

Chapter-29

Ministry of Housing and Public Works

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Ministry of Housing and Public Works are committed to build government infrastructures with all modern amenities and accommodation for all through planned urbanization by making the best use of land to materialize the vision of 7th Five Year Plan, Vision 2021 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). With a view to achieving the commitment, especially to ensure low cost housing for the poor and middle income people, a number of development activities have been undertaken in different divisional cities, districts and upazilas including Dhaka city. Different projects are going on regarding development of plots and construction of flats for low and middle income people, expanding accommodation facilities for government officials, development of lakes, canals, and other beautification of cities, removing water logging in Dhaka and Chattogram city, constructing new roads, widening existing roads, constructing overpass/flyover to minimize traffic jams etc., and other projects for developing infrastructural facilities. Besides, with a view to develop planned urbanization all over the country the ministry has prepared different regional master plans. To ensure gender equality, ministry of housing and public works provides special focus on these activities.

2.0 Major Functions of the Ministry

- ❖ Planning and undertaking activities to solve housing problem of the country;
- ❖ Preparation of architectural and structural design of public buildings and other infrastructure, their construction and maintenance;
- ❖ Preparation of laws and policies to promote planned housing sector;
- ❖ Proper use and development of land and planned urbanization;
- ❖ Undertaking activities to solve the accommodation problem of government officers and staff;
- ❖ Conducting research and innovate technology on urbanization, housing, construction of buildings, construction materials and techniques;
- ❖ Management of land and abandoned property under this ministry; and
- ❖ Create opportunities for involvement of the private sector in solving urbanization and housing problems.

3.0 Strategic objectives of the Ministry and their relevance with women's advancement and rights

3.1 **Planned urbanization:** Women are directly affected due to unplanned urbanization and unhygienic accommodation. To ensure hygienic accommodation and safety town through planned urbanization, which will play a key role in women's advancement indirectly. As a result, this strategic objective is indirectly pertinent to the development of women.

3.2 **Ensure affordable housing for different income groups:** Safe accommodation is being arranged by constructing dormitories for the working women under this activity. Consequently, their safety and opportunity for participation in job has been increase. It has also been facilitated contributing to women's advancement and empowerment.

3.3 **Innovation of technology in planned housing and house construction techniques:** New technology in accommodation and building construction will make the life of women easier and comfortable and that will play a vital role in developing the condition of women. Besides, training has been provided to women on innovated technology and provisions have been introduced in making these products as small entrepreneurs. Direct participation of these activities will contribute to women development as well as women empowerment.

3.4 **Ensure cost effective/appropriate infrastructural facilities for governmental works:** There are women friendly washroom, prayer room, breast feeding corner, day-care centre etc. are ensured in the working places of women which will facilitate women to providing and receiving services as well. As a result, these activities will play a special role for developing women.

4.0 Roles and Responsibilities of the Ministry for Women's Advancement and Rights

4.1 One of the important aims of the National Women Development Policy 2011 is to ensure women-rights through providing proper shelter and housing. The Ministry of Housing and Public Works has been playing an important role in preserving the rights and empowerment of women and creating decent living environment for women. The ministry has also taken initiatives to ensure women's social empowerment and security through constructing multistoried residential building for various income groups, especially for homeless women and ultra-poor people. Construction of 244 dormitories at the side of Saltgola-Patenga Road in Chittagong has been completed with accommodation facilities of 2000 female workers. The Ministry has been playing a significant role of the ministry to ensure the construction of women and children-friendly infrastructure in the rural and urban

areas, to improve the sanitation system and to ensure women's employment in the construction of government infrastructure.

- 4.2 The more participation of women in government services is considered as a milestone in the development process of Bangladesh. The reconstruction of infrastructure in offices is essential for creating women-friendly work environment. Construction of separate dormitories, day-care-centre, prayer room and separate toilets for women is essential to ensure women-friendly working environment in Bangladesh to ensure welfare of the women which the developed country already have. The Ministry of Housing And Public Works has been adopting various projects/programs to develop and reconstruct the government offices to meet up the demand of women. In addition, this ministry has also taken the initiatives of building and maintaining dormitories, hostels for working women in divisional cities including Dhaka. Due to ensuring their security and accommodation, the scope of women's participation in job will increase and that will contribute in development and empowerment of women. It is mentionable that a large number of women are working in the construction industry. But various forms of discrimination are practiced in this sector. Initiatives have been taken to formulate laws and policies to ensure equal right and risk-free working environment for women.

