

## Chapter-20

### Prime Minister's Office

#### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 National budget is the document of estimated annual income and expenditure of a country. Budget allocation, taxation or tax policy not only influence the life-style of people of different sphere, but also affect the life of male and female significantly. Ignoring female's contribution in the overall economy of the country, sustainable development is not possible. Adequate budget allocation is necessary for women development meaning their empowerment and economic solvency.
- 1.2 In Bangladesh context, as women are socially and economically back-warded, every Ministry/Division should maintain gender sensitivity in their budget process for streamlining women in the overall development initiatives. Considering the above circumstances, for achieving the goal of women development, Prime Minister's Office has undertaken number of initiatives like rehabilitation of landless and marginalized citizens, creating investment friendly environment through Public Private Partnership (PPP) etc.

#### 2.0 Major Functions of the Prime Minister's Office

- ❖ Provide secretariat assistance to the Honorable Prime Minister in discharging his/her duties and responsibilities related to political and parliamentary affairs, and other related functions;
- ❖ Liaison with international organizations and execution of treaties and agreements with different countries and international organisations related to the functions of the Prime Minister's Office;
- ❖ Ensure security of the Honorable Prime Minister and arrange protocol for different Heads of State and Heads of Government, dignitaries and foreign delegates;
- ❖ Undertake programs for small ethnic community living in the plain land to improve their socio-economic condition;
- ❖ Matters relating to NGO Affairs Bureau;
- ❖ Coordinate matters relating to the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA), Export Processing Zone (EPZ) and Private Export Processing Zone.
- ❖ Deal with administrative matters relating to the National Security Intelligence (NSI) and co-ordinate with all Intelligence Agencies; and
- ❖ Perform administrative and financial functions with respect to the Prime Minister's Office.

### 3.0 Strategic objectives of the Prime Minister's Office and their Relevance with Women's Advancement and Rights

3.1 Prime Minister's Office has identified the following strategic objectives that have both direct and indirect impact on women's development:

**Creating Conducive investment climate:** At present women constitute about 64 percent of the labor forces employed in different EPZs (Export Promotion Zones). Women's participation in labor market as well as in income generating activities will have an impact on their empowerment and promotion of social security. Initiatives have been taken to establish economic zones in all potential areas of the country that will create greater opportunity for women's employment and promotion of the quality of life and socio-economic conditions. It is mentionable that initiatives have been undertaken to establish 26 (9 Government & 17 Private) Economic Zones in different areas of the country.

**Increase Private Sector Partnership for infrastructure development:** PPP will open the scope of economic growth, infrastructure facilities and employment opportunities. It will contribute to the socio-economic development of men and women. It is to be noted that, since 2011, PPP Office started with 3 projects, up-to December 2018, 55 projects in the PPP Authority's various ministry/divisions in transportation, health and education, tourism, housing, industrial, water supply, information and technology sectors. Where approximate total investment is about 15 billion US dollars. 10 PPP projects have been signed so far with the private investors. The estimated investment figure of these signed projects is around 4 billion US dollars.

**Ensuring Transparency and accountability of NGO activities:** Different projects and programs are being implemented through NGOs. These are ensuring women's access to health services, nutrition, education, training, microcredit, legal aid and safeguard against torture and violence.

**Improving living standards of the marginal and small ethnic community:** In the Ashrayan project, public property and services are provided in joint names of husband and wife. Half of the beneficiaries of the Ashrayan project are women. Allocation of public resources to women is contributing in augmenting their social security, dignity and participation in different social forum. Women are included in large scale income generating projects undertaken for minor indigenous community living in the plain land. Along with male and female students of the indigenous community are being provided with

As a result, literacy rate of women is getting enhanced that leads to their development.

#### **4.0 Roles and Responsibilities of the Prime Minister's Office for Women's Advancement and Rights**

- 4.1 Ashrayan project implemented under PMO is providing land, housing, training, loans, health care, family planning services, income generating activities, pure drinking water, electricity supply, internal transport system, community center construction, pond construction and tree plantation facilities. All these benefits are being enjoyed by the female members of the family as well. Besides, construction of sanitary latrines, establishment of tube wells, community centers and construction and renovation activities of religious institutions for small ethnic groups is contributing to the living standard of both male and female of the minor ethnic groups.
- 4.2 In the 8 Export Processing Zones established in different parts of the country, 5.14622 lac people have been employed, of which 64 percent are women. At least 30 percent women's participation in the Workers' Welfare Associations of Export Processing Zones has been ensured.
- 4.3 During 2009-2018, NGOs registered under NGO Affairs Bureau distributed about 5529.87crore educational inputs for facilitating education.

