

Chapter-29

Ministry of Housing and Public Works

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Housing is one of the basic human needs and as per constitution of Bangladesh, providing accommodation for all citizens is one of the basic principles of Government. To fulfill the commitment, a number of activities have been undertaken in divisional cities, different districts and upazillas including Dhaka city to ensure low cost housing for poor and medium income people. Due to high-density of population, Bangladesh is one of the low land ratio country, where amount of land for housing has been decreasing each year. Considering the overall situation of Bangladesh, it is more important to integrate financial ability of the people and demand for accommodation together with maximum utilization of land, to improve the housing system. The Ministry and its attached departments have been working assiduously to ensure housing and accommodation facilities for all.
- 1.2 Among 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), the eleventh goal is about human settlements. To achieve this goal, Ministry of Housing and Public Works has been relentlessly trying to ensure housing facilities for all classes of people through planned urbanization. According to the urbanization strategy as mentioned in Seventh Five Year Plan, initiative has been taken to ensure the proper use of land and as per the demand of increasing urban facilities, this ministry has been keeping efforts in preparation, coordination and updating of regional planning, master plan, details architectural plan and innovation of agriculture friendly, disaster resistant and cost efficient house building technology. Through implementation of these projects, there are the provisions for employment creation of all people both men and women including gender-sensitive communication and women friendly employment generation.
- 1.3 This ministry plays an important role in providing sustainable, safe, cost-effective housing for low and middle income people, planned urbanization and construction of infrastructures with modern facilities through well-planned and research activities. To meet the pledge "Housing for All", a total of 72 development projects are under implementation for the improvement of plots and construction of flats especially for the lower and middle income people at various metropolitan cities, districts and upazillas including Dhaka under different organizations and departments of this ministry, which will benefit both men and women. Through implementation of different projects, employment opportunities of women have been created, which has been playing the role of their socio-economic development.

Apart from this , there are provisions of day care centre in all the under construction buildings built by various agencies under the ministry.

2.0 Major Functions of the Ministry

- ❖ Proper planning and activities to solve the accommodation problem of the country;
- ❖ Preparation of architectural and structural design of public buildings and other infrastructure, their construction and maintenance;
- ❖ Preparation/amendment of policies, laws, codes of planned housing sector;
- ❖ Undertaking measures to ensure planned urbanization, proper use of land and other matters related to development;
- ❖ Undertaking activities to solve the accommodation problem of government officers and staff;
- ❖ Conducting research and technological innovation on urban development, housing, construction of buildings, construction materials and techniques;
- ❖ Management of land and abandoned property under this ministry; and
- ❖ Creation of opportunities for involvement of the private sector in solving urbanization and housing problems.

3.0 Strategic objectives of the Ministry and their Relevance with Women's Advancement and Rights

- 3.1 **Planned urbanization:** Women are directly affected due to misuse of lands and environment pollution. Proper use of land and environment protection is being ensured through planned urbanization, which has been playing a key role in women's advancement.
- 3.2 **Ensure affordable housing for different income groups:** Safe accommodation is being arranged by constructing dormitories for the working women under this activity. Consequently, their safety and opportunity for participation in job being encouraged-which has been contributing to women's advancement and empowerment.
- 3.3 **Innovation of technology in planned housing and house construction techniques:** Training is being provided to women on innovative technology and they are getting involved in marketing these products as small entrepreneurs. Women can directly participate in the activities which has been contributing to the development and empowerment of women.

3.4 **Ensure cost effective/appropriate infrastructural facilities for Governmental works:**
Provision for women in accessing government assets and services helps to ensure women's advancement.

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

4.1 One of the important aims of the National Women Development Policy 2011 is to ensure women-rights through providing proper shelter and housing. The Ministry of Housing and Public Works plays an important role in preserving the rights and empowerment of women and creating decent living environment for women through performing duties vested upon the ministry. The ministry has also taken initiatives to ensure women's social empowerment and security through constructing multistoried residential building for various income groups, especially for homeless women and ultra-poor people. Construction of 244 dormitories at the side of Saltgola-Patenga Road in Chittagong has been completed with accommodation facilities of 1,952 female workers. Proper initiatives have been taken to ensure the construction of women and children-friendly infrastructure in the rural and urban areas, to improve the sanitation system and to employ women in the construction of government infrastructure.

