

## Chapter-7

### Ministry of Women and Children Affairs

#### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Equal participation of man and woman in all aspects of life including employment, education and health is one of the important pre-condition of maximizing social welfare. In the globalized era, it is necessary to involve women into the mainstreaming process of the state and society through ensuring women's rights, empowerment and working friendly environment towards establishment of progressive society. The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs is working for mainstreaming women in the overall development through establishment of rights of women and children and women empowerment. The present government has taken different initiatives on women and children development for implementation of Vision 2021. In light of the election manifesto of the government the Ministry of women and children affairs has taken different programs for women's poverty alleviation. The ministry is working uninterruptedly for ensuring women's participation in all development activities relating to capacity development of women by 2021. In the present decade Bangladesh achieved considerable progress on women development especially women education and political empowerment. According to World Economic Forum's 'Gender Gap Report' Bangladesh stood at 47<sup>th</sup> position among 144 nations in the world in 2017, and stands as the top country consecutively 3<sup>rd</sup> times among South Asian countries.
- 1.2 Bangladesh is committed to comprehensive development of women according to constitution. This commitment is expressed through article 27, 28, 29 and 65(3) of Bangladesh Constitution. Specially, Article 28(4) of the constitution provides for making specific law for women emancipation. Apart from this, Bangladesh is a signatory to almost all international conventions and covenants for women development. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is worth mentioning.
- 1.3 Driven by the constitutional obligations and commitment to the international legal instruments, the Government has accorded special emphasis on the programs to promote women's development in the 7<sup>th</sup> Five year Plan, Sustainable Development Goals and National Women's Policy, 2011. The National Women's Policy has set 22 targets. The overall activities of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) are closely associated with the implementation of those goals.
- 1.4 The MoWCA is working intensely for overall development of women in formulation and implementation of policies relating to women and children, women

empowerment, prevention of oppression of women, ensuring security at workplace along with ensuring total socio-economic development of women. The MoWCA is responsible for co-ordination and monitoring of the development activities related to women and children through Women in Development focal points of different Ministries. The MoWCA works for the overall welfare of women and children, establishment and preservation of legal and social rights of women and children.

## **2.0 Relevant Policies and Laws of the Ministry**

- 2.1 The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs has formulated Domestic Violence (Protection and Preservation) Rules, 2013 under Domestic Violence (Protection and Preservation) Act 2010 to ensure equal rights and to prevent all forms of discrimination in all spheres of public life and the state. In order to ensure overall development of women and children, the Government has formulated 'National Women Development Policy, 2011; National Children Policy, 2011; Early Childhood Care and Development Policy, 2013; Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) Act, 2014 and Early Marriage Protection Act, 2017.
- 2.2 'National Plan of Action' have been formulated to implement National Women Development Policy and prevention of violence against women and children. All these instruments are targeted to transform women into a capable human capital through their political, social, administrative and economic empowerment.
- 2.3 In the child related Acts and Rules special attention is given to the girl child. National Women Development Policy 2011 provides distinct guidelines on prevention of child marriage, removal of discrimination against disabled girls and their protection, secured and standard recreational, cultural and sports facility for the female child, and removal of mental and physical abuse of women, rape, dowry, family abuse and acid throwing. Besides, the National Child Policy 2011 accords special priority to girl child. It emphasizes counseling of the adolescent girl, provision of sanitation facilities for girls in the educational institutions and workplaces, and special security arrangements for girls during disaster.

## **3.0 Ministry Specific directives in the National Policy relating to Women's Advancement**

- 3.1 The Seventh Five Year Plan (2016-2020) of the Government of Bangladesh emphasizes on pursuing strategies and actions to establish "a country where men and women will have equal opportunities and rights and women will be recognized as equal contributors in economic, social and political development". The mission of this plan "is to ensure women's advancement as self-reliant human beings and reduce discriminatory barriers by taking both developmental and institutional

measures". The framework for women's empowerment and gender equality, as mentioned in 7<sup>th</sup> FYP comprises of 4 areas of strategic objectives:

- ❖ Improve women's human capabilities;
- ❖ Increase women's economic benefits;
- ❖ Enhance women's voice and agency;
- ❖ Create an enabling environment for women's advancement.

**To implement these strategic objectives, following seven action areas, have been identified:**

- ❖ Increase access to human development opportunities;
- ❖ Enhance access to and control over productive resources;
- ❖ Increase participation and decision making;
- ❖ Establish conducive legal and regulatory environment;
- ❖ Improve institutional capacity, accountability and oversight;
- ❖ Increase protection and resilience from crisis and shocks;
- ❖ Promote positive social norms.