5.0 Priority Spending Areas and Benefits for Women's Advancement

| Serial No. | Priority Spending Areas/Programmes | Impact on Women Development (direct/indirect) |
|------------|--|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1. | Optimum use of land in cities | ❖ Women are directly affected due to the unplanned and unhygienic accommodation. To ensure hygienic accommodation and optimum use of land through planned urbanization which will impact on women's development indirectly. |
| 2. | Construction of planned infrastructure in the towns and cities | ❖ Women are the worst victims for unplanned infrastructure. Besides, women do not get the opportunities to move freely due to inadequacy of public facilities like open ponds, playing fields, park etc. Introducing the above mentioned facilities will contribute to women's development indirectly. |
| 3. | Create suitable accommodation facilities for people of various income groups | ❖ Secured accommodation facilities for working women will be ensured by building dormitories. As a result, women security and participation in work will be increased, which will contribute to women's development and empowerment. Besides, the scope of income in the construction sector will be increased for |

| Serial No. | Priority Spending Areas/Programmes | Impact on Women Development (direct/indirect) |
|------------|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | women workers. |
| 4. | Modernized and planned urbanization and research and training related to house building | ❖ Women will be trained on newly innovated technologies and provision will be introduced in making these products by small entrepreneurs. Direct participation of women will be ensured in this program which will contribute to women's development and empowerment. |

6.0 Women's Share in Ministry's Total Expenditure

(Taka in Crore)

| Description | Budget 2019-20 | | | Revised 2018-19 | | | Budget 2018-19 | | | Actual 2017-18 | | |
|-----------------|----------------|-------------|---------|-----------------|-------------|---------|----------------|-------------|---------|----------------|-------------|---------|
| | Budget | Women Share | | Revised | Women Share | | Budget | Women Share | | Actual | Women Share | |
| | | Women | percent | | Women | percent | | Women | percent | | Women | percent |
| Total Budget | 523190 | 161247 | 30.82 | 442541 | 136036 | 30.74 | 464573 | 136938 | 29.48 | 321861 | 88441 | 27.48 |
| Ministry Budget | 6604 | 2179 | 33 | 6148 | 1708 | 27.79 | 4965 | 1595 | 32.12 | 3456 | 819 | 23.71 |
| Development | 4977 | 1704 | 34.23 | 4347 | 1274 | 29.3 | 3520 | 1585 | 45.03 | 2223 | 762 | 34.28 |
| Operating | 1627 | 475 | 29.19 | 1800 | 434 | 24.13 | 1445 | 10 | 0.67 | 1233 | 57 | 4.64 |

Source: RCGP database

7.0 Success in Promoting Women's Advancement

- ❖ To make the government working places more comfortable, there have been provisions for special wash room, prayer room etc. for women workers in the architectural design which has already been prepared;
- ❖ The accommodation facility of this ministry will enjoy everybody irrespective of gender;
- ❖ Women participation is ensured through the implementation of different projects of this ministry that contributes to the empowerment of women through the enhancement of income for the working women; and
- ❖ Chattogram Development Authority has constructed 244 dormitories for 2000 female worker to solve the problem of accommodation beside the Saltgola-Patenga road.

8.0 Recommendations for future Activities

- ❖ Initiatives should be taken to build hostel-dormitories in all districts headquarter for government and non-government working women to ensure women's safety and security and to increase their participation in work;
- ❖ It is necessary to take necessary steps and motivational activities to increase employment of women and to ensure their rights in implementation of different development projects;

- ❖ It is necessary to formulate legal provisions and other relevant activities to ensure women friendly working environment and equal rights in construction industry;
- ❖ Importing training on housing and building materials innovated by House and Building Research Institute and to expand the training programme all over the country to make women as small entrepreneur; and
- ❖ In housing and urbanization planning, housing facilities for the poor, destitute and working women should be preserved.