



Gender Equality Results

Case Studies: Bangladesh



Gender Equality Results

Case Studies: Bangladesh

© 2010 Asian Development Bank

All rights reserved. Published 2010.
Printed in the Philippines.

ISBN 978-92-9092-116-5
Publication Stock No. RPT102411

Cataloging-In-Publication Data

Asian Development Bank.

Gender equality results case studies: Bangladesh.
Mandaluyong City, Philippines: Asian Development Bank, 2010.

1. Gender equality. 2. Bangladesh. I. Asian Development Bank.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) or its Board of Governors or the governments they represent.

ADB does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this publication and accepts no responsibility for any consequence of their use.

By making any designation of or reference to a particular territory or geographic area, or by using the term "country" in this document, ADB does not intend to make any judgments as to the legal or other status of any territory or area.

ADB encourages printing or copying information exclusively for personal and noncommercial use with proper acknowledgment of ADB. Users are restricted from reselling, redistributing, or creating derivative works for commercial purposes without the express, written consent of ADB.

Note:

In this publication, "\$" refers to US dollars.

Asian Development Bank
6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City
1550 Metro Manila, Philippines
Tel +63 2 632 4444
Fax +63 2 636 2444
www.adb.org

For orders, please contact:
Department of External Relations
Fax +63 2 636 2648
adbpub@adb.org

Contents

Abbreviations	iv
Second Participatory Livestock Development Project	1
Rural Infrastructure Improvement Project II (RIIP-II)	11
Urban Governance and Infrastructure Improvement (Sector) Project (UGIIP)	19
Secondary Towns Integrated Flood Protection Project II (STIFPP-II)	27
Small-Scale Water Resources Development Sector Project II (SSWR-II)	37
Teaching Quality Improvement (TQI) in Secondary Education	45

Abbreviations

ADB	–	Asian Development Bank
B.Ed	–	Bachelor of Education
DLS	–	Directorate of Livestock Services
FWC	–	female ward commissioner
GAP	–	gender action plan
LCS	–	labor contracting society
LGED	–	Local Government Engineering Department
MIS	–	management information system
MOE	–	Ministry of Education
NGO	–	nongovernment organization
O&M	–	operation and maintenance
PKSF	–	Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation
PLDP	–	Participatory Livestock Development Project
PMO	–	project management office
PMU	–	project management unit
PRAP	–	poverty reduction action plan
PROMOTE	–	Programme to Motivate, Train and Employ women teachers in secondary schools
RIIP-II	–	Rural Infrastructure Improvement Project II
SMC	–	school management committee
SSWR-II	–	Small-Scale Water Resources Development Sector Project II
STIFPP-II	–	Secondary Towns Integrated Flood Protection Project II
TOT	–	training of trainer
TQI	–	Teaching Quality Improvement
TTC	–	teacher training college
UGIAP	–	Urban Governance Improvement Action Program
UGIIP	–	Urban Governance and Infrastructure Improvement (Sector) Project
WMCA	–	water management cooperative association

Second Participatory Livestock Development Project¹

About 70% of the world's rural poor are women for whom livestock represents one of the most important assets and sources of income. Similarly, over 70% of the women in rural Bangladesh invest a large part of their time, labor, and expertise in livestock production. The livestock subsector comprises activities contributing to sustainable livestock production to reduce poverty, support widely shared growth, and increase food security. Sustainability in livestock production entails the provision of technology, information, support services, and enabling policies to ensure growth while increasing the efficiency of a renewable resource use.

Background

The Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) in Bangladesh implements microcredit programs through its partner organizations with the aim of reducing poverty among the assetless poor in the country. Between 1998–2003, PKSF implemented a 5-year Participatory Livestock Development Project (PLDP I) through 10 partner organizations with the financial assistance of the Government of Bangladesh, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and Danish International Development Assistance in the northwest and north-central region covering 89 *upazilas* of 17 districts. The objective of the project was to raise income of poor households and improve status and empowerment by creating self-employment for 360,000 beneficiaries, especially distressed women, through livestock rearing, poultry farming, and beef fattening with the delivery of microcredit and related technical support services in rural areas.

Evaluations conducted on PLDP I demonstrated various aspects of the project's positive impact on the livelihoods of the beneficiaries, 70% of whom were poor rural women: (i) household incomes rose by more than 50% with significant increases in savings as well as expenditures on food, clothing, and education; (ii) literacy and school attendance rates increased; (iii) 90% of the members adopted technologically more advanced methods in chick farming; (iv) about 20% of the poultry farmers acquired the skills for establishing small-sized efficient poultry farming; (v) beef fattening emerged as a profitable business and opportunities for growing small beef-fattening farms were created; (vi) skilled

¹ Loan 2070-BAN: Participatory Livestock Development II was approved on 19 December 2003 for \$20.0 million. The loan became effective in June 2004 to be implemented through June 2010.

manpower with technological knowledge increased in the project areas; and (vii) women's status in their families and communities improved based on their entrepreneurship and earnings. The PLDP I experience highlighted the different needs for technology and support services due to gender differences in roles and responsibilities in livestock activities. Women generally raise small stocks and are involved in processing activities while men are responsible for large animals and marketing produce. PLDP I impact studies recommended that future livestock projects should take these differences into account in order to increase project effectiveness and sustainability.

Building on lessons learned, the second phase (PLDP II) has been designed to maximize opportunities for livestock rearing for the poorest of the poor, particularly for households headed by females who are landless, small marginal farmers, farmers on riverbanks, and farmers in riverbed flood areas. PLDP II is classified as a core poverty intervention with economic growth and gender and development thematic classifications.

Objectives and Scope

The goal of PLDP II is to increase incomes and create employment opportunities from livestock-related enterprises providing technical and social training and marketing assistance for the rural poor in an expanded geographical area. PLDP II aims to benefit an additional 300,000 households in 20 districts and 68 *upazilas* increasing the total coverage of PLDP I and II to 660,000 households (including 5,000 ultra poor households) in 157 *upazilas* of northwest and north-central regions of Bangladesh.² The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock are the executing ministries while the PKSF and Directorate of Livestock Services (DLS) are the two executing agencies of the project. PKSF is responsible for implementing the project components on community development, livestock enterprise development, ultra poor pilot program, marketing and small business development, and project management and implementation support. DLS is responsible for implementing community extension services, innovation and applied research, and capacity building for participating nongovernment organizations (NGOs) and DLS.

1. Community Development

Community mobilization: Targeted members including the ultra poor are trained on technical skills development for poultry and livestock rearing. At least 26,000 community groups will be formed by NGOs with the enrollment of 25–30 members per group to raise awareness on enterprise and marketing opportunities.

Community livestock extension: Community extension workers provide livestock extension, vaccination, and other services to livestock rearing members through government livestock service centers or through partner organizations at the union level.

² The project districts are Panchagar, Thakurgaon, Nilphamari, Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Dinajpur, Rangpur, Gaibandha, Joypurhat, Naogaon, Chapai Nawabganj, Bogra, Sirajganj, Jamalpur, Sherpur, Mymensingh, Netrokona.

2. Livestock Enterprise Development

Livestock enterprise creation: Members receive microcredit assistance for livestock enterprise development through partner organizations. Beneficiaries choose income-generating activities from 28 packages including poultry, goat, beef and dairy cattle, vegetable, nursery, and small trading.

Market system and business development: Special attention is given to the marketing of livestock and livestock products (milk, egg, and meat). Orientation and credit support are provided for local milk collection, preservation, and transportation to boost up the marketing system. In addition, the project assists with the creation of consumer awareness for livestock products and market promotion.

Innovation and applied research: The project supports innovation and applied research in poultry farming and livestock rearing to raise incomes of the poor.

3. DLS Capacity Building

Support is provided for officers' technical training and institutional development including infrastructural development of the DLS.

4. Project Management Services

With a project management unit (PMU) in Rangpur headed by the project director and the project liaison unit, under a project manager, PKSF is implementing the project with financial and technical support provided to 15 NGOs in 157 *upazilas*. A project steering committee also advises on policy matters at the national level and an implementation coordination committee coordinates overall implementation of the project activities on a regular basis.

Under PLDP II, community development aims to develop beneficiaries' education, and health and awareness of basic legal rights through group formation and to increase their incomes by poultry and livestock rearing with the provision of microcredit. Community is developed in a way that members can implement and manage income-generating activities themselves in the long run. The project's goal is not only to achieve targets on training or credit disbursement but also to assist members in selecting poultry and livestock-related income-generating activities, and provide training and inputs to enable them to become sustainable entrepreneurs with good incomes. Credit is awarded to members so that they can fulfill their needs for enterprise growth and become responsible borrowers with timely repayment rates.

Framework for Gender and Development Activities

Socioeconomic surveys during the design phase indicated that 18% of households in the project area were headed by women. Their status in their families and communities was marginal, and they lacked negotiating skills. As a result, they had no real participation in decision making. PLDP II provides opportunities to address these concerns and raise women's employment and incomes by (i) ensuring that gender aspects of poverty reduction are addressed in all project components; (ii) increasing women's involvement at all stages of project planning and implementation; (iii) improving women's access

to and control over resources like credit, information, training, and livestock support services through mixed and female farmer groups; and (iv) increasing women's employment in livestock rearing and in marketing livestock products like feed.

A detailed gender action plan (GAP) was prepared and covenanted during the design of PLDP II outlining specific interventions under each project component. The original GAP was revised during project implementation with the following areas of focus:

1. **Livestock-related enterprise development:** beneficiary capacity development in management of enterprises, skills training, access to extension services and credit especially for women, assistance for women entrepreneurs in marketing their products locally as well as linking them with national-level enterprises (forward linkages), and development of leadership and empowerment to achieve group sustainability.

2. **Institutional strengthening/project services – participation of women as agents:** PLDP II and NGOs will engage women staff to facilitate social development and leadership and orient beneficiaries through group meetings on social and gender issues and the economic development process. Identify PLDP II gender focal point to monitor group development activities and link the groups with national-level enterprises for further socioeconomic development of the families.

3. **Institutional strengthening/project services – training and capacity building:** finalize social development and gender orientation manual and illustrations for beneficiary orientation; and organize training of trainers (TOT) for NGO staff on the manual, and refresher orientation for PLDP II staff, NGOs, and field-level facilitators on the GAP.

4. **Institutional strengthening/project services – monitoring:** NGOs report to the executing agency at regular monthly/quarterly meetings on GAP progress.

5. **Institutional strengthening/project services – networking:** NGOs to first develop a strategy/plan with clear objectives; then arrange linkages between beneficiaries and medical services, Union Parishad members, NGOs, and the local-level offices of agriculture and fisheries departments; and in group meetings, NGO facilitators will raise the beneficiaries' awareness on processes, systems, and benefits of such linkages.

6. **Community development:** develop facilitators from among the beneficiaries on how to become leaders, how to become effective managers of income-generating activities, and how to analyze, resolve, and mitigate family and community conflicts; and train educated, semi-educated beneficiaries to undertake group activities such as conducting meetings, maintaining registers, keeping accounts, writing resolutions, and implementing decisions taken in group meetings.

7. **Enterprise development including livestock enterprise:** (i) inform beneficiaries about the different income-generating activities and, based on their choices, organize appropriate trainings; (ii) link potential entrepreneurs with national-level enterprises to provide either raw or finished products; and (iii) orient beneficiaries on enterprise management, including undertaking cost-benefit analysis and profitability assessments, accessing credit and extension services, setting aside

savings for further capital formulation, and ensuring family agreements on management of earnings (control over resources and bank accounts including deposit pension schemes and fixed deposits of various durations).

8. **Pilot program for the ultra poor:** (i) identify divorced, separated, and widowed women and ensure their inclusion in regular groups; (ii) organize health and psychosocial training; (iii) organize skills training; (iv) provide credit; (v) encourage savings; and (vi) conduct studies on the behavioral patterns regarding utilization of credit and savings, and changes in livelihood patterns of the ultra poor rural women.