3.2 Towards implementation of the Vision 2021, Government of Bangladesh has specified probable plan of action for women development in the Perspective Plan and five year plan. In this plan document, the areas emphasized for women's development are:

- ❖ To create policy and legal structure;
- ❖ To generate productive employment opportunity;
- ❖ To ensure facilitating environment;
- ❖ To eliminate discrimination against women in healthcare facilities and educational opportunities;
- ❖ To give preference to the women on social safety net programs;
- ❖ To facilitate political empowerment & participation of women in different activities;
- ❖ To safeguard women from violence;
- ❖ To ensure gender mainstreaming;
- ❖ To institutionalize gender responsiveness;

- ❖ To include gender issues in planning and budgeting process;
- ❖ To ensure strong participation of women in financial decision making process;
- ❖ To solve the problems of the women belonging to small ethnic communities;
- ❖ To increase image of women in the society; and
- ❖ To address issues related to disability and gender.

3.3 Gender equality is an important aspect of Sustainable Development Goals-SDGs (adopted by UN General Assembly on 25 September 2015) aiming at transforming our world by 2030. SDGs consist of 17 goals. All these goals together identified 169 targets. Although a number of goals have targets on gender issues, Goal-5 especially emphasizes on gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls. The targets set against this particular goal include elimination of all forms of discrimination, violence and harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage against all women and girls in the public and private spheres. It also puts emphasis on recognizing unpaid care and domestic work and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family. Ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life and ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights are also significant targets against this goal. Apart from these, undertaking reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws and enhancing the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women are given importance. Finally, this goal encourages for adopting and strengthening sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

3.4 The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs is directly or indirectly involved with almost all the policies and strategies mentioned above. Besides, the National Women Development Policy (NWDP), 2011 is the core policy-specific document of the present government in relation to women development. In the light of the Constitutional obligations, the Five Year Plan and the international commitments, the NWDP-2011 has fixed 22 objectives that are as follows:

- ❖ To establish equal rights of men and women in areas of state and public life in the light of the Constitution of Bangladesh;

- ❖ To ensure security and safety of women in all areas of state, social and family life;
- ❖ To ensure economic, political, social, administrative and legal empowerment of women;
- ❖ To establish human rights of women;
- ❖ To ensure full and equal participation of women in the mainstream socio-economic development;
- ❖ To bring up women as educated and skilled human resources;
- ❖ To free the women from the curse of poverty;
- ❖ To remove existing male female disparities;
- ❖ To give appropriate recognition to women's contribution in social and economic spheres;
- ❖ To eliminate all forms of abuse of women and girl child;
- ❖ To eliminate discrimination to women and girl child;
- ❖ To establish gender equality in politics, administration, socio-economic activity, education, culture, sports and in all areas of family life;
- ❖ To innovate and import technology favoring the interest of women and disallow those which are not in the interest of women;
- ❖ To ensure appropriate measures for sound health and nutrition of the women;
- ❖ To ensure priority for women in provision of proper shelter and housing;
- ❖ To arrange rehabilitation of women affected by natural calamities and armed conflicts;
- ❖ To extend overall assistance to ensure rights of the disabled women and women belonging to the smaller ethnic groups;
- ❖ To arrange safety of the widow, and women who are aged, guardian less, deserted by husband, unmarried and childless;
- ❖ To reflect gender perspective in the mass media including positive image of the women and female children;
- ❖ To assist in flowering of talented, genius women of their creative potentials;
- ❖ To extend necessary support services for development of women;
- ❖ To provide overall assistance in ensuring the growth of women entrepreneurs.

