

Chapter-43

Power Division

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The power sector plays a significant role in the economic development of a country. The Government's Perspective Plan (2010-2021) and Seventh Five Year Plan (2016-2020) has set annual growth target of 7.4% for the period. Apart from the increasing demand for electricity in daily household use, electricity usage and demand is on the rise in agriculture, cottage industries and the various income generating activities. Alongside meeting the increasing electricity demand, Power Division has also prioritized the objectives of achieving the SDG goals and to provide electricity for all within 2021 by ensuring uninterrupted and quality power supply through improvement in generation, transmission and distribution systems for sustainable development.

2.0 Major Functions of the Division

- ❖ Undertake all activities related to power generation, transmission and distribution;
- ❖ Formulation, updating and implementation of policies related to power sector;
- ❖ Expand, rehabilitate and modernize power generation, transmission and distribution services in line with the increasing demand and formulate plans accordingly;
- ❖ Encourage private and joint venture investment initiatives along with government investment;
- ❖ Improve the standard of living of the rural poor people through rural electrification and introduction of renewable energy;
- ❖ Revenue collection and commercial operation monitoring;
- ❖ Expansion of renewable energy, ensuring efficient use of energy and promoting energy saving initiatives.

3.0 Strategic Objectives of the Division and their Relevance with Women's Empowerment

3.1 **Ensuring uninterrupted and quality power supply:** With the increase in electricity coverage, new factories, cottage industries and business enterprises will be set up, which will create new employment opportunities for women.

- 3.2 **Expansion of renewable energy technology and increase usage of energy saving appliances:** Efficient use of energy for domestic purposes can be ensured by motivating village women and encouraging them to use renewable energy technology and energy saving appliances. This will increase their awareness and help improve their quality of life. A large number of women participated in solar home system and energy saving improved cook stove distribution which has led to their employment and income.

4.0 Role of Power Division for Women's Advancement and Rights

- 4.1 The per capita electricity generation of Bangladesh has increased from 220 kWh to 407 kWh in the last 8 years. This has resulted in a huge increase in women's access to electricity which facilitated women to enter the labour-market and improve their quality of life.
- 4.2 Women can complete their household chores quickly using electrical appliances which gives them ample time to focus on cottage industries and other various economic activities to become self-dependent.
- 4.3 Women can familiarize themselves with national and international news and information due to access to electricity. This creates awareness among women regarding their rights. On the other hand, as electricity is helping them to become self-dependent, they can contribute significantly in establishing their rights.

5.0 Priority Spending Areas Programmes and its impact of Women's Advancement

Serial No.	Priority Spending Areas/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (direct/indirect)
1	2	3
1.	Construction of new power plants and rehabilitation and maintenance of existing plants	Establishment of new power plants and maintenance of the existing power plants has increased electricity production. As a result, new industries will be established that will create employment opportunities for women.
2.	Construction of new transmission lines and necessary maintenance of old lines	The expansion of power transmission system in the rural areas has made positive direct and indirect impact on the socio-economic development and employment of women.
3.	Expansion of renewable energy technology and initiation of measures for energy savings	Production of electricity through development of renewable energy sources and distribution to remote areas (where expansion of grid is expensive) will ensure future energy security. Women can carry out their

Serial No.	Priority Spending Areas/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (direct/indirect)
1	2	3
		household chores comfortably using renewable energy. Under the energy efficiency enhancement program, steps have been taken to distribute improved cook stove all over the country. This will ensure energy and time savings, reduction in environmental pollution and guarantee better health for women.
4.	Implementation of load management activities	Uninterrupted power supply in irrigation season through load management has been contributing to increased agriculture production while implementation of energy conservation program through maximum utilization of limited resources will contribute to economic development. Women will benefit from this development.

6.0 Women's Share in Ministry's Total Expenditure

(Taka in Crore)

Description	Budget 2017-18			Revised 2016-17			Budget 2016-17		
	Budget	Women Share Women percent		Revised	Women Share Women percent		Budget	Women Share Women percent	
Total Budget	400266	112019	27.99	317174	86586	27.3	340605	92781	27.24
Ministry Budget	18894	10173	53.84	13450	5568	41.39	13063	5140	39.35
Development	18845	10173	53.98	13421	5567	41.48	13040	5139	39.41
Non-Development	49	1	2.01	29	1	3.19	23	1	4.05

Source: RCGP database

7.0 Success of power division in the progress of Women's Advancement

7.1 During the last eight years, per capita electricity generation has increased to 407 kWh. Increased per capita electricity generation and its usage have created new employment opportunities for women and improved their standard of living. The success story of Power Division in women's development is noted below:

- ❖ 100% participation of women in billing of rural electrification program
- ❖ Maximum participation of women in distribution of solar home system and improved cook stove
- ❖ Creation of employment opportunities for women in garment industries through expansion of power
- ❖ Participation of women in union information centre through electrification

- ❖ Facilitating women's employment through establishing new industrial and commercial organizations by electrification
- ❖ Revenue earning opportunity creation for women through electrification of cottage industries
- ❖ Electrification has made social and information media available to women everywhere in the country which has resulted in awareness among women regarding health, education and other sectors and made them stronger in attaining their rights.

8.0 Recommendations for Future Activities

- ❖ Ensure electricity access to the projects taken by poor, deprived women and make it a top priority
- ❖ Childcare facilities should be provided to the women employees of power sector for their children's safety and security.
- ❖ While undertaking power sector related projects, necessary measures can be taken to ensure that the project contributes to enhancing the knowledge and capacity of women. At the same time, proper attention should be given in taking up projects so that workload and health risks for women are reduced.
- ❖ Due consideration should be given to integrate women's benefit during project undertaking.