9. **Monitoring and evaluation:** (i) develop a gender-disaggregated database to capture both quantitative and qualitative effects of the project on the lives of its beneficiaries; and (ii) orient NGOs on the data requirements and ensure that they monitor project implementation accordingly.

PLDP II Achievements under the Gender Action Plan as of March 2009

Activities	Progress as of March 2009
1. Farmer Training	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10,000 beneficiaries will be trained on management of income-generating activities (IGAs). • 52,000 group leaders will be trained on group management including conducting weekly meetings, maintaining registers, books of accounts, and writing resolutions. • 500 lead farmers will participate in cross visits to learn improved practices in livestock rearing. • Train female group members on IGA management regularly in weekly group meeting by field workers and technical persons. • Prepare women-friendly training modules, curriculum and training materials. • Ensure women-friendly time and venue for training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 580,500 beneficiaries received IGA management training (99% women). • 15,015 group leaders received training on leadership (100% women). • 1,204 female lead farmers will receive the opportunity to participate in cross visits during July 2009–2010 to learn improved practices in livestock rearing. • Field workers and technical persons conduct informal training for female group members during weekly group meetings. • Women-friendly training modules and training materials have been prepared. • Women-friendly training venue and times are maintained during training courses.
2. Community mobilization and credit	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26,000 groups will be formed, of which 70% will be women only groups. • 660,000 members will be enrolled, of which 70% will be female. • 660,000 members will receive credit for taking livestock-related IGAs. • Different social issues like health, nutrition, and family law will be discussed regularly in the group meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28,749 groups have been formed, of which 99% were women-only groups. • 811,193 members have been enrolled, of which 99% are women. • 704,534 members have received credit, of which 99% are women. • Social issues like health, nutrition, family law, and family planning are being discussed in weekly group meetings regularly.

continued on next page

Table continued

Activities	Progress as of March 2009
3. Capacity building of project staff regarding gender and development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,650 staff will be recruited by project officers, of which 50% will be female. • 106 program organizers (social) will be recruited to implement activities on health, nutrition, family law, and gender issues. • Organize TOT for NGO staff who will then orient beneficiaries. • Organize refresher orientation for PLDP II and project officers' staff on the project GAP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PMU is advising project officers to recruit minimum 50% female staff under PLDP II. Presently, the percentage of female staff is about 20%. • Project officers have recruited 106 (15% female) program organizers (social) to implement and supervise gender-related activities. • Project will be organizing TOT in July 2009 for NGO staff working on social development and gender. • Project organized refresher session on GAP in May 2009 with attendance of 12% women participants.
4. Pilot Program for Ultra Poor	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5,000 women will be selected from ultra poor families. • 5,000 ultra poor women will be provided training on livestock rearing and other IGAs management. • 5,000 ultra poor women will be provided financial support for asset creation and income generation. • 5,000 ultra poor women will be provided training on social and health care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5,395 women have been selected from ultra poor families. • 4,438 ultra poor women have received training on poultry farming and livestock rearing and small trading. • 4,229 ultra poor women have received credit for income generation and asset creation. • 2,794 ultra poor women have received training on social and health care issues.
5. Monitoring and Evaluation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design a format to maintain baseline information with special emphasis on gender and development issues. • Collect and preserve gender-related quantitative and qualitative information through independent household surveys. • Revise (if necessary) existing management information system (MIS) to incorporate gender-based indicators and include them in the project design and monitoring framework. • Conduct field visits to monitor the participation of women in project activities. • Evaluate project impact on women's participation in decision-making processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIS formats have been prepared incorporating gender-disaggregated data. • Gender-related baseline information are collected by a prescribed profile, namely borrower profile. • Gender-related indicators are included in the MIS format, e.g., women's participation in family decision making; interaction about market prospects and problems; sharing livestock-related work, etc. • PMU officials closely monitor the participation of women in the project activities during their field visits. • Under the mid-term impact evaluation study conducted in 2008, positive impact was observed regarding women's participation in decision-making processes and their mobility among others.

continued on next page

Table continued

Activities	Progress as of March 2009
6. Marketing support	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,000 milk cow rearers will be trained on dairy entrepreneurship. • Provide support to women on marketing and market linkages. • Conduct meetings especially with female entrepreneurs to discuss marketing problems of their livestock products. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,054 milk cow rearers received training on dairy entrepreneurship, of which 100% have been female. • PMU observes the marketing of products of beneficiaries regularly and helps to link them with proper persons or organizations. • PMU monitors and discusses with female beneficiaries any marketing problems they have with their livestock products.
7. Project Management Unit (PMU) in PLDP II	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a gender focal point in the PMU. • Engage gender and social development consultant to plan, implement, supervise, and monitor gender-related issues under the project. • Coordinate supervision and ensure that all project implementation activities are gender-sensitive. • Arrange training seminar and workshops to orient the PMU and project officers' staff about gender issues and the project GAP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established a gender focal point at PMU headed by the deputy project director. • Project gender specialist completed her 6-month contract. A new gender specialist is being recruited. • PMU arranged one gender and development workshop for project coordinators of project officers and PMU officials. • PMU organized a workshop on GAP for PMU and project officer's officials with the assistance of ADB.

Results to Date

A mini evaluation conducted in early 2008 with 254 project beneficiaries assessed women's growing empowerment as a result of participation in PLDP II through a range of important factors, including their motivation to join the groups; knowledge and skill acquisition; access to resources; mobility; participation in income-generating and group management and development activities; control over resources and own income; ownership of assets; decision-making power in the family and in the groups; and improved family relations. Respondents were 98% women aged 21–50 years. Among them, 18.5% had primary school education, 13.8% completed grade VIII, 3.5% secondary school, 1.2% high school, and 0.4% had a bachelor's degree. Of the women, 7.5% could read and write without any formal education. The three main motivating factors for them to join PLDP II groups were to increase family income (64%); earn money for managing family investments and businesses (32%); and create own savings (22%).

Food security: Overall, respondents were happy because with increased income from their livestock enterprises, they were able to feed their families even though the cost of basic needs have been increasing.

"Even though prices of daily necessities have increased, we can eat three satisfying meals a day".

—Mahiron of Sugandhi Samity, Haldi Bari Union

Improved skills and confidence on IGA management: Women are now more informed about income-generating activities and have more technical knowledge about livestock rearing including poultry, beef fattening, goat rearing and milk cow rearing which are the main IGAs the beneficiaries are involved in. Skills training on IGA and financial management and savings accumulation have made women more confident.

"Now I know Deposit Pension Scheme; in the past I used to hide my savings in the bamboo hole of my thatched roof."

–Rani Dev, Koli Mahila Samity, Balapara Union

Group support for IGA management: In group meetings, members talk about status of savings accumulation; problems with credit utilization; IGA management; extension services; familial relations; communications at the family and community levels; prospects of becoming community leaders; and their improved socio-economic status as members of PLDP II groups. Credit utilization and repayment are the major concerns.

Improved knowledge about social issues: Through group development activities, women have also become more knowledgeable about social issues like consequences of early marriage; son preference; parental attitudes toward daughters that result in low self-esteem; HIV/AIDS, human trafficking; utility of marriage and birth registration; and environmental protection.

Improved gender relations: Gender relations in the household have improved with regard to husband/wife consultation about IGA management and family affairs. The inducing factor for this is women's contribution to the family income. Women are the main managers of the IGAs while both men and women together take important decisions on issues relating to the IGAs and family matters. Support from husbands and male members of their families are helping women to manage time poverty which has increased due to their engagement in IGAs in addition to their household chores. This has also ensured that girls do not drop out of school to fulfill their mothers' household roles. The positive change in gender relations has been facilitated by gender awareness and social development orientations provided under the project.

Improved mobility: Women now receive support from in-laws to have more mobility outside the home. They were found knowledgeable about the location of the health care center, bank, and Union Parishad. They enjoy the freedom of going to markets to buy household utensils, food, and medicine for the children.

"When I became a widow, I found the world dark as I was to depend on my brother's family. My brother's wife was feeling very unhappy. Now that I can make money by selling milk and buy things for the family and also for my nephew and nieces, I see them smile and bright towards me... I am grateful to Saiful Bhai (Program Organizer)"

–Shefali Bala, Nijpara Samity, Shahbagpur Union

Improved social and economic status for the ultra poor: Over 4,000 ultra poor divorced, separated, and widowed women have received training and credit for income-generating activities in poultry farming and livestock rearing so they are no longer destitute but contributing members of their extended families.

Access to and control of resources: Women are empowered in terms of better access to resources, improved skills, becoming earning members of their families and having some savings. In terms of control of resources, either the husband or father-in-law owns the land title. Women seemed in favor of buying assets (land) in the name of their husbands. They are not in the habit of maintaining bank accounts in their own names. Awareness on the benefit of having assets in their own name or joint names is yet to be nurtured.

To improve project impact in the long term, the evaluation recommended the following:

- High performing women entrepreneurs should get support in larger-scale enterprise development, including more advanced technical and management skills training, access to larger loans, and linkages to bigger markets.
- Ownership of assets in their own names including bank accounts and land will be critical for women entrepreneurs for the growth of their livestock enterprises. Motivation to purchase assets jointly in the names of both husband and wife needs to be cultivated through social communicators.
- Leadership development should be nurtured through better communication and leadership skills, gender and social awareness, knowledge about IGA management issues, and sharing of group management responsibilities. As a short-term measure, social communicators can complete social awareness training and develop trainers from among the beneficiaries.
- A uniform message with illustrations is necessary with respect to skills development and social and gender awareness issues for group cohesion. The monthly meetings should be used as a forum for capacity development on social and gender issues to be conducted by trained female and male members of the groups.
- For institutional (group) sustainability, educated beneficiaries need to be trained to maintain registers, keep books of accounts, set meeting agendas, conduct meetings, write resolutions, and prepare and implement poverty reduction activities through savings utilization.
- The project should continue to make an effort to recruit female staff and female staff should be allocated to groups that are closely located.
- Project quarterly progress reports should reflect implementation status of the GAP per gender-disaggregated data and indicators included in its design and monitoring framework.

Rural Infrastructure Improvement Project II (RIIP-II)

Key Points

Development Aims and Impacts:

- Infrastructure initiatives offer a range of important opportunities to support women’s empowerment—this can include more appropriate infrastructure design (e.g., providing separate toilets in market areas, meeting rooms for women in the local government complex); new employment opportunities (e.g., in construction and maintenance); and a greater role in ongoing infrastructure management (e.g., through participation in local government committees responsible for planning and maintenance).
- Even when gender stereotypes about appropriate roles and rewards for women seem strong, this should not be seen as a constraint to project initiatives for women—in fact, projects that provide benefits to a community (in relation to employment opportunities and new services, for example) are good mechanisms to challenge stereotypes as project resources and opportunities can provide incentives and rewards for changes in behavior.

ADB Processes and Management Tools:

- Project innovations undertaken in the context of a supportive relationship between ADB and a partner government executing agency can result in mutual learning, further innovation, and the institutionalization of new practices within the executing agency, thus multiplying the impact of the investment.

What are the main project aims and approaches?

The project aims to contribute to poverty reduction by expanding the economic opportunities of the rural poor. This will be achieved through improving rural infrastructure (focusing on roads and growth center markets), strengthening women’s economic opportunities and public role, and improving local governance facilities and capacity.

Bangladesh’s poverty reduction strategy has identified efficient rural transport and rural infrastructure as critical to economic development and poverty reduction. About 75% of the Bangladesh population and 85% of the poor live in rural

Project Basic Facts	
Loan approval number: 2254-BAN(SF)	Overall project cost: \$260.5M (revised to \$204.4M)
Loan approval: August 2006	Financing:
Loan effectiveness: December 2006	
Closing date: December 2011	\$96.1M ADB loan
Executing agency: Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives	\$78.3M GOB
	\$60.9M DFID (revised to \$4.8M)
	\$21.6M KfW
	\$3.6M GTZ (parallel co-financing, supporting additional consulting services)
	Gender classification: Gender equity
<hr/> Project overview and ADB documents on ADB website at www.adb.org/Projects	

areas. Infrastructure and institutions to support broad-based local development are needed to generate employment and livelihoods for the rural poor. Many rural communities lack road links and all-weather access to market centers and services. In many others, infrastructure is in poor repair due to insufficient investment in maintenance. Improved roads enable the local population to reach markets and trading centers and increase access to public services such as healthcare, education, and agricultural extension. Improved roads have been shown to increase transport services and reduce transport costs for both people and goods. Improvements in growth center markets are intended to enable more efficient trading.