#### 4.0 Strategic objectives and activities of the Ministry in relation to Women's Advancement

Sl. No.	Medium-Term Strategic Objectives	Activities
1	2	3
1.	Creation of equal opportunity for women in social and economic activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Providing women technical, vocational and income generating training, equipment for production and micro-credit to facilitate self-employment.</li> <li>❖ Forming and registering voluntary social organisations, and providing assistance.</li> <li>❖ Providing training and creating residential facilities so as to empower women entrepreneurs and enhance their efficiency and skill.</li> <li>❖ Creating opportunities for women and children to facilitate access to modern information technology.</li> </ul>
2.	Social protection and justice for vulnerable women and children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ To provide allowances to lactating mothers to remove poverty;</li> <li>❖ To provide food assistance and training to vulnerable women under VGD Programme and provide onetime cash assistance and production inputs instead of food.</li> <li>❖ To give maternity allowances for the ultra-poor and pregnant women;</li> <li>❖ To provide medical services and financial assistance to abused/distressed women and children;</li> <li>❖ To provide hostel facilities for working women and day care facilities for their children;</li> <li>❖ To provide medical treatment, legal assistance, counselling, safe shelter and food assistance to abused women and children;</li> <li>❖ To make available residential accommodation for women, girls and children during the trial period in Courts.</li> </ul>
3.	Social and political empowerment of women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ To arrange training for elected female representatives and organise awareness building programs to increase women's participation in the electoral process.</li> <li>❖ To increase awareness through meetings in the courtyards to prevent women trafficking.</li> </ul>
4.	Development of children and adolescents into good citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Operating Children Development Centres and the <i>Sisimpur</i> Program to provide early childhood education for children aged 0-5 years.</li> </ul>

Sl. No.	Medium-Term Strategic Objectives	Activities
1	2	3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Publishing books, periodicals and dictionaries suitable for children in order to instil in them respect for the mother tongue;</li> <li>❖ Conducting programs on mental, intellectual and cultural development of children;</li> <li>❖ Empowering adolescents by mobilizing them through clubs to bring in positive change in the society.</li> </ul>

## 5.0 Identifying the Gender Gaps in the Activities of the Ministry and Strategy for Removal of the Issues

5.1 The ministry has formulated a 'National Plan of Action' in 2013 with an aim of implementing 'National Women Development Policy, 2011'. To implement the action plan, concerned ministries have been requested to assess the financial needs attached to each of the items to be implemented by them. It may be mentioned that at present, there is no scope to differentiate women's development from the overall development of the state and the society. Rather, women rights are incorporated in every development plan all over the world. Based on the gender responsiveness the development policies are categorized into four heads:

- ❖ Plan which has not considered women's development (Gender Blind);
- ❖ Gender Neutral programmes both men and women would be benefitted equally;
- ❖ Activities related to women development- formulated exclusively for the development of women. (Gender Specific);
- ❖ Associate women in every activity - Policies sensitive to gender parity (Gender Responsive).

5.2 Recognizing the scarcity of resources, women development experts focus more on gender responsive policies and strategies. Accordingly, the present Government emphasized the need for formulating government policies gender responsive instead of gender specific. Based on the rationale that all the policies of the Ministry are made gender responsive, implementation of the most of the items of the action plan will be possible within the medium term budget ceiling. The implementation of the gender-specific programmes would be considered later on depending upon the existing realities, and importance and necessity of specific issues.

- 5.3 Almost all the activities of the MoWCA, for obvious reasons, are gender-responsive. But it is necessary to consider whether as a coordinator of the development activities concerning women, the MoWCA has been able to play an effective role in ensuring women's share in the overall development activities of the various Ministries, Departments and Agencies. Besides, the MoWCA is responsible for coordinating and providing advice on the plans and programs related to implementation of the 'National Women Development Policy, 2011' and National Action Plan, 2013. In the light of the National Action Plan 2013, the MoWCA is working relentlessly for women employment of women, food security, political and administrative empowerment of women, health and nutrition, housing and shelter, safety of children before and after the natural disaster, special programs for disabled, backward and minority groups.
- 5.4 Ministry is trying to portray a positive image of women in the mass media and guarantee their fundamental rights so that they can involve in all the activities of the national economy in equal manner. Over and above, as an important precursor of women's development, MoWCA is taking effective steps to provide strategic assistance to other ministries and departments so that they can prepare gender disaggregated database and gender responsive budgets.
- 5.5 The activities of the Ministries and Departments related to women's development have to be harmonized with the National Action Plan 2013 and the National Women Development Policy (NWDP) 2011. For this reason, different ministry/departments are preparing project and programme document (DPP and TPP) based on the current policies. The success of MoWCA will, however, depend on how these policy documents are coordinated to produce the desired results.

## 6.0 Women's Participation in Ministry's activities

### 6.1 Statistics of Male and Female under Different Department including MoWCA

Function Description	Officers (%)				Staff (%)			
	2016-17		2017-18		2016-17		2017-18	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Secretariat	60.71	39.29	67.25	32.75	64.15	35.85	60.78	39.22
Autonomous Bodies and Other Institutions	67.02	32.98	70.83	29.17	69.36	30.64	71.14	28.86
Department of Women Affairs	17.58	82.42	17.54	82.46	58.04	41.96	59.48	40.52

- 6.2 Women are the major beneficiaries in the programmes administered by the MoWCA. Male and female participate equally in only Sisimpur, day-care programme and in the programme of empowering adolescent boys and girls by mobilizing them through formation of clubs.



