

## Chapter-16

### Ministry of Water Resources

#### 1.0 Introduction

1.1 Bangladesh is basically a silted-up delta with river widows. From the ancient time life-livelihood, education, culture, history and economy of the people of this country have been formed on the basis of water. The Ministry of Water Resources has relentlessly continued the effort for effective and successful management of water resources of the country, integrated water resources development, flood forecasting, warning, flood control, drainage & irrigation, prevention of river erosion, navigability of rivers, removal of water logging, protection of coastal embankment and development of haor-baor. Ministry of Water Resources play a special role for the welfare of the people through one (01) department & four (04) organizations in addition to two trustees institutions. These two institutions undertake various empirical work for climate and environmental related water management at national and international level.

1.2 To materialize the purpose and objectives of Vision-2021, Delta plan-2100 and 7<sup>th</sup> Five year Plan of the present government, this ministry is working sincerely and attentively as instructed by our honorable Prime Minister. The success of Bangladesh has been acclaimed worldwide for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Subsequently, the goals of sustainable development within 2030 declared by the United Nation, the government is committed to moderate, efficient and sustainable use & management of water resources as well as to ensure adequate and safe water for all by keeping in mind the demand of future generation. Meanwhile, Bangladesh Water Rules, 2018 have been formulated under the Bangladesh Water Act, 2013.

#### 2.0 Major Functions of the Ministry

- ❖ Implementation of centennial Delta Plan-2100 announced by the Honourable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina;
- ❖ Formulate national policy and provide technical assistance for irrigation, flood control, removal of water logging, improvement of drainage systems, protection from river erosion, prevention of salinity and desertification;
- ❖ Execute all activities related to flood forecasting and warning, flood control infrastructures, identification of causes of flood and assessment of the damage done by flood;

- ❖ Conduct basic and applied researches on river basin management, flood control infrastructures and conduct hydrological survey and collection of data;
- ❖ International cooperation and trans boundary river related activities for flood control and water resources development;
- ❖ Carry out dredging of rivers and excavation/re-excavation of irrigation canals , construct and operate water control infrastructures to enhance the water conservation capacity of the rivers and protection against erosion;
- ❖ Construct, maintain and Deal with the issues related to land conservation and reclamation, management of estuary, expansion of drainage system, removal of water logging and development of Haor and Wetlands areas as well;
- ❖ Construction of water reservoirs, embankments and barrages;

### **3.0 Strategic objectives of the Ministry of Water Resources for Women's Advancement and Rights**

**3.1 Ensure balanced and sustainable management of water resources:** Water Management Group (WMG) and Water Management Association (WMA) are being formed in different projects for sustainable and participatory water management. In water resource management, participation and training of women will be ensured through this. As per guidelines of the water management, women will constitute 33% of total members in the water management organizations. This will contribute to the economic solvency and empowerment of women as well. To improve the livelihood of the stakeholders through better water management, women are trained regarding formation & development of WMG, agriculture, fisheries, Operation & maintenance of project infrastructure, income generating activities etc. This will increase their social status and create employment opportunities. 30% of the earth work under BWDB will be implemented by women organized LCS which will induce economic solvency of the women. Employment opportunities have been created by involving rural Women in irrigation activities. Women's are given opportunities to participate in all aspects along with crop diversification, post-harvest processing, fish cultivation in ponds and canals, social forestry etc and they are trained accordingly.

**3.2 Flood control and protection of river bank from erosion:** Enhancing navigability of rivers, reducing rate of river erosion, ensuring water supply in dry season, moreover reduction the country's poverty, the work of river dredging, excavation and re-excavation of irrigation canals, construction/repair of irrigation structures, construction of barrage/rubber dam will be completed. As a result, the loss of crops

and property of the poor people will be reduced. By implementation of these activities, job opportunities of the poor women will be created.

**3.3 Development of Haor wetlands and water management of coastal region in**

**connection with climate change:** 30,770 hectares of land will be developed under CDSP-4 Project. The socio-economic condition of the poorest community in the coastal areas will be improved through the implementation of the project. 30683 hectares of land will be distributed to the landless peasants under this project. With the assistance of Development Partner JICA “Haor Flood Management and Livelihood Improvement Project (BWDB Part)” has been taken at a cost of 993.37. By implementation of these projects, transportation facility of crops in haor areas and the internal navigability of rivers & canals will be increased. As a result, employment and income opportunities of these localities specially for women will be created. To improve the socio-economic condition of the poorest people of the coastal area different projects are being implemented. If the projects are implemented, the employment opportunities and income opportunities of women workers will be created.

**3.4 River basin management:** Women and children are the worst victims in the floods, storms, flow-tide as well as any natural or man-made disasters. By modernization of the flood forecasting and warning system it has been possible to forecast flash floods in advance. As a result, the mortality rate of women and infant has decreased.

**4.0 Roles and Responsibilities of the Ministry of Women’s Advancement and Rights**

4.1 The National water Resources Policy 1999 was enacted for proper implementation and direction of different activities related to water sector. Until now different development activities were carried out in light of this policy. Considering the wider scope of water resource management and its involvement with a number of Ministries and Departments, an integrated act has been formulated by involving all stakeholders. `Bangladesh Water Act’2013 has ensured development, management, exploration, distribution, use, protection and conservation of water resources. Proper implementation of the act will prevent misuse and wastage of water resources as well as ensure its proper use. Women as well as the entire people will certainly get its benefit.