Government investments in rural infrastructure projects include four earlier ADB initiatives (and another is in the planning stages). The current project draws on the experience and lessons of previous projects, particularly in relation to participatory approaches, the involvement of local government, and women’s empowerment.

The project works in 23 districts in northeast and central Bangladesh. The project plan calls for building or upgrading of infrastructure:¹

- 830 km of subdistrict roads, 330 km of union roads, 4,700 km of village roads;
- 104 rural markets (44 growth center markets and 60 major village markets), with separate women’s market sections in 35 markets;
- 60 Union Parishad complexes (to provide a one-stop center for ready access to social and technical services for health care, education, agriculture and livestock extension, land administration at the union level); and
- three jetties (to better integrate land and water transport) and three flood refuge centers (for emergency relief, but also multipurpose).

¹ Targets revised January 2010 to reflect reduction of the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom (DFID) participation and increased cost of construction.

The Union Parishads (local government councils) in the project area are involved in project management and will be responsible for the long-term maintenance of village roads and other local infrastructure. As the Union Parishads previously had a limited role in planning and management of local infrastructure, capacity building for them is a major project component.

Project contributions to poverty reduction are through the targeting of poor areas and the involvement of the poor in implementing subprojects and maintaining local infrastructure. The poor are also expected to benefit from improved infrastructure and transport and the increased economic activity generated.

What are the key gender equality issues related to project aims?

Gender equality issues are relevant to all the main aims of the project. Specific to the project aim of *reducing poverty and increasing access to economic opportunities and social services*, the relevant gender issues are:

- Women's contributions are important to the welfare of poor households. The very restricted employment and earning opportunities for women and the practice of lower wages for women is a cost to all poor households, including both male-headed and female-headed households.
- Entrenched gender stereotypes about what women should or can do and what they should be paid relative to men are among the factors that constrain women and make them particularly vulnerable to living in poverty.
- Access to services as well as employment is critical to women's well-being and to progress toward equality. For example, transport costs and complexity in reaching health care services contribute to the high levels of maternal mortality in Bangladesh.

Regarding the *selection and design of local infrastructure* to be built or upgraded:

- The incorporation of specific design elements in markets and other infrastructure may be necessary for women to benefit or use them safely, as the absence of separate areas and separate toilets for women can render use of the infrastructure inappropriate and unsafe.
- Given women's limited access to income opportunities and household resources, they may also have different views on priorities for infrastructure or design elements (e.g., hand pumps that require considerable strength to use are not women-friendly).

There are also gender equality issues related to *ongoing management by local government*:

- Women are stakeholders in local infrastructure, as noted above, and it is therefore important for them to have a voice in ongoing management to ensure that decisions reflect the priorities and interests of women as well as men (including, for example, the need for women-friendly facilities in existing or new infrastructure, and an equitable share for women in any employment in ongoing maintenance).

- Women’s participation as elected members of local councils with specific responsibilities is relatively new,² and their effectiveness is constrained by both lack of experience and by resistance to women’s participation from their male colleagues. This suggests that capacity building for local government management needs to incorporate specific measures to ensure effective participation by women and the incorporation of women’s perspectives.

What is the project plan for involving women?

RIP-II aims to create scope for women’s participation in all project activities. This includes women’s participation as members of the community and local government, as users of infrastructure, and as economic actors. More specifically, the project targets increased participation by women as follows:

- as participants in project planning (target of at least 30% in participatory workshops);
- as employees in construction work managed by contractors (target of 30% in all construction work);
- as entrepreneurs allocated shops in GCMs in women’s market sections (target of women’s market sections in 35 GCMs);
- as vendors in open sheds (target of 15% earmarked space in 104 GCMs and rural markets, in addition to any space women might use in open sheds in all markets);
- as employees in maintenance or road shoulders and tree planting during the project (target of 1,850 women, all of the employment in this category);
- as shop owners and vendors in market decision making (women represented in Market Management Committees); and
- as participants in Union Parishad committees responsible for infrastructure management (committees for construction supervision, operations and maintenance, and market management).

How does the project seek to address gender disparities and benefit women?

The project is taking a range of initiatives that recognize the specific needs of women and address the disadvantages or discrimination they face. These initiatives include³ the following:

- equal pay for equal work for women and men employed in construction—to be specified in the bidding processes and in construction contracts and supported through orientation of contractors;

² Direct election to reserved seats for women at the local Union Parishad level has been in place since 1997. In addition to open elections to seats in each of nine wards for the union chairperson, three seats are reserved for women, each representing three wards.

³ Detailed GAP, report and recommendation of the President (RRP) Supplementary Annex G.

- women-friendly working conditions for construction laborers—including toilet and water facilities, temporary resting sheds for lunch and when breast-feeding infants;
- construction of women’s market sections—shops allocated to women at GCMs, grouped together and provided with water and toilet facilities, for the convenience and safety of women buyers and sellers;
- support to female shop owners—training on business management, tax, and licensing issues to be provided through collaboration with nongovernment organizations (NGOs); facilitation of links with financial institutions for credit purposes;
- incorporation of women-friendly elements into new and upgraded infrastructure—including separate areas to provide privacy for women in flood refuges; specific areas for women and toilet facilities on jetties; separate rooms with independent access for female Union Parishad members and separate toilet facilities with water at Union Parishad complexes for all women to use;
- development of the role of Union Parishad complexes as centers for one-stop services and promotion of women’s participation—encouraging the involvement of relevant government departments, creating information banks to increase access to information;
- savings program for women employed in road maintenance and tree-planting—setting up bank accounts and regular savings among women employed to provide a capital sum with which to undertake income-generating activities after the project;
- training of elected Union Parishad members, men and women—training that includes components to increase their awareness of gender issues; and
- activation of road safety committees—to increase public awareness of traffic safety practices and women’s rights to security.

What are the key achievements to date and remaining challenges?

Regular project monitoring largely focuses on project targets related to activities delivered and beneficiaries reached through project activities. To date this includes

- women’s participation in subproject selection as a result of deliberate outreach (including separate meetings of women and men before joint meetings, to ensure that women’s voices are heard);
- incorporation of women-friendly elements in construction of 65 Union Parishad complexes (separate office room and toilets for women ward members and their constituents);
- women’s market sections built in 24 markets, with a total of 152 shops allocated to women in these 24 markets (and particular attention to the location of these women’s sections to ensure this is favorable to business success);
- participation of women who are small traders in the 15% space reserved in market sheds, e.g., fish shed or meat shed, in all markets;
- delivery of training courses to contractors in support of hiring women laborers for construction, equal wages, and women-friendly working environments (safety, drinking water, separate toilets, resting shed); and

- training in income-generating activities provided by NGOs to women with project employment in maintenance and tree planting, for better use of savings after project employment (12 districts, with the other 11 districts to be covered by the end of 2011).

Commitment to Supporting a Partner's Initiatives and Learning on Gender Equality Brings Results for ADB, the Partner, and Women^a

This is the fifth in a series of rural infrastructure projects in which ADB has collaborated with LGED and through which approaches to participatory management and women's empowerment have been evolved. Particular advances were made with the Third Rural Infrastructure Development Project (TRIDP, 1998–2005), which was the first to develop a gender action plan (GAP). In TRIDP and subsequent projects, ADB's collaboration with LGED in support of women's participation and empowerment have included the following:

- continuous support and interaction with LGED project staff and the technical assistance team;
- adjustment and agreement on action areas, and flexibility to revise in response to learning;
- participation of a gender specialist at the ADB resident mission in review missions;
- additional orientation and consultation with project authorities and the technical assistance team in implementation strategies; and
- the inclusion of capacity building for project and LGED staff in project design.

Similar collaboration between ADB and other LGED divisions provided momentum for LGED to develop a department-wide gender equity strategy. An LGED workplan for 2002–2007 was prepared with ADB support; the follow-up plan for 2007–2015 was developed by LGED without external support, indicating both increased capacity and ownership.

Several innovations tested through ADB supported projects have subsequently become part of LGED policy, in particular:

- the requirement of equal pay for equal work in infrastructure construction; and
- the use of women-friendly designs for local markets, transport infrastructure, Union Parishad complexes.

ADB has been able to provide ongoing encouragement in several ways:

- highlighting LGED approaches and achievements to colleagues in Bangladesh and internationally, through enabling senior staff and project directors to present their experience at workshops; and
- recognizing the leadership provided by a key LGED senior manager by inviting him to advise ADB through membership in the ADB External Forum on Gender and Development.

^a ADB. 2009. *Institutionalizing Gender Equality: the Experience of the Bangladesh Resident Mission*. See also case study on TRIDP in ADB. 2005. *Gender Equality Results in ADB Projects: Bangladesh Country Report*.

Two challenges to achieving the project gender equality aims have also been identified.

- Achieving wage parity between women and men—efforts in this project and others implemented by the same executing agency have increased awareness among contractors of ADB and LGED policy on equal pay for equal work. However, implementation still requires an investment of staff time in close monitoring and continued pressure.
- Gaining more widespread understanding of why women should be involved in infrastructure—infrastructure is still generally seen as a male domain by target communities (and construction professionals).

What else could we look at when assessing results?

To better understand the project’s contributions to women’s empowerment and gender equality, it would be useful to further consider questions such as the ones suggested below.

- Has women’s use of basic services increased with road and transport improvements? Has use of health care increased? Are there more frequent contacts with services such as agricultural and livestock extension, or microcredit? If not, what are the barriers?
- Have project activities to enable locally elected women to function more effectively and in a wider range of union council activities (including construction and maintenance) had a broader impact on their standing in the community? For example, are locally elected men more supportive of women councilors and more ready to work with them? Are women given more responsibilities?
- Have the poor women who have savings from their employment in road maintenance during the project been able to use those savings for income-generating activities? Were they able to generate reasonable income from this?
- Has the greater visibility of women resulting from project activities (with women employed in construction, running shops in GCMs, participating in project decision making) had broader impacts on views of appropriate activities for women (among women and men)? Has it had other effects on women’s activities in markets or the community?

What project features contribute to its gender equality performance?

Project planning documents incorporated several features that provided momentum for implementation.

- A detailed GAP was ready as a management tool from the project launch. The GAP was prepared in conjunction with other planning documents. It drew on the experience gained from previous infrastructure projects. It outlines objectives and activities together with specific targets, indicators, actors responsible and time frame.

- The aims and activities of the GAP are reflected elsewhere in project documents, which supports integrated and effective implementation. The main text of the key documents refers to project approaches to supporting women’s economic activities and community standing.
- The loan covenants highlight several key commitments and ensure continuing attention to them by the government, the technical assistance team and ADB throughout implementation. See box below on the text of the covenants.
- The design and monitoring framework refers to key elements of the GAP. This includes a reference at both the outcome level (to women’s entrepreneurship activities and participation in community decision making) and the output level (to facilities in GCMs).
- The project goal of expanding opportunities for women is reflected in the criteria for selection and prioritization of subprojects. Construction proposals that first meet the specific economic, technical, environmental, and regional balance criteria are then further screened according to contributions to broad project goals, one of which is expanding opportunities for women.
- Consulting services to support implementation included a significant allocation for gender equality expertise. This included a gender training specialist for 22 person-months, plus two gender specialists for 72 months each—the full term of the project (the latter provided for through earmarked GTZ funds).