### 6.3 Women's Share in Ministry's Total Expenditure

(Taka in Crore)

Description	Budget 2018-19			Revised 2017-18			Budget 2017-18		
	Budget	Women Share		Revised	Women Share		Budget	Women Share	
		Women	percent		Women	percent		Women	percent
Total Budget	464574	136938	29.48	371495	86169	23.2	400266	112019	27.99
Ministry Budget	3490	2776	79.54	2633	2031	77.11	2576	2074	80.51
Development	509	488	95.89	224	87	38.8	302	221	73.18
Operating	2981	2288	76.75	2409	1944	80.68	2274	1853	81.49

Source: RCGP database

### 7.0 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of the Ministry in relation to Women's Advancement and Rights in last three years

Indicator	Unit	Actual		
		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
1	2	3	4	5
Supporting poor women with food, cash and equipment for production	Man (Lakh)	7.50	7.50	10.0
Maternity allowances to ultra-poor mothers	Man (Thousand)	220.00	264.00	600
Lactating Mother Support Allowance	Man (Thousand)	100.00	120.00	200
Empowering women entrepreneurs and providing them skill development opportunities	Man (Thousand)	14.30	17.50	18.39
Providing protection to women and children affected by violence	Man (Thousand)	80.30	100.00	100

### 8.0 Success in Promoting Women's Advancement

#### 8.1 Vulnerable Group Development (VGD)

The VGD is one of the biggest social safety net programme of the Bangladesh Government. VGD aims at ensuring socio-economic development of the poverty stricken and destitute rural women of Bangladesh. In order to overcome prevailing food insecurity, malnourishment, financial insecurity and social degradation, under the umbrella of VGD, each month 30 kg rice are distributed among ten lac poor women throughout the country for 24 months. Besides, for sustainable development of destitute and helpless women they have been given food support along with awareness training on maternal health, nutrition, neonatal care, sanitation, poultry, horticulture etc. through 415 NGOs. The principle policy of "Support for Self-Dependence" is being followed to bring women out of the clutch of extreme poverty by their own initiative. From 2001 to 2017 the cumulative figure of the beneficiaries has stood at 61 lakh. Apart from that, under the VGD programme

selected women are given fortified rice in 23 Upazilas to cover shortage of nutrition that family members require. The National ID holders are being provided VGD card holders throughout the country.

With the technical support of WFP a total number of 8000 VGD beneficiaries who are extremely poor from 8 Upazila under 7 District have been included in the ICVGD project for ensuring their self-employment and promoting them as a small entrepreneurs. Under this project they are receiving IGA training and Tk. 15000 cash as financial support. In the inception period this programme was implemented in 2 Upazila under a district. WFP has been conducted a formative evaluation regarding the activities of this pilot programme and considered it as a successful programme. The number of VGD beneficiaries will be increased to 10 lac 40 thousands from Fiscal Year 2018-19.

## **8.2 Maternity Allowance for Poor Mother's**

Maternity allowance of Tk. 500 a month is being provided to 5 lac poor pregnant mothers and their children to cover the shortage of nutrition for 24 months for 2 cycles and 251 selected NGOs/CBOs are providing them with training on health, nutrition and income generating activities. In the FY 2014-15 Rural. Development Academy (RDA) have made an in-depth study on "Maternity Allowance Program", the reports reveal that "Maternity Allowance Programme" plays a supporting role in reducing the risk of pregnant mothers and new born babies in the rural areas. There is a plan to increase monthly allowance from Tk.500/- to Tk.800/-for the next 2018-19 Fiscal year. Number of beneficiaries has been increased to 7.0 lac from existing 6.0 lac and the duration of allowances period has been extended up to 3 years from existing 2 years. Government has introduced G2P payment system in disbursing this allowances in 7 upazilla in 2018 on pilot basis

## **8.3 Funds for Supporting the Lactating Working Mother**

The Working Lactating Mother fund activities is being operated from the year 2010-2011 in order to provide financial support for their health during pregnancy and full development of their unborn babies in the urban areas. In the FY 2016-17 lactating mothers of garments areas of Dhaka, Narayanganj, Gazipur, and Chittagong and all City Corporations and Pouroshovas a total of 1.80 lac lactating working mothers are getting TK. 500 per month in 24 months cycle. Besides, under this programme health, nutrition and income generating activities training are being imparted through 222 NGOS/CBOS and BGMEA and BKMEA. There is a plan to increase monthly allowance from Tk.500/- to Tk.800/-for the next 2018-19 Fiscal year. Number of beneficiaries has been increased to 2.5 lac from existing 2.0 lac and the

duration of allowances period has been extended up to 3 years from existing 2 years.