4.2 For sustainable development of the socio-economic condition of the people living in the 19 southern coastal districts, a comprehensive ‘Coastal Zone Policy, 2005’ has been formulated. The objective of this policy is alleviation of poverty, sustainable development of life and livelihood, integrated coastal development and involvement

of the coastal people in the mainstream of development of the country. Under this policy people who living in the coastal area will be provided education, medical assistance, safe dwelling place and safe drinking water and sanitation facilities. In addition, it will contribute to employment generation, proper use of land, water, fisheries, animal husbandry, and forestation for the people living in coastal area. The policy also emphasis targets ensuring gender equality in distribution of assets and employment opportunities in the coastal area. Thus the policy will directly impact on Women's development of 19 coastal districts.

- 4.3 To alleviate poverty of destitute women, their participation has been ensured in the various infrastructures maintenance related activities of water sector in accordance with "Participatory Water Management Regulation 2014" prepared under Bangladesh Water Development Board Act 2000. According to this rule, every water management group will form cluster groups including landless men and women of the project area for infrastructure development or maintenance related activities of which 30% will be women. Moreover, to ensure the proper maintenance of earthwork in the various projects, there is a provision to include 2 (two) female members out of 6 (six) members in the executive committee of water management groups.

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

Serial No.	Priority spending Area/Program	Impact on women's advancement (Direct and Indirect)
1	2	3
1.	Excavation/Re- Excavation of Rivers and canals, Construction of Structures and their maintenance works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Excavation/Re-excavation of rivers/canals, construction of structures and their maintenance will protect agriculture and properties, create employment opportunities for the poor, a large number of whom are women. This will increase women's social security and empowerment.</li> <li>❖ Employment opportunities for rural women will be created in different irrigation activities to be implemented during next three years.</li> </ul>
2.	Repair/ maintenance and development of existing coastal embankment / structures and construction of new embankment/structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Repair/maintenance, rehabilitation and development of existing embankments/structures, construction of new embankments &amp; structures, and afforestation programs in the coastal area have been included as priority that will ensure protection and proper use of resources will create employment opportunities for women and</li> </ul>

Serial No.	Priority spending Area/Program	Impact on women's advancement (Direct and Indirect)
1	2	3
	and forestation works	increase their social security.
3.	Construction and maintenance of flood control embankment and erosion protection works to protect economically important places, lives and properties of the people and crops of the agricultural land.	❖ Poor people will engage in the construction of 50 km river bank protection works and will protect properties and alleviate poverty. River bank protection works will create employment opportunities for women.
4.	Reclaiming the fair share of the water resources of border and common rivers.	❖ Establishment of the rights to fair share of water on border and common rivers will promote irrigation, increase agriculture production and collection of fish. This will make positive impact on women's development.

## 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	7932	3559	44.86	7680	2688	35.01	7093	3362	47.4	6026	877	14.56
Development	6257	2390	38.2	6018	1518	25.23	5606	3156	56.29	4660	612	13.13
Operating	1676	1168	69.73	1661	1170	70.42	1487	206	13.88	1366	266	19.44

Source: RCGP database

## 7.0 Success in Promoting Women's Advancement

- ❖ Under C.D.S.P.-3 project, 11 cluster villages prepared by partner agencies were being distributed among 30 families. Socio economic conditions of the poorest people in the coastal areas will be improved through the implementation of this project. The number of total beneficiaries are 8323. Women are being benefited from the project.
- ❖ It has been possible to forecast flash floods in advance by modernization of flood forecasting and warning system. So the lives of the people are protected from floods in the coastal areas. As a result, the mortality rate of women and infant has decreased.

## 8.0 Success of a woman:

Nila Rani Biswas is a successful woman. She is a member of Flalguni Water Management group of Mulia Union in Narail sadar Upazila under the South-West area Integrated Water Planning and Management Project. To improve livelihood through better water management, she took different training and invested her share-savings. She is getting financial benefit through duck-chicken rearing, cow and goat rearing homestead gardening, fish culture, sewing etc. For the above financial and social activities she is now honored and evaluated in her family as well as in the society. At present she is an elected member of word 1, 2, 3 at Mulia Union in Narail sadar, Narail.

## 9.0 Recommendations for Future Activities

- ❖ Generating employment opportunities proportionately for women in several activities such as excavation/re-excavation of rivers/canals, repair/maintenance, rehabilitation and development of existing embankment/structures, construction of new embankment & structures;
- ❖ To determine women's role in financial matters;
- ❖ Resettlement arrangements should be taken into consideration by preparing a separate list of women and children affected by river erosion and natural disasters;
- ❖ There are a good number of infrastructures of Bangladesh Water Development Board throughout the country. Greater participation of women should be ensured for the construction and maintenance of these infrastructure;
- ❖ Water Management Rules entail the provision to form groups for water Management of which 33% will be women. There need to take proper steps to execute the rules;
- ❖ To ensure direct participation of women of the activities related flood control embankment and erosion protection work, conservation of costal land from saltation and protection place and lives and reclamation of marine land. Arranging employment generating activities of women by the Ministry to under take initiative to retain water in the project areas and to promote fishing;
- ❖ Afforestation activities can be taken to the large infrastructures of Bangladesh Water Development Board with participation of local women;
- ❖ Ensure Women participation at the time of making planning and policy implementing projects related to water resources;

- ❖ Arrange seminars, meeting, workshop etc. on water resources management to develop awareness among women with a view to reduce the misuse of water as per the national water act and
- ❖ Identify the role of women in case of rehabilitation due to climate change.