Loan Covenants Signal the Importance of an Issue and Provide a Practical Tool

This project included two provisions specific to gender equality in the loan agreements:

- “The Borrower shall ensure that all bidding documents and civil works contracts include provisions requiring equal payment to men and women for work of equal value, and prohibiting the use of child labor.” (Schedule 4, para. 8)
- “The Borrower shall take necessary and appropriate measures to ensure full implementation of the GAP during project implementation. The PMO shall prepare field manuals for the GAP and conduct training for PMO staff.” (Schedule 5, para. 23)

Urban Governance and Infrastructure Improvement (Sector) Project (UGIIP)

Key Points

Development Aims and Impacts:

- Women elected to local government can be effective as members of council committees (including committees with responsibilities such as construction tendering) as well as in reaching out to women citizens, if given skills training and support.
- Mechanisms, such as citizen committees through which women can express their views and priorities for local infrastructure and services, can also be useful tools to increase local government responsiveness to the needs of women, i.e., to improve governance.
- It is not enough for towns or other actors to identify objectives and activities to benefit women—they also need to set aside the budgets to implement them, which ADB can encourage and support (e.g., through performance criteria).

ADB Processes and Management Tools:

- Performance criteria on women's participation are a powerful tool when they are developed as part of a set of performance criteria that *all* need to be met for further participation in the investment component of the project—this approach promotes practical action and also reinforces the legitimacy of issues of women's participation in governance and in project benefit.

What are the main project aims and approaches?

The project aims to support better urban development and services and good governance in secondary towns (*pourashavas*) across Bangladesh. It was prepared as a sector loan that is aligned with the government's sector investment plan and its urban management policy.

The government is developing secondary towns to improve living standards, particularly in the poorer areas, and to provide an alternative destination for

Project Basic Facts

Loan approval number: 1947-BAN(SF)	Overall project cost: \$87M
Loan approval: November 2002	Financing:
Loan effectiveness: August 2003	\$60.0M ADB loan
Closing date: December 2009 (revised to Dec 2010)	\$22.8M GOB
Executing agency: Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives	\$3.9M Participating towns (<i>pourashavas</i>)
	\$0.3M Beneficiaries
	Gender classification: Effective gender mainstreaming

Project overview and ADB documents on the ADB website at www.adb.org/Projects
See also analysis in planning documents for phase II at www.adb.org/Projects

rural dwellers who would otherwise join the migration to larger metropolitan centers.

Urban poverty levels are lower than in rural areas, but there are severe deficiencies in urban infrastructure and services:

- Only 25% of urban households live in dwellings with a permanent structure, and most of the rest are in housing made of temporary materials in unplanned, informal settlements with uncertainty of tenure.
- Only 30% of urban households use tap water for drinking, less than 20% have their own house connections, and arsenic contamination is a problem in many urban areas.
- No secondary town has a sewerage system, and solid waste collection systems are very partial or nonexistent.
- As many as 40% of urban households have no alternative to defecating in open spaces or unsanitary hanging latrines.
- Air quality is poor due to traffic, brickfields, and industry, and water quality is compromised by domestic and industrial wastewater discharges.

These conditions are evidence of a major investment gap, but there are also major weaknesses in urban governance:

- very limited public participation in urban management;
- concentration of authority in the hands of the town chairperson, resulting in poor performance and lack of accountability; and
- weak capacity of elected commissioners, local public officials and community groups.

These governance issues are critical—experience has demonstrated that infrastructure improvement cannot be sustained without addressing underlying governance problems. The major innovation of UGIIIP was to promote progress on both investment and governance problems through a performance-based

approach. Participation in the project is linked to an agreement to implement an Urban Governance Improvement Action Program (UGIAP) and actual performance in implementation (see box).

Linking Performance to Continued Participation and Investment

Participating towns potentially benefit from three phases of investment, depending on their performance in implementing the UGIAP.

Phase 1: All participating towns sign an agreement with the government to participate in this phase, during which they begin implementation of the UGIAP and some high-priority infrastructure investments are undertaken (limited to 25%–30% of the overall investment identified for that town in project plans).

Phase 2: Continued participation is dependent on meeting *all* the minimum performance criteria under the UGIAP, including performance criteria on women's participation. Those towns whose performance is *fully satisfactory* on all criteria (including performance criteria on women's participation) get a bigger budget under this phase than towns that meet only the minimum requirements.

Phase 3: Only towns that maintain a *fully satisfactory* rating during phase 2 will benefit from phase 3 to fully use the financial assistance available through the project for infrastructure improvement.

Themes of UGIAP Performance Criteria

- Citizen awareness and participation
- Women's participation
- Integration of the urban poor
- Financial accountability and sustainability
- Administrative transparency

UGIAP Performance Criteria on Women's Participation

- Delineation of responsibilities of female ward commissioners (FWC) in each *pourashava* by the municipal council
- Formation of Gender and Environment subcommittee headed by an FWC
- Participation of FWC in *pourashava* committees
- Organization of semiannual rallies on UGIIP and social and gender development at the ward level involving women citizens
- Component-wise activities undertaken in accordance with the gender and action plan (GAP), based on the targets set by the project management office (PMO)
- Introduction of a monitoring and report system on GAP

The UGIAP was developed during project design in collaboration with participating towns and comprises five subprograms: three for enhancing participation of local stakeholders in planning and management (citizen awareness and participation, women’s participation, and the integration of the urban poor); and two for improved accountability and transparency (financial accountability and sustainability, and administrative transparency).

Under these programs, the participating towns are asked to take steps that include, for example, forming town-level citizen committees, developing participatory town development plans, strengthening the role of FWCs, implementing GAPs and poverty reduction action plans (PRAPs), operating microcredit programs for poor women, and increasing tax collection.

What are the key gender equality issues related to project aims?

Improved living conditions and basic amenities are important for all urban inhabitants but particularly for poor women, who are the most exposed to the indignities and health consequences of unsanitary living conditions. This is because of the following:

- Workloads – household responsibilities usually met by women for water collection, waste disposal, and family hygiene are all more burdensome in the absence of services;
- Health – the same responsibilities put women at particularly high risk of illness through use of polluted and arsenic-contaminated water;
- Care burdens – poor conditions increase the need for care of family members who fall ill, but also the difficulty of providing care, which is also usually provided by women;
- Personal safety – inadequate water supplies and toilet facilities expose women to risk; and
- Inequality in well-being – women are worse off than men on most social indicators, including nutritional intake, literacy, and workforce participation and earnings.

If local governments are to meet local needs and serve women equitably, they need to be aware of women’s needs and priorities for infrastructure and services. Since 1997, at least one-quarter of the members of town councils have been women elected to reserved seats, which has been an important step toward a stronger voice for women in local decision making. However, few of the women elected to reserved seats (FWCs) participate in decision-making processes or in the higher-status council committees. Challenges in achieving an effective voice for women include

- the specific role of FWCs, and the relation between FWCs and the regular ward commissioners has been unclear;
- ward commissioners of regular seats (mostly male) have not been supportive of FWCs;
- FWCs lack experience and the skills that would enable them to be effective; and

- elected town officials and the community have been slow to recognize women as service users and responsible citizens.

What is the project plan for involving women and addressing gender disparities?

The project design aimed to ensure that all project components addressed gender issues and that women benefited from project resources. The GAP developed during the design phase focused on promoting the participation of women at two levels:

- *role of elected FWCs* in municipal governance and in addressing women's needs; and
- *awareness and participation by women citizens* in urban planning and municipal management and as service receivers.

The project GAP was structured according to project components and the UGIAP agenda. The summary below indicates the range of initiatives identified to increase women's participation in and benefits from project activities and to enhance the project's empowerment potential.

In relation to *urban infrastructure improvements*:

- ensure women's access to urban infrastructure (markets, bus terminals, and water and sanitation facilities) through gender-sensitive designs;
- ensure women's participation in infrastructure construction, management and maintenance; and
- promote of wage parity between men and women in construction, operation and maintenance (O&M) of infrastructure.

In relation to *urban governance improvements*:

- delineate responsibilities between male and female ward commissioners;
- involve FWCs and women citizens in town and ward level coordination committees;
- assign FWCs as committee chairs, such as the Gender and Environment Committee; and
- involve FWCs and women citizens in tax collection and budget preparation.

In relation to *improving environment and health conditions, and addressing slum development*:

- increase women's awareness and participation through campaigns and orientation on solid waste management, sanitation and hygiene;
- include poor women in slum development committees as leaders;
- provide microfinance and skills training for women for income generation; and
- provide health services for women and children.

Finally, in relation to *capacity building and project management*:

- engage women as staff, consultants, and facilitators;
- provide orientation for the project executing agency, municipal officials, and ward commissioners on the project GAP; and
- improve the capacities of executing agencies and project implementing units to collect sex-disaggregated data and establish gender-based monitoring, evaluation, and reporting under the project.

What are the key achievements and lessons?

Project achievements in relation to the GAP reported in 2009 included:¹

- *More institutionalized approach on gender equality* – each participating municipality has developed a GAP with the aim to ensure women's participation in municipal development and governance.
- *More active and supported FWCs* – elected women are gradually improving their leadership roles and are chairing one-quarter of the committees, as well as being one-third of the membership of each committee (including committees on matters such as tender evaluation); separate office spaces allocated to FWCs and female staff in all participating *pourashavas*; five regional FWCs established as well as a national forum.
- *New mechanisms to engage women citizens in decision making and social change* – Gender and Environment subcommittees made up of council members and municipal staff are functioning in all 30 participating towns, with activities related to tree planting and environmental cleanliness; they also undertake efforts to resist early marriage, dowry, violence against women, and acid violence.
- *New approaches to reaching women and raising awareness on rights and key issues* – courtyard meetings led by the women councilors have provided forums to raise awareness on rights and responsibilities, e.g., in relation to cleanliness, sanitation, health, education, early marriage, dowry, timely payment of municipal taxes, tariff and utility bills etc. (See box on p. 20)
- *More women-friendly facilities* – this includes the design of bus terminals with separate facilities and toilets for women, arrangements for toilet facilities in public markets; and more broadly, as a result of learning from a series of projects, all new bus terminals and public toilets have facilities for women.
- *Employment opportunities in project-funded construction* – women's representation among laborers hired varies among sites, from above 50% in some participating towns to none in others, with most in the 10%–35% range; over 450 contractors have been oriented to engage women and reduce wage gaps.
- *New income opportunities for women* – this was through extension of micro-credit for income generation to poor women (211.54 million taka as micro-credit to 10,200 women, in a project element targeted to women only).

¹ From internal project note, presentation by the project director to the Regional Seminar on Gender, Environment and Natural Resource Management, New Delhi, October 2009; UGIIP. 2010. *Mainstreaming Gender under UGIIP Phase-3*. March.

An assessment of the UGIIP experience was done in 2008 as part of the preparation of UGIIP-II. One area of attention was the need for adequate and timely resources to support GAP implementation, as noted in the box below.

GAP Definition is Important, but So Are Resources

- **Issue identified in planning UGIIP-II** – the first phase had achieved improved participation and visibility of women but more limited results in meeting practical gender needs; lengthy budget processes slowed the implementation of both the GAP and the PRAP.
- **Response in designing UGIIP-II** – GAPs and PRAPs formulated by participating towns are required to identify the budget requirements for implementation; the GAP and the PRAP together with their budgets are to be incorporated in the town development plan, and all of these steps (GAP and PRAP development, specification of budget, and inclusion in the town development plan) are now elements of the performance criteria for towns to go beyond the initial stage of participation in UGIIP-II.

What else could we look at when assessing results?

Implementation of this project is almost complete and progress monitoring has been able to show positive achievements. In addition to the issues tracked and reported, further consideration of questions such as those below could provide additional insights into how UGIIP and follow-on projects are contributing to gender equality and women's empowerment.

- Has there been a change in the views or practices of male ward commissioners in relation to women's participation in council committees and decision making?
- How do male ward commissioners view their responsibilities to women citizens as users of services and citizens? Have project activities contributed to more informed views on women's needs and rights and on council responsibilities toward women?
- Are women members of town committees, both subcommittees of council and citizen committees, speaking up more? Are they being heard? (Do others listen? Do women's views influence discussions and decisions?)
- Have there been improvements in the well-being of the poor that can be attributed to the project? Have similar improvements been observed for women and men? Have these reduced the gender gap in any social indicators?