#### **8.4 Joyeeta Foundation**

The Women Entrepreneurship Endeavor Programme (*Joyeeta*) was started to promote products and services of women entrepreneurs across the country with a vision of gradually establishing women friendly infrastructure and spread them beyond Bangladesh in the long run. For the continuation of this support a non-profitable and autonomous foundation has been set-up under the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs named Joyeeta Foundation. The Vision of this foundation is to expedite the process of creating a gender based society through economic empowerment of women and the mission is to ensure economic empowerment of women by giving them following special priority: (a) To establish a separate distribution chain for the women entrepreneurs across the country which would be women friendly, (b) To establish a women friendly separate supply chain for production and distribution of their products through which women can develop their ability. Selected 180 registered women associations from the remote area of the country are allotted 139 stalls at Rapa Plaza at Dhanmondi, Dhaka for selling their products. Almost 14000 women are engaged directly and indirectly involved with these 180 registered women associations. To establish a permanent market a House no.405B (old) 20/A (new), Road no.27(old) 16 (new) has been allotted in favour of Joyeeta Foundation. A 12 storied multipurpose building with 4 basement is to be constructed at its own land.

##### **Action plan of Joyeeta Foundation**

- ❖ Joyeeta Foundation strives to engage more women entrepreneurs in processing and marketing following products and services under the brand-*Joyeeta*:

Organic agro products; beauty parlour; food stuff; laundry service; hostel service for women; daycare service for children dymnesium service for women; domestic help service and CNG-three wheeler service.

#### **8.5 Joyeeta Extension Programme**

For women entrepreneurs' development the Joyeeta-Haluaghat Programme has been undertaken as an extension of Joyeeta Programme. After renovation of Joyeeta-Haluaghat Marketing Centres for women Entrepreneurs a total of 37 stalls have been opened. In the Marketing Centres a 3 storied building has been constructed with the facility of modern training rooms, child corners, clubs and necessary toilets including 19 more shops. 500 entrepreneurs are being operating their shops. Besides, in the Bandarban District among 3 Hill Tracts districts a

planning has been undertaken to implement Joyeeta programme. In the meantime, a foundation has been laid in the tourist area of Bandarban district after settlement of land for Joyeeta. Recently, the Joyeeta-Bandarban Programme has been started its implementation.

The 'Joyeeta Onneshone Bangladesh' is being implemented through selection of Joyeetas in five categories selected from different parts of the society are being honored properly, recognized and inspired them to make more confident and inspired them to make themselves as an entrepreneurs. Every year a total of 35 women of 7 divisions are being honored who are economically successful, who contributed in the social development, conquered women of victim of violence, successful women on education and jobs and successful mothers identified from districts and upazilas through competition.

#### **8.6 Multi-sectoral Programme on Violence against Women**

The main objective of the multi-sectoral programme is to develop management aspect of prevention and protection of women oppression in Bangladesh through GO-NGO in an integrated manner. Under this programme, 67 One-Stop-Crisis Cell (47 district's city hospitals and 20 Upazila hospitals) has been established towards providing services for the women and children victim of violence across the country. Under this programme One-Stop-Crisis Centre has been established in Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Rangpur and Faridpur Medical College Hospital. A total of 70,389 women and children have received services through One-Stop-Crisis Cell and 9 One-Stop-Crisis Centre during the period up to March 2018. Besides, under the programme a total of 1463 women and children received services from National Trauma Counseling Centre and 8,09,998 women and children received psycho-social counseling through National Helpline Centre (109). To expedite and ensure justice for women victim, a National Forensic DNA Profiling Laboratory and to support the women and children victim of violence a DNA Screening Laboratory have been established in Medical Collage Hospitals located in seven divisions. Till March 2018, a total of 13,441 samples of DNA are tested for disposing 4498 cases.