4.2 The increased participation of women in government services is considered as a milestone in the development process of Bangladesh. The reconstruction of infrastructure in offices is essential for creating women-friendly work environment. Construction of separate dormitories for women, day-care-centre, prayer room and separate toilets for women is essential to ensure women-friendly working environment. The Ministry has been adopting various projects/programs to develop and reconstruct the infrastructure of the government offices to meet up the demand of women. In addition, this ministry has also taken the initiatives of building and maintaining dormitories, hostels for working women in divisional cities including Dhaka. It is mentionable that a large number of women are working in the construction industry. But various forms of discrimination are practiced in this sector. Laws and regulations are being formulated and existing laws and policies are being reformed including accommodation related rules and regulations to ensure equal right and risk-free working environment for women workers.

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

Serial No.	Priority Spending Areas/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (direct/indirect)
1	2	3
1.	Optimum use of land in cities	❖ Women are directly affected due to the misuse of land and pollution of environment. The improvement of

Serial No.	Priority Spending Areas/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (direct/indirect)
1	2	3
		environment and equitable use of land will be ensured through planned urbanization which will indirectly contribute to women's development.
2.	Construction of planned infrastructure in the cities	❖ The cities have become environmentally disastrous due to inadequacy of ponds, playing fields and unplanned structural construction, etc. Improvement of environment of the city areas and its sustainability will be ensured through this programme which will indirectly contribute to women's development.
3.	The solution of accommodation problem through arranging suitable systems for people of various income groups	❖ This initiative will secure accommodation facilities for working women as low cost housing will be built by the ministry. As a result, their security and participation in work will be increased, which will contribute to women's development and empowerment. The scope of income for woman workers in the construction sector will be increased.
4.	Modernized and planned urbanization and research and training related to house building	❖ Women will be trained in newly innovated technologies. Efforts will be made to keep them engaged in high tech activities in the construction sector and rules will be formulated to employ them in marketing of building industry as small scale entrepreneurs. Direct participation of women will be ensured in this program which will contribute to women's development and empowerment.

6.0 Women's Share in Ministry's Total Expenditure

(Taka in Crore)

Description	Budget 2017-18			Revised 2016-17			Budget 2016-17		
	Budget	Women Share		Revised	Women Share		Budget	Women Share	
		Women	Percent		Women	percent		Women	percent
Total Budget	400266	112019	27.99	317174	86586	27.3	340605	92781	27.24
Ministry Budget	3735	977	26.15	5175	328	6.33	3120	847	27.16
Development	2569	919	35.77	3999	271	6.78	1845	788	42.74
Non-Development	1166	58	4.97	1177	57	4.8	1276	59	4.62

Source: RCGP database

7.0 Success in Promoting Women's Advancement

- ❖ With a view to build planned and safe accommodation for working women in Chittagong city, Chittagong Development Authority has constructed 244 dormitories for working women under the Project titled "Construction of Dormitory and Commercial Building for Accommodation of Women Employees by the side of Saltgola-Patenga Road".
- ❖ There are the provisions of day care centre in every buildings to be constructed by different agencies under the ministry. As a result, the women employees have been successfully performing their duties.
- ❖ Besides this, female employees have been doing their jobs successfully side by side the male employees in different projects being implemented by various agencies under the ministry. Through implementation of different projects, employment opportunities of women have been created, which has been playing the role of their socio-economic development.

8.0 Recommendations for Future Activities

- ❖ Initiatives should be taken to build dormitories in all the districts of the country for Government and non-Government working women to ensure women's safety and security and to increase their participation in work;
- ❖ It is necessary to extend the training programmes conducted by the House and Building Research Institute under "Let us build our own home" program and expand the program across the country;
- ❖ Ministry can undertake activities to provide women equal access with men in the construction industry;
- ❖ Taking steps to encourage and ensure women's participation as construction worker in different infrastructure projects; and
- ❖ Reserving housing facility for the poor, destitute and working women in the planning of housing and urbanization.