Courtyard Meetings Provide Opportunities to Reach Women

“Courtyard meetings are an excellent tool for building awareness among women citizens.... Considering the culture and religious bindings, women always like to discuss any issue/problems in their own settings and courtyards are perceived by them as their own place where they are free to discuss issues and problems for their benefit and improvement. Thus, through organizing courtyard meetings, FWCs can make aware the womenfolk of different wards on UGIAP and UGIIP activities and communicate the feelings, aspirations, and thoughts of the majority of the females to different forums in the *pourashava* for facilitating decision making on gender-related aspects.”

By early 2010, 2,253 courtyard meetings had been held in the 30 participating towns (*pourashava*).

UGIIP. 2010. *Mainstreaming Gender under UGIIP Phase-3*. March.

What project features contribute to its gender equality performance?

The project design and implementation approach includes several features that contribute to management for results:

- The inclusion of *specific activities and performance criteria on women’s participation* in the UGIAP was a means of ensuring that progress in these areas was integral to the project and not understood or pursued as a marginal element;
- The *project loan covenants include implementation of the GAP*, with necessary support for implementation (manuals, training of staff), close monitoring of implementation, and quarterly progress reporting;
- The *GAP is structured to engage all project components* and was therefore both thorough and easy to follow;
- *Gender training and GAP orientation for the executing agency, municipal officials, and ward commissioners* has been provided to increase knowledge and skills for both project implementation and ongoing management of local government affairs.

Secondary Towns Integrated Flood Protection Project II (STIFPP-II)

Key Points

Development Aims and Impacts:

- Women have a particular stake in initiatives that protect the poor in slums and shantytowns from floods and improve environmental conditions, as women are particularly disadvantaged among the urban poor.
- Involving men and women in gender training and in efforts to reach women is important for both project effectiveness and in sending the message that addressing gender inequality is a development challenge that is everyone's responsibility.
- Consistent demands that contractors hire more women and pay equal wages can result in changes in behavior (as contractors respond to signals about what is valued) and may eventually result in changed attitudes.

ADB Processes and Management Tools:

- Specific performance criteria for women's participation can be an effective means of ensuring high-level agreement from the outset. (In this project, the performance criteria were part of agreements with the town council reached before implementation began.)
- An effective innovation where there are many participating towns is to develop a generic or guideline gender action plan (GAP) in the project plan and then require each participating town to adapt it to their own circumstances.

What are the main project aims and approaches?

The project aims to promote economic growth and reduce poverty in nine towns by providing a flood-free and secure living environment within the framework of integrated flood protection.

The selected towns are prone to river flooding, flash floods, and river erosion. Lack of flood protection and inadequate drainage lead to waterlogging and overflow of

Project Basic Facts

Loan approval number: 2117-BAN(SF)	Overall project cost: \$128.9M
Loan approval: December 2004	Financing:
Loan effectiveness: June 2005	\$80.0M ADB loan
Closing date: December 2009 (revised to June 2011)	\$33.8M GOB
Executing agencies:	\$15.0M OPEC Fund
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB), Ministry of Water Resources (lead EA), and Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives 	\$0.1M Beneficiaries
	Gender classification: Gender equity

Project overview and ADB documents on the ADB website at www.adb.org/Projects

sewer facilities, especially latrines, and cause widespread environmental degradation, and unsanitary living conditions, particularly in slums and squatter areas. The growth potential of the urban sector is also undermined by frequent flooding, with associated damage to infrastructure, industrial sites, inventories, and businesses.

The project's baseline survey found that the incidence of poverty was 34% in the overall project area and as high as 40% in some towns. Households in hard-core poverty are concentrated in overcrowded slum and squatter areas. Steady migration from rural areas is evident in the shanty settlements sprouting on along river embankments and in low-lying areas. These areas and inhabitants are particularly vulnerable to flooding and attendant misery.

The integrated approach combines river protection works with drainage and basic sanitation and solid waste services. Most project investments are in construction of infrastructure for flood protection. However, the long-term effectiveness of these investments is closely tied to the capacity of project towns to manage their affairs and the ongoing operation and maintenance (O&M) of the municipal works put in place through the project. The project therefore extends an approach developed in a previous ADB-supported project¹ in which, in exchange for financial assistance, the participating towns undertake a formal agreement to implement an Urban Governance Improvement Action Program (UGIAP). The program's performance criteria set out for STIFPP-II cover activities in six areas:

- citizen awareness and participation,
- women's participation,

¹ Urban Governance and Infrastructure Improvement Project (UGIIP, BAN-1947-SF), see separate case study. In UGIIP (but not STIFPP-II) performance assessment was done in phases, with release of funds at each phase conditional on satisfactory performance. The difference in approach is because of the type of infrastructure investments (all "inevitable" in STIFPP, some discretionary in UGIIP).

- integration of the urban poor,
- environmental and sanitation improvement,
- financial accountability and sustainability, and
- administrative transparency.

To address these areas, each participating town is assisted to form a town-level coordinating committee with citizen participation, to develop a participatory municipal development plan, to strengthen the role of elected female ward commissioners (FWCs), to implement a slum improvement program, and to run a community-level fund for income generation and infrastructure improvement.

The project addresses poverty through

- the employment generated during construction and in subsequent operation and maintenance of infrastructure and facilities,
- the improvement in basic amenities and living conditions in slums and shantytowns, and
- better protection in times of flooding from the loss of homes, possessions, livestock, and livelihoods.

What are the key gender equality issues related to project aims?

The poverty and social assessment done as part of the project planning process points out the difficulty of life for all poor persons in slums and shantytowns, but also that, among this disadvantaged population, women are more disadvantaged than men:^{2,3}

- Fewer employment opportunities – while poverty is pushing more women to seek wage work, opportunities are limited to the informal sector, mostly as unskilled labor, and there is a bias toward men in giving out work;
- Lower wages – women are generally paid at rates half that of men, and the disparity is even greater during floods, when men are offered work below regular rates and women are reduced to work for payments in kind or in exchange for a meal;
- High work burdens – women’s household responsibilities for family water, cooking, and hygiene are more difficult in the absence of basic amenities, and unsanitary conditions also increase illness and the burden of family care;
- Personal hygiene and toilet requirements – these are more complicated for women because of mobility restrictions and security concerns;

² Consultant reports, PPTA, Volume 1.

³ Rural–urban migration adds to the growth of slum and shanty areas and women are a growing proportion of this, though still a minority. In the project area, 7%–30% of households are headed by women. The sex ratio in slum areas (males to 100 females) ranges from as low as 91.2 to 127.

- Higher vulnerability to trafficking – with migration, uncertainties of shelter and earnings, the vulnerability of women and children to being trafficked increases;
- Different priorities – as a result of the points above, women are particularly concerned about shelter for themselves and their animals, children’s access to schools, and access to medicine and health care, particularly during floods.

In times of flood, these problems are exacerbated. The low-lying areas and embankments in which the poor are concentrated are the first to flood, and lack of drainage and sewerage leaves inhabitants struggling through stagnant and contaminated water, sometimes for weeks or months.

In relation to the capacities of town councils and officials to consult with their women constituents, to hear their views, and to respond to their particular needs, there are also a number of gender issues to be addressed. The law mandates that one-quarter of council seats (ward commissioners) are reserved for women (one woman is elected for every three wards, and women can also run in the open seats or for the position of council chairperson). This provision brought many women into public life. However, as it is relatively new, there are still few women with skills developed through experience. The specific role of female ward commissioners (FWCs) has also taken some time to work out. Another problem is evident in reports about male commissioners being reluctant to work with women and the relegation of women to marginal roles in council work. Enabling FWCs to be effective members of council is therefore important to increasing the voice of women in municipal decision making. At the same time, the council can only be responsive to the town’s women if all those elected, men as well as women, see this as their responsibility.

What is the project plan for involving women and supporting gender equality?

The project built on the experience of previous ADB-supported initiatives and the gender equity strategy of executing agencies to ensure that women benefited from project inputs, processes, and outcomes. The approach included attention to

- project benefits and resources – providing for women’s access to the employment generated during the project, and related skills training;
- community improvements resulting from project investments – ensuring that improvements to basic amenities meet women’s needs (footpaths, latrines, and community water supplies); and
- decision-making processes established for the project and ongoing management – also targeting strengthened capacities of FWCs, and involvement of commissioners and women citizens in consultations and decision making.

Efforts to benefit women and support women’s empowerment were given a high profile through being included in the performance criteria in the UGIAP that participating towns needed to sign on to before civil works could begin (see box).

UGIAP Performance Criteria in Support of Women’s Participation for STIFPP-II

Activity	Level of Performance
1. Delineate responsibilities of FWCs in each project town by the municipal council	Within 1 year of loan effectiveness
2. Form gender and environment subcommittee headed by an FWC	Within 6 months of loan signing
3. Ensure participation of FWCs in project town committee	Within 6 months
4. Organize semiannual rallies on STIFPP-II and social and gender development at the ward level involving women citizens	Every 6 months
5. Undertake component activities in accordance with GAP	Meet targets set by PMO
6. Introduce a monitoring and reporting system on GAP (the project management office [PMO] will develop the system)	Strict compliance

RRP, Secondary Towns Integrated Flood Protection Project, Phase II (STIFPP-II), 2004. Appendix 6.

Each participating town also developed a GAP that adapted to their own circumstances the generic GAP presented in planning documents. The generic GAP highlighted steps in relation to each project component. It is quoted below to indicate the range of possibilities to support gender equality that were identified.

Flood protection works – construction or upgrading of facilities, such as flood embankments, reinforced walls, and bank protection:

- consult with women for land acquisition and settlement and providing special compensation packages for women;
- include FWCs and citizens in resettlement activities; and
- provide employment opportunities for poor women in flood protection earthworks (target at least 25% women).⁴

Urban drainage improvement system – including lined drains, drainage outfalls, and road culverts:

- promote wage parity between men and women in construction, operation, and maintenance of infrastructure;
- provide skills training for men and women in construction and operations and maintenance works;
- organize labor contracting societies (LCSs) with female membership; and
- employ 100% women in tree planting and routine maintenance work.

⁴ Government policy sets the target of at least 25% women in earthworks. This is implemented at the level of the overall project (rather than individual contracts).

Urban environmental improvement – providing for solid waste management, sanitary latrines, and slum improvement:

- raise awareness among women and other stakeholders about their roles in solid waste management;
- organize ward-based rallies for awareness on environment, sanitation and hygiene;
- promote women’s participation in sanitation programs as motivators;
- allow sanitation program completion certificates to be signed by women;
- ensure that the location of public toilets suit women’s needs; and
- include a suitable clause in lease deeds for public facilities to include women in management.

Capacity building – for governance improvement under the UGIAP and to implement slum improvement activities:

- ensure women’s representation in all decision-making committees;
- provide for women’s access to the poverty reduction fund, slum infrastructure, and community empowerment activities; and provide skills training for women;
- raise awareness among displaced, migrant, and floating people about the risks of human trafficking and child labor;
- advocate environmental sanitation and women’s health; and
- involve women in motivational activities for tax collection and resource mobilization.

What are the key achievements and remaining challenges?

The project is still in implementation and reports still tend to focus on activities and outputs.

Achievements in relation to local governance and management include⁵

- town-level implementation plans together with town-specific GAPs;
- discussions with women in courtyard meetings led by FWCs;
- establishment of gender and environment committees chaired by FWCs;
- FWCs active on town-level and ward-level coordinating committees; and
- women-led community development committees are undertaking some of the infrastructure-related slum improvement activities.

⁵ The points on achievements in this section were reported in the presentation by the project director to the Regional Seminar on Gender, Environment and Natural Resource Management, India, October 2009; data on employment supplied by the project staff.

Women were also employed in project-funded construction for flood protection and drainage:

- about 26% of the 902,400 person-days of employment in flood protection work went to women (just over the target of 25%); and
- training, guidelines, and monitoring forms for contractors on equal wages and appropriate working conditions for women.