#### **8.7 Micro Credit Fund for Women Self Reliant**

Micro Credit Fund for Women Self Reliant has been started with a view to making rural destitute women self-sufficient, self-employment since FY 2002-03. It is a continuous activity and being implemented by Jatyio Mohila Sangstha under Directorate of Women Affairs. Total amount of fund allocated in favor of the Directorate stood at taka 10.25 up to February, 2018 from FY 2009-10. From this revolving fund, credit is being disbursed across 488 upazillas under 64 districts with

amount of taka 5000/-15000/-. A total 56,846 beneficiaries have so far received taka 67.3 crore as micro credit under this program.

#### **8.8 Hostel for Working Women**

A total of 1,608 working women are getting hostel facilities in 'eight working women hostels' throughout the country of which four are in Dhaka and rest are in Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna and Jessore. Besides, Nalitabari Upazila under Sherpur district a 50 bedded hostel cum training centre for working women is under construction. A hostel with 744 seats have been constructed in Asulia under Savar for garments workers. A nurses hostel in National Heart Foundation Hospital is under construction. Recently a vertical expansion project of Mirpur and Khilgaon working women hostel have been approved. Additional 558 borders will get residence facilities after completion of the project. Another working women hostel has been approved under Kaligonj Upazilla in Gazipur district.

#### **8.9 Development of Women Entrepreneurs**

Training on different trades has been organizing for women entrepreneurs through ongoing projects and programs funded by development and revenue budget for social, economical and political empowerment of women. Joyeeta Foundation is being working for the economic empowerment of women entrepreneurs through marketing their products. Permanent development centers and hostels are being made for enhancing the skill of women entrepreneurs. Besides, for preventing early marriage, awareness build up different activities like skill development training, catering training, women ICT freelancer and entrepreneur development etc. are being implemented.

#### **8.10 Indirect Contribution of Women in GDP:**

Women's contribution in the household is not counted in the economy of Bangladesh simply because of women's household works still unpaid. The women in Bangladesh, either housewives or employed in office, all look after their families. Their work in the family includes rearing children, cooking, cleaning, homestead gardening and taking care of husbands, mother-in-laws and sewing etc. If these unpaid activities performed by women at home are recognized in the GDP, their status will be elevated in the family and in the society.

#### **9.0 Obstacles to Achieve Targets related to Women's Advancement and Rights**

There are real problems in the implementation of the programs and activities of the MoWCA. One of the most important is the selection of beneficiaries of VGD. Often this is plagued by nepotism. In many cases, the local representatives do not

cooperate in the selection process. There is also obstacle in the formation of clubs for adolescent girls. Religious superstition is the main obstacle in this respect. On the whole, because of superstition and misinterpretation of religion, conservatism of male-dominated society, women find their freedom of speech, freedom of movement, etc. restricted. The targets for women development often hits a roadblock as their opinion does not get importance in the decision making process of the family.

#### 10.0 Development of last year's recommendations

Last year recommendations	Development
1. Include targeted poor and vulnerable women in Social Security Programs	Remarkable progresses have been achieved in this area. The number of VGD beneficiaries increase to 10.40 lakhs from 10.0 lakhs while the beneficiaries of maternity allowances have been increase to 7.0 lakhs from 6.0 lakhs. On their hand, the number of beneficiaries under lactating mother allowances has increased to 2.5 lakhs from 2.0 lakhs.
2. Implement National Action Plan made under National Woman Development Policy,2011	Action Plan has been made with a view to empowering woman under the guidance and special initiatives of the Honorable Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina.
3. Prepare National Action Plan for ending child marriage	Child Marriage Restraint Act 2017 has been enacted. Rules under this law and national action plan will be finalized soon
4. Take necessary action to prevent violence against women and children	A total of 70,389 women and children have received services through One-Stop-Crisis Cell and 9 One-Stop-Crisis Centre during the period up to March 2018. Besides, under the program a total of 1463 women and children received services from National Trauma Counseling Centre and 8,09,998 women and children received psycho-social counseling through National Helpline Centre (109).
5. Empower women entrepreneurs and	Different types of trainings in different trades

Last year recommendations	Development
<p>train women and creating residential facilities for them</p>	<p>are being provided with the women for empowering them socially, economically and politically by Directorate of Woman and Jatiyo Mohila Sanagtha. . A hostel with 744 seats have been constructed in Asulia under Savar for garments workers. A nurses hostel in National Heart Foundation Hospital is under construction. Recently a vertical expansion project of Mirpur and Khilgaon working women hostel have been approved. Additional 558 borders will get residence facilities after completion of the project. Another working women hostel has been approved under Kaligonj Upazilla in Gazipur district</p>