home and marry again in work sites, in many cases, they never come back.
20. Often daughter-in-laws are rebuke if they are unable to work after a couple of days after giving birth a child.

Why are women oppressed in chars?

1. Women are not treated as human beings.
2. Women are not educated.
3. Women are poor. They do not own property.
4. Though Khas land is settled jointly in the name of both spouses, women are deprived of exercising right over that.
5. Women are perceived as helpless and weak.
6. Bribery is practiced in traditional coup. Women have nothing to bribe.
7. Women are oppressed for dowry.
8. Women have no courage to speak.
9. Women cannot earn cash.
10. Women's reproductive role is not valued. The society has no understanding about women's contribution to up bringing of new labour force.
11. No recognition and valuation of women's household work. Nobody understood women's contribution to up-keeping labour force.
12. It is difficult for women to ensure real justice.
13. The society is not aware about women's rights.

14. The local leaders understand the meaning of women's development, but never put importance on the issues. They do not want to lose power. Therefore, they never thought about women's liberty, empowerment and self-reliance.
15. Women are not united in the family as well as in the society.

How much opportunity exists for women to be involved in local judicial and decision making process?

There is no opportunity for women to be involved in traditional village court and decision making process. Most of the local courts are held in market, union office or in the home of local touts in the late evening. Traditionally women are not encouraged to attend this court. Women are not obeyed as judges. Nobody seek women's opinion.

Are the women's contributions to the family and the society recognised with importance?

Women do a lot of work. All day they remain busy in various reproductive and productive activities such as attending children and elderly, cooking cleaning, gardening, crafts making, raising birds and animals, harvesting and processing crops. They never got the recognition for all the effort, even though they work day and night. Female labourers are not getting equal wage to male labours in chars.

Is women's right to participate in local institution (i.e. Moktab, Madrasha, Mosque Committee, Club, Water Management Committee, Farmers Forum) established?

There is no women's participation in social institutions i.e. religious school and mosque committee and clubs. At present, their participation in market and school management committee is nominal, but they are unable to influence decisions. Male-female equal membership is achieved in Water Management Committee. However, women's participation in Farmers Forum remains limited. Women's leadership is not developing because we commit crime if women go out of home compound without permission of household head.

How far can women fulfil their need for food, clothes and treatment in sickness in the chars?

Many women are unable to fulfil their daily need for food and clothes in the Chars. In most cases, the women are less fed, have less clothes and less privileges in getting treatment than that of men. They are also enjoying limited opportunity to be educated and employed.

How much opportunity exists in the Chars for woman to be involved in cash earning activities?

Women's earning is less than the men in the char. There is limited scope for cash earning. There are no mills and factories in the area. Whatever they earn from household enterprises, they are unable to keep in their hands. Nobody values the productive work that women do in their home compound.

Does any opportunity exist in the Char for women to be skilled for earning cash?

Skilled women workers are rarely found in the char. For many years women were given no opportunity to work as labour force in the area. Due to absence of high school and vocational training institutes, it remains difficult for women to obtain cash earning skills. Nowadays women earn cash through catching and selling fish fries.

Are women's view valued on the issues of property, divorce, guardianship of children and right to vote in char societies?

Since 1987, women are able to share ownership of land with their husbands. In reality they do not enjoy the output of that at their will.

Divorced women do not get support in realisation of their share from the husband. If they managed to get doer (Denmohor), in most cases, their guardian took that away.

Women are legally recognised as the guardian of the children. In reality, men exercise right over them in char society.

Women have the right to franchise but could not exercise it properly. Male relatives compel the women to cast vote at their will.

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