Project management also provided employment for women as well as training of both women and men on gender issues:

- There are three positions for women staff with the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) in each participating town.
- The project employed nine woman engineers.
- Training on gender was provided to 150 staff members of the executing agencies.

Project reviews note several challenges facing the project in reaching and benefiting women:⁶

- increasing the numbers of women employed in the project's drainage construction components;
- addressing the wage discrimination against women, which remains prevalent (even though there are some indications of changed behavior among contractors, see box);
- increasing contractor attention to the full set of core labor standards, including working condition and health and safety measures; and
- increasing support for the development of entrepreneurial skills and effectiveness of use of savings accumulated.

Persistence Is Required to Achieve Change

Even though project reports note that wage discrimination against women is still the norm, project staff also report promising signs of change. Contractors have been made aware of LGED policy and project requirements through orientation sessions for STIFPP and through requests made for data on the number of women hired. As similar steps are being taken by other projects, contractors are now more aware of the importance given by LGED and ADB to hiring women and paying them equal wages:

“More contractors now value this also—or at least they see it as valued by others and therefore important for business.”

⁶ Quarterly Progress Report No. 12, Oct.–Dec. 2009.

What else could we look at when assessing results?

Project initiatives have the potential to contribute to women's empowerment and gender equality in a range of ways. Some issues that would be interesting to analyze are suggested below.

- Have environmental and sanitary improvements resulted in reduced workloads for women? (Reduced hours required for water collection, waste disposal, and care of the sick?) Has overall health improved (and are improvements equally evident for women and girls as for men and boys)?
- What are the levels of satisfaction of slum and shanty dwellers with new facilities and services (water supply, lighting, toilets, and waste disposal)? Is this the same for women and men? Do both feel their voices have been heard in decision making?
- Have project initiatives to strengthen the participation and skills of elected women councilors in project management had a broader impact on their involvement in other council activities and committees?
- Have the project and LGED initiatives to promote equal pay for women been reflected in other council projects and had an impact on other employers in project towns?

What project features contribute to its gender equality performance?

Several particularly notable project management features strengthen its gender equality approach:

- *Use of performance criteria on women's participation* – the criteria were set out as part of UGIAP in project approval documents. Each participating town had to enter into a formal agreement to implement the GAP at project outset and before any civil works could be undertaken.
- *Guidance from the LGED Gender Equity Strategy and Action Plan* – the policy of one of the two executing agencies, which had itself developed with experience gained in ADB-supported initiatives, provided an overall framework and momentum for implementation.
- *Thoughtful gender analysis done as part of the poverty and social analysis at the project design stage* – this analysis considered gender differences and inequalities in relation to all the problem areas addressed by the project as well as in relation to project aims. The analysis included a socioeconomic survey that identified the particular characteristics of poor women and compared perception, needs, and demands of women and men.
- *Gender workshop as part of the project analysis and planning process* – this was a workshop that brought together many chairpersons and ward commissioners of participating towns and provided an opportunity for discussion of views on poverty reduction and GAPs.

**Engaging Men As Well As Women to Work
for Women's Empowerment**

"Men's support and strong advocacy from the top are essential ingredients to successful gender mainstreaming. Thus gender training—addressed to both men and women—will be offered at all levels and to all stakeholders."

ADB. 2004. *Report and Recommendation of the President*. Summary of gender analysis (p. 42).

- *Preparation of a GAP to guide preparation of a town-specific GAP in each of the nine project sites* – this was set out in the project approval documents and, together with the performance criteria and the LGED Gender Equity Strategy, provided a strong framework that could be adjusted to the circumstances of each project site and adopted locally.
- *Gender training provided to both men and women, and to both staff and management* – this was done to involve all levels of staff and men as well as women, which also reinforces the point that women's empowerment and gender equality is a development challenge that is everyone's responsibility.

Small-Scale Water Resources Development Sector Project II (SSWR-II)

Key Points

Development Aims and Impacts:

- Poor women are interested in and can benefit from employment opportunities in earthworks and construction work for water infrastructure.
- Mandating equal daily wages for women and men in construction is an important statement in support of women's rights as well as a practical step for women, although continued follow-up is required to ensure implementation of this principle.
- Women's involvement in project planning and management is important to motivate and mobilize other women to participate; also important is awareness among women of the specific benefits to be gained from participation.

ADB Processes and Management Tools:

- A detailed gender action plan (GAP) that is based on a gender analysis and sets out activities, responsibilities, and indicators for each sub-project implementation stage provides an important management and monitoring tool.
- Setting specific targets for women's participation in project activities and management also provides a useful focus for action and progress monitoring.
- Awareness building at the management level of the executing agency (headquarters and the field) has proved helpful in generating practical ideas about how to mainstream gender equality and involve women in the project.

Project Basic Facts

Loan approval number: 1831-BAN (SF)	Overall project cost: \$78M
Loan approval: July 2001	Financing:
Loan effectiveness: November 2001	\$34.0M ADB loan
Closing date: June 2010	\$17.3M GOB
Executing agency: Local Government	\$24.3M Netherlands (grant)
Engineering Department (LGED),	\$2.4M Beneficiaries
Ministry of Local Government, Rural	Gender classification: Effective gender
Development and Cooperatives	mainstreaming

Project overview and ADB documents on ADB website at www.adb.org/Projects

What are the main project aims and approaches?

The project aims to contribute to poverty reduction through the increased agricultural production and rural incomes that would result from improved water resource infrastructure and management. This will be achieved through participatory approaches to rehabilitation and management of small-scale systems (i.e., less than 1,000 hectares and thus under the authority of local government institutions).

Management of water resources for agriculture, fisheries, and other uses is critical to rural development and poverty reduction. Water resources are the foundation of many livelihood activities of the rural population, including agriculture, inland and coastal fishing, transportation, water supply, and rural industries. Floods in the monsoon season, water scarcity in the dry season, and riverbank erosion are all threats to the livelihoods of the vulnerable. Households also need access to an adequate and safe domestic water supply, which is increasingly in competition with groundwater use for dry season irrigation and in many cases threatened with arsenic contamination. Water is also vital to Bangladesh's natural ecosystems and rich biodiversity. In short, there are many interests in this critical resource, and thus a need for strategic, integrated, and participatory management.

The project assists communities to form water management cooperative associations (WMCAs) that participate in the selection, design, implementation, and subsequent operation and maintenance (O&M) of subprojects. The subprojects rehabilitate or upgrade infrastructure for flood control, drainage improvement, water conservation, or irrigation. Agricultural and fisheries extension services are also engaged to promote appropriate practices and to maximize benefits from improved systems. The project also provides technical assistance to strengthen the capacity of the executing agency, LGED, for small-scale water resources development at the national, district, and *upazila* levels.

While project outcomes such as increased agricultural production and land values benefit landowners, benefits to the poor are through the following:¹

- employment in the project earthworks, which is done through labor contracting societies (LCSs) composed of landless laborers who are members of the WMCAs;
- employment in ongoing maintenance, also done through LCSs;
- opportunities to take up income-generating activities with the support of WMCAs, including training and microcredit; and
- employment opportunities through the increased demands for wage labor resulting from increased agricultural production.

The project builds on approaches developed during an earlier phase (SSW-I) while extending the initiative to some 300 new locations. A third follow-on project

¹ Consultant's Report, TA7041, p. J22.

further developing and extending the reach of this approach was approved in September 2009 (PSSW).²

What are the key gender equality issues related to project aims?

Inequalities between women and men are relevant to the main aims of the project and the strategies for achieving them. In relation to the *project's poverty reduction aims*, the points below highlight the importance of specifically targeting women and supporting increased opportunities for earnings and income:

- Women as well as men are poor, and poverty in poor households may be experienced differently by women and men because inequalities within households put women at a disadvantage in consumption, in access to productive resources and in household decision making.
- Women's earnings and contributions are important to the household incomes of the poor, and would be even greater if not for the deeply entrenched practice of paying lower wages to women.
- Fewer opportunities and lower wages for women penalize all poor households.

In relation to the *participatory management of water resources and infrastructure by stakeholders*, the points below highlight the need to involve women to ensure that all interests are represented, but also the challenges in achieving equitable and effective participation by women:

- Water management must serve domestic and other uses, and women are the major stakeholders regarding the quality and accessibility of domestic water because of the responsibilities they generally carry for household water use for cooking, household health and hygiene, as well as the health consequences of unsafe water (all of which also have consequences for time available for other economic activities of women and access to schooling for their daughters).
- Women are also stakeholders in water use for household vegetable production and small livestock as well as other employment and income-generating activities.
- Accordingly, women have a stake in any mechanism that has a role in adjudicating conflicts between different uses and users.
- The predominant view is still that water management and infrastructure are the domain of men, so involving women means outreach to men as well as women.
- More generally, women's involvement in community decision making is relatively recent in Bangladesh, and therefore few have skills and experience (though major strides have been made in recent elections, spurred by reserved seats for women).

² SSW-I: Scale Water Resources Development Sector Project, Phase I, Loan #1381, 1996–2002 (\$51.2M, including ADB loan of \$27.3M);

PSSW: Participatory Small-Scale Water Resources Sector Project, Loan approved September 2009, (\$107.3M, including ADB loan of \$51.3M).

Finally, as noted in project documents:³

“When women do not get the opportunity to participate in water management they are simultaneously delinked from the urgent effort to protect these vital resources.”

What is the project plan for involving women?

Women’s involvement in all aspects of the project is the major focus of the project’s GAP, with specific targets set for each type of activity.⁴ This includes

- membership in the WMCAs, which are key partners in the subproject and in ongoing management of community water resources and infrastructure (target of one-third of members of each WMCA);
- membership in the management committee of the WMCA, to increase the opportunities to participate in decisions (representation depends on elections, but the project has encouraged WMCAs to stipulate that four of 12 seats be filled with elected women);
- membership in the LCSs through which project employment and ongoing maintenance are organized (preference to women, target of 25%–100%); and
- participation in training provided by the project, including training related to WMCA operation (target of 30%) and training in livelihood activities (preference to women).

The project provided training on the importance of women’s involvement to both the executing agency (LGED) and project staff. On the other side, there has also been confidence building and training in management skills to enable women to participate in WMCAs.

How does the project seek to address gender disparities and benefit women?

Project initiatives offer the potential to provide both immediate benefits and longer-term contributions to women’s well-being and gender equality. These include

- *income opportunities* through the employment available in earthworks during project implementation;
- *ongoing employment* in O&M of water infrastructure, during and after project implementation;
- *equal pay for construction and maintenance work*, in line with project and LGED policies;

³ *Report and Recommendation of the President, SSW-II (2001), social dimensions annex.*

⁴ Presentation by the project director to the Regional Seminar on Gender, Environment and Natural Resource Management, New Delhi, October 2009.

Recognizing Factors That Support Increased Participation by Women

- Women’s involvement is important to motivate and mobilize other women:
 - Including women in the participatory rural appraisal teams making the initial contacts is critical for reaching women and ensuring they are included in eligibility lists for project benefits.
 - Using female staff from the executing agency on participatory rural appraisal teams and as local facilitators also supports women’s increased participation.
 - The involvement of women members of the Union Parishad (elected local council) in the WMCA encourages women’s involvement.
 - Election of women to WMCA management positions also has a positive influence.
- Awareness of the specific benefits to be gained is also a motivator:
 - For both poor women and men, the strongest incentive for joining WMCA was the prospect of earthworks employment.
 - Nonpoor women were less likely to join, but were attracted when they became aware of the opportunities for practical training.
- However, difficulty in accessing those benefits can have the opposite effect:
 - Complex procedures for joining and remaining in LCSs can be barriers for women.
 - Delays in payment are discouraging, as day laborers cannot go several days without pay.
 - Working conditions (water, rest, and first aid facilities) can also be an issue.
- Men’s attitudes are important, and it may be necessary to persuade them to support the involvement of their wives and other women:
 - The findings of one survey were that women participated at lower rates in communities in which a significant proportion of men objected to the participation of their wives.
- Other factors influencing women’s engagement in project activities and decisions:
 - Women members of WMCAs were more likely to be active when they were given responsibilities (e.g., collect contributions or select groups of trainees).
 - Increased participation of more literate and qualified women is important to increasing women’s representation and effectiveness as members of WMCA management.