#### **5.0 Priority Spending Areas and Benefits for Women's Advancement**

<b>Serial No.</b>	<b>Priority Spending Areas/Programmes</b>	<b>Impact on Women's Advancement (direct/indirect)</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
1.	Accelerating Economic Growth by Increasing Investment	<p>BEPZA: Eight EPZ have been established for enhancing export and attracting direct foreign investment and overall development. 5.14lakh people have been employed in these EPZs; out of which 64% of the employee are women.</p> <p>BEZA: The Governing Board of BEZA has approved 88 Economic Zones across the country. Among them, 56 are government economic zones , 27 are private sector economic zones and 5 are G to G economic zone. Already, 26 economic zones have started their infrastructure development activities. BEZA is working to build Mirsharai, Feni (Sonagazi) and Sitakunda Economic Zone as a planned industrial estate, and this economic zone has already been named as "Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Shilpaalnagar".</p> <p>So far, BEZA has owned 33,451.00 acres of land (acquisition of 4,720.00 acres and settlement 28,731.00 acres) and more</p>

Serial No.	Priority Spending Areas/Programmes	Impact on Women's Advancement (direct/indirect)
1	2	3
		<p>32,804.00 acres of land acquisition and settlement are under process. Already 475 million US dollars have been invested in 17 industrial establishments in the private sector and employment opportunity has been created for 23,823 people. In total, 5600.00 acres of land has been allocated to 64 investors in Srihatta Economic Zone and Maheshkhali Economic Zone along with "Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Shilpanagar". In these economic zones, investment proposals, a total of \$15.08 billion were noticed.</p> <p>Japanese Economic Zone on 1000 acres of land in Araihasar upazila of Narayanganj, and exclusive Economy Zone for the Chinese on an area of 783.00 acres in Anwara Upazila of Chittagong is being developed. Apart from this, three economic zones are being set up for Indian investors.</p> <p>Economic zones will open up a huge potential for Bangladesh, which will benefit women too.</p>
2.	Improve the Living Standard of poor and small ethnic community	<p>About 500 income-generating projects have been taken up from 2011-2012 to 2017-18 for the development of the small ethnic community living in the plain land. Total beneficiaries of these projects are 1 lakh of which 50% are female.</p> <p>Ashrayan-2 project has been adopted for rehabilitation of 2,50,000 thousand landless-homeless, destitute and poor families. Through this project, so far 24,000 families have been provided loans and training, of which 50 percent are women. Besides, 60,000 women have been rehabilitated. Land and house ownership is shared jointly with husband and wife. Every woman living in the project is a member of the registered Co-operative Society. Women are encouraged in income-generating activities. Older women are getting knowledge of literacy. So far, 1,51,000 women have been provided training and loans through the Ashrayan project. There are plans to rehabilitate 1,78,000 landless families and women by 2019.</p>

## 6.0 Women's Share in Prime Minister's Office'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	3529	318	9	2819	559	19.83	2802	538	19.21	4187	951	22.72

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
Development	2964	296	9.98	2197	536	24.41	2314	517	22.35	3766	926	24.59
Operating	564	22	3.9	622	23	3.66	488	21	4.36	421	25	5.95

Source: RCGP database

## 7.0 Success in Promoting Women's Advancement

### 7.1 Success History

With the support of project loan, women beneficiaries of 'Saldighi Ashrayan project' under Nawabganj upazila in Dinajpur district are doing business of wigs (making of artificial hair). It is exported to abroad and makes profit. Women beneficiaries of 'Dhangara Ashrayan project' of Raiganj upazila in Sirajganj district are working as a handloom weaver, making profit and became self-reliant. They have also improved their socio-economic condition. Farida Khatun, a woman beneficiary of 'Kumarkhoda Ashrayan project' of Savar upazila established a sheep farm with 49 sheep and achieved financial solvency. Her success story was published in the Daily Star Newspaper. Besides Many women beneficiaries of the Ashrayan project are earning money through poultry and dairy projects.

### 7.2 Women's Development through Ashrayan Project (1997-2017)

- ❖ 2,50,000 landless, homeless and helpless poor women have been rehabilitated;
- ❖ About 22500 women were rehabilitated by building houses in their own land under the project named "Houses for All";
- ❖ About 1,50,000 poor women have been provided with credit and training for income generation;
- ❖ 1,85,000 women have been awarded ownership and possession of homestead;

### 8.0 Recommendations for Future Activities:

- ❖ Ensure rehabilitation of 100 percent poor women with housing facilities in the light of the instruction of Honorable Prime Minister;
- ❖ Ensure development and empowerment of small ethnic women of the plain;
- ❖ Ensure work place of women secured in the Prime Minister's Office and its subordinate Department/Agency;
- ❖ One lakh forcefully displaced Rohingya people will be rehabilitated in Bhasanchar through Ashrayan-3 project, where health care facilities for women will be provided;

- ❖ Arrangement of special training for 'Kazi's on negative aspects of child marriage to prevent child marriage under a program implemented by GIU.