Lessons from SSW-I and SSW-II, reported in Consultants’ Report for PPTA 7041, Supplementary Annex J (PPTA for PSSW).

- *new skills for income generation* through training provided by *upazila* officers of various government extension services (agriculture, fisheries, and livestock), and better subsequent links with those services;⁵
- *opportunities to accumulate savings* through deposits of shares and cash in WMCAs (which was particularly valued by women); and
- experience in participating in *community decision making* and reinforcement of their right to participate in community decision making.

The rationale and potential broad impact for an increased role in decision making was well-stated in the project GAP:⁶

“Women cannot contribute simply by appearing at meetings, etc. in large numbers. They must work to implement subproject decisions. They must express their own thinking and develop themselves. If decision-making opportunities are given to women, they will learn how to deliberate and what to realistically expect from participation. Gradually, they will gain experience and learn from practicing decision-making skills. When women get such opportunities to share in decision-making processes on an equal basis with men, overall social development benefits. Their involvement relates directly to the project goal of encouraging the poor, vulnerable, and landless, and involving people in income-related affairs.”

What are the key achievements and remaining challenges?

Insights into the types of achievements that will result from this project can be gained from studies on the earlier phase of the project, SSW-I (1996–2002), when achievements included the following:⁷

- More than 25% of overall WMCA members were women.
- Over 14,000 women had access to training, mostly in agricultural activities (vegetable and seed production, poultry farming and vaccination, pond fish culture, and other on-farm income-generating activities).
- Some 270 women were trained in women’s participation in integrated water management.
- Almost 20% of earthwork employment went to women.
- All employment looking after project-planted trees went to destitute women, providing some with as much as 3 years of sustained income.

Many WMCAs (over 70%) established some sort of income generation to support themselves, and most of these were microcredit schemes. Women accounted for over 25% of the borrowers. The average loan amount was sufficiently small to interest only persons with relatively few assets. These microcredit schemes emerged spontaneously rather than as part of the initial project plan and, in the words of

⁵ Consultant’s Report, TA 7041, p. J28.

⁶ GAP SSW-II, para. 28.

⁷ Consultant’s Report, TA7041, Supplementary Annex J.

one observer, this development “reflects a significant achievement in providing sustainable support to assetless persons using locally generated resources.”⁸

SSW-II is near completion and the latest available monitoring data show that:⁹

- On average, women account for 28% of WMCA members (although the range is great, from 4% to 50%) and 31% of managing committee members.
- On average, women are 32% of microcredit recipients (again with a large range: 4%–91%).
- Women account for 15% of labor contracting society (LCS) training and employment (with a range among locations of 14%–42%).

Project reports also point to a number of broad challenges.¹⁰

- *Identifying factors associated with low-participation locations* – there are significant differences among subproject locations in women’s participation rates, which have been explained as due to social and cultural factors. More precision on what differentiates regions would assist in identifying specific strategies to overcome these constraints.
- *Increasing the involvement of more literate and qualified women in WMCA management* – attracting women from a broader range of social groups, including women whose husbands are farmers or fishers that are WMCA members, to increase the pool with the time and skills to participate in WMCA management (elected and unpaid positions).
- *Ensuring implementation of equal wage policies* – although equal wages have been mandated, reports of continuing wage gaps in project activities show that consistent implementation has not yet been achieved.
- *Achieving more widespread knowledge of the LGED gender equality strategy and water sector GAP* – ensuring the LGED local officers and project staff are familiar with these commitments and appropriate implementing approaches is a continuing field-level challenge.

What else could we look at when assessing results?

There has been regular monitoring using the indicators set out in the GAP. A number of additional issues would be interesting to analyze further to increase understanding of project contributions to women’s empowerment and gender equality.

- What uses have been made of the training in income-generating activities provided and of microcredit accessed through the WMCA?
- What has been the impact of project involvement on women’s income, time use, and health (looking at different categories of women, i.e., destitute women or women whose husbands are WMCA members)?

⁸ Consultant’s Report, TA7041, p. J23.

⁹ Presentation to Regional Seminar, see footnote 4 (data as of September 2009).

¹⁰ These are all issues identified in planning documents as issues for attention in PSSW, though without specific strategies as yet.

- Does targeting of household heads have the effect of excluding a significant group of women from the employment opportunities in the project? That is, would poor women in poor households headed by males be excluded from this opportunity to increase their own and their family's well-being?
- What is the extent of women's participation in WMCA meetings? (Do they speak, participate in decisions? Do WMCA leaders encourage women's participation?)
- Where the project's equal pay requirements have been implemented, has this also had an impact on wage rates outside the project?

What project features contribute to its gender equality performance?

This includes a range of features that assist implementers to focus on what is to be achieved and provide guidance and support for implementation. These include

- *detailed GAP*, formulated at an early stage, for the overall project and for each stage of subproject implementation (identification and feasibility, design and institutional establishment, construction and first-year O&M);
- *training of staff of project and executing agency* on the importance of women's involvement in the project;
- *use of gender equality expertise* for both strategy development and implementation; and
- *attention to data collection for analysis*, with a management information system (MIS) that collects sex-disaggregated data on institutional issues (WMCA membership, meeting attendance, farm households, etc., on construction work (LCS groups, laborers, and person-days of employment); and other project elements (including O&M work and microcredit borrowers).

Engaging Management to Generate Practical Ideas

One good practice noted as a lesson of experience was that awareness building at the management level resulted in generating practical ideas and approaches to mainstream women in the project.

Source: Reports on TA7041 (page J24) for SSW-I.

Teaching Quality Improvement (TQI) in Secondary Education

Key Points

Development Aims and Impacts:

- Initiatives concerned with the quality of teaching and learning provide a range of opportunities to address the disadvantages girls face in the classroom—this can be pursued, for example, through teacher awareness, increased numbers of female teachers, leadership from head teachers, and better informed school management committees.
- Mainstream projects can learn from and build on the knowledge and innovations generated by projects with a gender equality focus—mainstream projects have the reach and resources to achieve much broader implementation than is usually possible with the more limited resources and time frames of projects with a gender equality focus.

ADB Processes and Management Tools:

- Targets are important means of highlighting objectives, but a critical element of target-setting is the analysis of the current situation and of what is reasonable and possible to achieve in a specific time frame.
- Project contributions to the development of data systems provide important opportunities to ensure that these systems generate the data required to assess gender disparities (differences between women and men) and progress in addressing these disparities.

Project Basic Facts

Loan approval number: 2101-BAN (SF)	Overall project cost: \$108.7M
Loan approval: November 2004	Financing:
Loan effectiveness: April 2005	\$69.0M ADB loan
Closing date: September 2011	\$21.7M GOB
Executing agencies: Directorate of	\$18.0M CIDA (grant)
Secondary and Higher Education	Gender classification: Gender equity
(DSHE), Ministry of Education (MOE)	

Project overview and ADB documents on ADB website at www.adb.org/Projects

Additional information and documents on project website www.tqi-sep.gov.bd

What are the main project aims and approaches?

The project (TQI) aims to enhance the quality of learning in secondary school classrooms through better teaching. This is to be achieved through upgrading the skills, knowledge, and competencies of teachers, head teachers, and teacher educators; through enhancing the learning environment in schools; and through strengthening institutions to support the professionalism of teaching.¹

Project planning documents outline a range of significant problems in the secondary education sector in Bangladesh, most notably the following:

- low gross enrollment rate of about 25%;
- high wastage (44% dropout rate);
- low and declining pass rates (in 2003, 36% for Secondary School Certificate and 38% for the Higher Secondary Certificate);
- high numbers of untrained teachers (about 150,000, accounting for 60% of all teachers);
- inadequate teacher recruitment system;
- low percentage of female teachers (17%, despite government directives since 1999 setting a 30% quota at secondary level);
- outdated curriculum and textbooks for teacher training;
- poor teaching and learning conditions (with most schools devoid of basic and essential conditions for normal teaching and learning);
- shortage of teaching and learning resources; and
- no accountability for secondary schools in the private sector (which account for about 98% of the total).

The project has been designed to address the problems related to education inputs—the last seven points above—to bring about improvements in the quality of teaching that will improve student enrollment, reduce dropout, and increase achievement.²

The project's four components focus on

- *organizational development and capacity building*, including teacher training colleges (TTCs) and higher secondary teacher training institutes; a teacher registration authority; and improved databases, monitoring, and evaluation;
- *improved teacher training facilities*, such as classrooms; science and computer laboratories, equipment, and resources; hostel accommodation; and libraries;
- *strengthened in-service and pre-service training*, with a new Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) program, a 3-month certificate course aligned with the B.Ed program; and short professional development courses for subject teachers; and
- *more equitable access and increased community involvement*: increased access to teacher training by women, disadvantaged groups, and those in remote areas.

¹ As summarized in the TQI-SEP brochure and project website.

² See TQI, Putting quality into TQI: the role of a quality assurance framework, project website.

What are the key gender equality issues related to project aims?

Bangladesh has made considerable progress in closing the gender gap in enrollment at both primary and secondary levels, and currently girls outnumber boys in enrollment in primary and junior secondary levels. While enrollments of girls have increased dramatically, large numbers of girls and boys remain out of school and there are major concerns about the quality of education received by both girls and boys.

Poor quality affects boys as well as girls, but there are ways in which girls are particularly or differently affected, for example, through unequal treatment of girls and boys in the classroom, a curriculum that reflects gender stereotypes, and subject streaming that channels girls into the humanities rather than areas of employment demand. Further, the need to invest in tutoring to counter poor quality teaching and to pass exams is particularly unfavorable for girls, who are less likely than boys to benefit from such additional expenditures. Poor physical facilities and the lack of toilets are particular problems for girls. Quality of education for girls is also undermined by the harassment and insecurity they experience within school premises and on the way to school.

The outcomes of factors such as these are evident when data on dropout, completion, and performance of girls are compared to those of boys. Dropout rates in secondary school (grades 9–10) are high for both girls and boys, but even higher among girls; completion rates are low for both, but even lower among girls. Girls are less likely to be put forward for Secondary School Certificate exams and even less likely to pass. The aggregate figures on dropout and performance show the extent of wastage of resources in the secondary system; the figures disaggregated by sex suggest that reducing wastage requires attention to the specific factors that result in lower retention and performance among girls.³

Although some aspects of the issues noted above are outside the school system, *there are several ways in which initiatives in the areas of teacher training and school management can address the gender dimensions of education quality, notably:*

- ensuring that teacher training equips teachers to deal equitably with girls in classroom interactions and to avoid reinforcing negative attitudes towards girls and women;
- alerting head teachers to the importance of their leadership role in establishing a positive learning environment for girls;
- promoting attention by school management committees (SMCs) to the needs of girls, such as security inside and on the way to school; and
- the development of policies, circulars, or guidelines on teachers' role in providing an equitable learning environment for girls.

The proportion of women among secondary school teachers is an issue of quality of education for girls. Several studies suggest that girls get less attention from teachers than boys, with consequences for both performance and confidence;

³ Project planning documents; Manzoor Ahmed et al. 2004. Investing in People: Education with Quality and Equity. PRSP Education Thematic Paper. June.

however, female teachers were observed to have a more balanced approach than male teachers.⁴ Schools without women teachers are also a source of concern because of the absence of female role models for the students. The proportion of women teachers at the project start was just over half the government's 30% target; however, the government does not seem to have backed up this target with other measures that would give it effect. Factors contributing to the low representation of women include negative attitudes of communities and SMCs to female teachers, lack of support to communities to cover teachers taking maternity leave, the barriers raised by the need for candidate teachers to offer "donations" to SMCs. Physical security and accommodation issues are additional barriers for women.

What is the project plan for involving women?

A major focus of the project gender action plan (GAP) is achieving the target of 30% representation of women teachers at secondary schools. This reflects the discussion in ADB planning documents and the commitment in a loan covenant covering this issue. The target was subsequently revised by government circular and in the GAP to 40% in urban areas, 20% in rural areas, and "relaxed" in remote and underserved areas (equivalent to a 23% overall target). Project activities and tasks related to this target include

- improving gender-disaggregated data on teachers;
- improving the availability of accommodation for women teachers;
- attracting women to training and employment in shortage subjects;
- setting targets for women in TQI training (25% end-of-project target);
- promoting awareness among SMCs, head teachers, and communities about the government target for recruitment of female teachers; and
- strategic planning workshops for education and administrative officials to promote adherence to the targets and the development of action plans to achieve them.

The GAP also aims to increase the number of women on SMCs, reflecting the 40% target set in the loan agreement (subsequently reduced to 20% by government circular and in the GAP). Project activities related to achieving this target include

- advocacy in training activities for head teachers, and in inclusive education for classroom teachers, and
- orientation initiatives at the community level and with SMCs.

⁴ J. Raynor and R. Choudhury. 2004. A National Assessment of the Girls' Secondary Stipend Programmes in Bangladesh. Study for DFID.

How does the project seek to address gender disparities and benefit women and girls?

Several interrelated themes are being pursued through activities outlined in the project GAP:

- *Strengthening the capacity of schools to provide an effective learning environment for girls*, through measures to increase the number of women teachers; to increase the number of women participating in SMCs; and to increase awareness of inclusive education principles among teachers, managers, and SMCs.
- *Increasing the capacity of TTCs to incorporate gender issues in their programs*, including the incorporation of gender and development issues in training of both teachers and head teachers; the development of teacher trainers knowledgeable about inclusive education; and mentoring and support for teacher trainers.

Building on Innovations Developed through a Gender Equality Project

The European Commission-funded PROMOTE (Programme to Motivate, Train and Employ women teachers in secondary schools) was a source of innovation and momentum on gender equality in secondary education. PROMOTE aimed to “create a congenial environment for quality education for girls at rural secondary schools.”

PROMOTE initiatives to increase the numbers of qualified and employed female teachers included

- provision of fellowships to women to study for their B.Ed (over 2,800);
- incentives to schools to release teachers for B.Ed studies (funding of replacement teacher);
- incentives to communities to recruit unemployed PROMOTE graduates (cash for educational materials and school refurbishment);
- construction of hostels for female teachers (to address accommodation and security issues).

Initiatives to increase the capacity of teacher training colleges (TTCs) on gender equality issues included:

- development of some teaching practice elements into the new TTC/B.Ed curriculum;
- establishment of gender resource groups consisting of faculty members at the 11 government TTCs, and training members to analyze classroom materials and behaviors through a gender lens;
- assistance to the gender resource group to develop a gender resource pack for use in gender training at TTCs;
- assistance to the Grievance Redress Committee to do initial “gender audits” of TTCs, i.e., analyses to identify trends in women’s representation among TTC faculty and trainees, the distribution of women faculty by subject matter, and student subject electives and success rates.

- *Making teacher training facilities more woman friendly*, through adding women's restrooms, providing more hostel accommodation, and monitoring to ensure these facilities are being used to benefit women in accordance with government rules.
- *Increasing the institutional capacity on gender issues of the Ministry of Education partners*, including gender training of partners such as the National Academy for Educational Management, the Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics, and the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education; improving availability of sex-disaggregated data on teachers through the Ministry of Education (MOE) data systems.

In these activities, TQI was able to build on the initiatives and outcomes of an earlier project that focused specifically on women teachers, the EC-funded PROMOTE project (see box on p. 47).

What are the key achievements and remaining challenges?

The project is past its midpoint, but most of the reporting still relates to process and input side rather than changes achieved. Women's participation in project activities has been one focus of reporting. The target is for 25% participation by women in all pre-service and in-service training by project end.⁵

- Continuing professional development (in-service, initial): Women account for 17% of the 158,423 trained.
- Secondary training certificate – STC (3 months): Women account for 12.4% of the 10,597 participants.
- STC (9 months) leading to B.Ed: Women account for 12.4% of the 1,111 trained.
- B.Ed program: Women account for 28.7% of the 2,155 students completing the new B.Ed program.
- International training, short course: Women account for 36% of the 254 students trained. International training, long course: Women account for 23% of the 43 students trained.

The project has prepared and disseminated various policy papers on gender and inclusive education. It has also delivered training on gender and inclusive education to institutions, head teachers, and SMCs, as well as training of trainers on these topics. Materials on gender and development have been developed for inclusion in the curriculum of all training courses.

It is also evident from project reports that major challenges were faced in meeting two project commitments.

- *Number of women teachers*. As noted above, the initial project commitment to achieving 30% women's participation was subsequently revised to 23% (with differentiated targets to urban, rural, and remote locations reflecting

⁵ TQI Quarterly Report 15, March 2010; B.Ed figures from September 2009.

the different challenges of meeting the targets in different areas). Women accounted for 17% of secondary teachers when the project began and just over 21% in 2009.⁶ The figure reached 22% by 2010 (STIS). The change in the target reflects the recognition that the initial targets were unrealistic. Another important step was the decision in 2009 to launch a study to “investigate the barriers to recruitment of women teachers in secondary schools”—targets can only be pursued effectively when constraints are identified and strategies are developed accordingly.

- *Participation of women in school management committees (SMCs)*. This is another area in which there was a target set in loan agreements, apparently on the assumption that if SMCs included more women they would be more open to recruitment of women teachers.⁷ Before the project, there were no guidelines for women’s participation in SMCs for the secondary level. The project aimed to restructure SMCs and achieve 40% female membership by drawing on female community leaders, elected women representatives and mothers of secondary school students. The reduction of the target from 40% to 20% in 2009⁸ reflects a recognition that the earlier targets were overambitious. TQI plans a study of whether the participation of women has increased as a result of the 2009 circular, TQI awareness creation or other factors. It has also recognized the need for more follow-up training on gender and inclusive education for SMCs, particularly given the turnover likely with elections to SMCs every third year.

Targets are an important strategic tool, if used appropriately. TQI’s background work and proposals to the MOE on revisions to the targets may have contributed to a better appreciation of target-setting as well as to the specific new circulars issues.

Another challenge that was not identified at the TQI planning stage is the *need for measures to protect girl students and female teachers from sexual harassment and intimidation*. Media attention to several recent incidents raised the profile of the issue. An interministerial workshop held in response in early 2010 generated some suggestions about actions that could be taken. TQI’s community awareness workshops on gender and inclusive education, which are to be held in all 64 districts in the next 6 months, will specifically address these issues. Another long-term option under consideration is the development of a professional code of conduct for the teachers that would set out what is expected of the profession and could include specific obligations to ensure that colleagues and students enjoy an environment free of harassment.

⁶ The targets set out in the government circulars do not seem to be linked to a specific date. Given the gap between the target and the current situation, it will take a number of years to achieve even with a high and steady rate of recruitment of female teachers. A complicating factor for TQI has been the embargo on recruitment to new positions that was in place from project inception until recently.

⁷ See RPP, Appendix 8, p. 54.

⁸ The revised target is actually a minimum of two women among the 12 SMC members, or 16.7%, but this is generally rounded up to 20% for easier reference.

What Makes a Reasonable Target?

The 2005 loan agreement with the government specified two targets for women's participation, but both were changed in the course of implementation:

- *Teaching positions in secondary schools* – the target in the loan covenant was 30% with increases of 5% per year during the loan period to reach that target, but the target has since been revised to 40% for urban areas and 20% in rural areas (by government circular and in project documents, which now set the overall target as 23%).
- *Membership of school management committees* – the target in the loan covenant was 40% women, but has since been reduced to 20% (by government circular and in project documents).

This significant reduction in targets highlights a number of points about the use of targets:

- Any target established must be reasonable and achievable if it is to remain credible.
- Establishing a reasonable and achievable target requires data and analysis. Arbitrary targets such as 50% women or any target not backed by an analysis of the problem faced and how it will be addressed in the specific time frame serves little purpose.
- For example, what is reasonable and achievable as a target for women's representation in secondary teaching positions would be affected by
 - o current representation of women in those positions – the baseline;
 - o supply-side barriers – factors keeping trained women from taking up teaching positions, or women from entering teacher training;
 - o demand-side barriers – factors affecting school or community decisions to hire or keep women teachers; and strategy to address barriers – specific steps to be taken and resources allocated.
- To take another example, the purpose of setting a target for women's participation in TTC training would be to improve performance. Since TQI planning documents suggest that this was 38% in 2000, then a target of 38% would merely maintain the status quo (women are not further disadvantaged) and a target that is an achievable amount above 38% provides a measure of positive action.
- A reasonable target should serve as a management tool – regular monitoring against an achievable target indicates when *strategies need revision and modification* in order to meet the target.

What else could we look at when assessing results?

Regular quarterly reporting on GAP targets provides information such as that in the section above. While such reporting yields some insights into project outcomes, it would also be interesting to investigate other issues related to potential project contributions to women's empowerment and gender equality.

- What have been the employment outcomes for women graduates of the B.Ed training offered since TQI began? And for the women who had benefited from PROMOTE fellowships? Are employment and unemployment rates similar for qualified male and female teachers? Has TQI impacted on biases against women in obtaining teaching positions?
- Have teacher attitudes to girl students changed as a result of TQI training? Is this so for men as well as women? Has this affected practices in the classroom? For example, do teachers interact as much with girls as boys? Provide encouragement to girls? Provide equal opportunities to take leadership roles?
- Are teachers trained under the new curriculum for B.Ed and continuing professional development more aware of gender equality as a development issue? Are they more willing or able to communicate or reflect ideas about equal rights of girls and women? How is this evident in the classroom?
- Has the project resulted in stronger leadership by head teachers to ensure that schools provide an effective learning environment for girls and a safe environment for both girl students and women teachers?
- Have there been any changes in the discussions and decisions of school management committees as a result of the participation of women and the training received? Are the women members having a positive effect on the recruitment of women teachers? Are they contributing to increased attention to equal opportunities and adequate facilities for female students?

Insights into some of these questions may be gained from several ongoing and proposed studies, including the initial impact assessment, the investigation of barriers to the recruitment of women teachers, and other studies tracking those trained (both the student teachers and the teacher trainers).

What project features contribute to its gender equality performance?

Project features that support its aims and efforts on gender equality include

- *MOE-led gender equality planning workshop* at an early stage of implementation. The project inception mission resulted in agreement on the need for a GAP and on a government-led process to prepare it. Accordingly, MOE organized a workshop involving its agencies that had responsibilities in TQI to discuss issues and generate ideas.
- *GAP* that details in chart form a set of aims with related tasks, an end-of-project target, and implementation responsibilities. The progress against targets is reported on each quarter.
- *Project support to data systems* provided an opportunity to ensure capacity and commitment to sex-disaggregation of data in databases that will be maintained by MOE, in particular the secondary teachers information system.
- *Leadership on gender equity by men*. Men in management positions have provided strong and visible support at different stages of implementation.

Lessons Identified for Other Projects

- *Importance of data and analyses on policy and strategy issues:* “It is important to develop a database from the very beginning and to carry out relevant studies in order to have background material available for any proposals to higher government authorities and to support them in make informed decision.”
- *Enhancing the effectiveness of advocacy activities:* “Initiate advocacy activities at an early stage.”

Source: Comments by project technical team.

About the Asian Development Bank

ADB's vision is an Asia and Pacific region free of poverty. Its mission is to help its developing member countries substantially reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of their people. Despite the region's many successes, it remains home to two-thirds of the world's poor: 1.8 billion people who live on less than \$2 a day, with 903 million struggling on less than \$1.25 a day. ADB is committed to reducing poverty through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration.

Based in Manila, ADB is owned by 67 members, including 48 from the region. Its main instruments for helping its developing member countries are policy dialogue, loans, equity investments, guarantees, grants, and technical assistance.

Asian Development Bank
6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City
1550 Metro Manila, Philippines
www.adb.org
ISBN 978-92-9092-116-5
Publication Stock No. RPT102411



Printed in the Philippines