

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Office of the Additional Chief Engineer (Planning)  
Department of Public Health Engineering  
14, Shahid Captain Monsur Ali Sharani, Kakrail, Dhaka-1000.

Memo No: : 46.03.2600.003.06.007.23- 60

Date: 29/07/2026

**3rd Meeting Minutes of the Gender and Development Forum (GDF) held on 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2026**

Venue : CWIS-FSM Support Cell, DPHE, Dhaka  
Chaired by : Additional Chief Engineer (Planning), DPHE, Dhaka  
Date : 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2026  
Time : 11:00 AM

**Meeting Discussion:**

The meeting was chaired by **Mr. Eheteshamul Russel Khan, Additional Chief Engineer (Planning), DPHE.** He warmly welcomed all participants and thanked them for attending the meeting on time. The Chairperson stated that this was a progress review meeting and noted that it had been approximately two and a half years since the last meeting. Therefore, he emphasized the need for a detailed review of the Forum's progress and achievements.

The Chairperson then requested the former Member Secretary, **Ms. Dalila Afroze, Executive Engineer, Arsenic Management Division, DPHE,** to present the activities of the Gender and Development Forum.

Ms. Dalila Afroze welcomed all participants and provided a brief background on the establishment of the Forum. She presented a detailed overview of the Forum's activities and achievements up to 6 November 2023.

**Open Discussion:**

The Chairperson invited the participants to share their valuable comments and suggestions regarding the future direction of the Gender and Development Forum.

**Md. Shafiqul Hassan, Project Director & Coordinator, Gender and Development Forum,** stated that gender plays a vital role in the Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE), particularly in implementing Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) sector. He noted that development partners frequently enquire about DPHE's institutional mechanism for promoting gender equality and social inclusion. Since there had previously been no central platform to demonstrate the Department's collective gender initiatives, the Gender and Development Forum (GDF) was established.

He further mentioned that a 24-member committee had been formed, and in collaboration with the Support Cell and ITN-BUET, a WASH Manual had been developed and several training programs had been conducted. A Gender Action Plan (GAP) for 2023–2030 had also been prepared, under which seven thematic focus areas were established.

He emphasized the need to review whether the existing seven focus areas should be retained, merged, or expanded. He also recommended aligning the Forum's activities with national policies, including the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) and the Cabinet guidelines issued in 2018. He observed that gender-related initiatives are currently implemented independently under different projects and emphasized the need to institutionalize a standardized departmental approach to mainstream gender across all DPHE programs and projects.

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Furthermore, he highlighted the necessity of establishing a dedicated unit within DPHE with assigned Assistant Engineers to ensure effective coordination, record management and secretarial support. He also recommended engaging expert consultants to strengthen DPHE's overall gender strategy in the WASH sector.

**Md. Mohammad Fayazul Islam Soman, Executive Engineer (Establishment)**, emphasized that the Forum should be reconstituted in accordance with the Ministry's guidelines.

**Md. Fahim Hasan Siraji, Executive Engineer (Planning)**, stated that gender-related activities need to be incorporated during the preparation of Development Project Proposals (DPPs). He emphasized the importance of maintaining SAAD data to support these activities. He also noted that although members had previously worked within their respective focus areas, their activities had not been systematically documented. Therefore, he requested that previous meeting minutes be shared with the respective focal persons and suggested consolidating all gender-related policies and guidelines into a central repository.

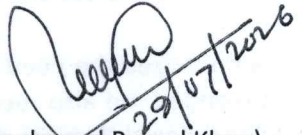
**Ms. Dilruba Farzana, Deputy Project Director (10-Town Project)**, recommended revising both the Gender and Development Forum and the Gender Action Plan (GAP), including the composition of the members under each focus area. She proposed organizing a day-long workshop to familiarize members with the GAP so that they could effectively implement the planned activities. She further recommended retaining all seven focus areas without reduction and highlighted the importance of incorporating gender-related activities in donor-funded projects.

**Mr. Abdul Kaium, Project Director**, stated that since the Gender and Development Forum had already been established, efforts should now focus on strengthening and advancing the Forum so that it can effectively carry out its responsibilities in accordance with donor requirements and guidelines.

#### **Decision and Action Points:**

- The Gender and Development Forum (GDF) shall be reconstituted.
- The existing seven thematic focus areas shall be retained; however, the member of each focus area shall be reviewed and updated.
- The implementation timeline of the approved Gender Action Plan (2023–2030) shall be reviewed and updated.
- A day-long workshop shall be organized to orient GDF members on the Forum, the approved GAP, and the implementation roadmap.
- A dedicated unit shall be established within DPHE to support the Gender and Development Forum.
- Gender Consultants engaged under various DPHE projects shall provide technical inputs and support for the further development and strengthening of the Gender and Development Forum.
- Adequate human and financial resources shall be allocated to ensure the effective operation of the Gender and Development Forum.

As there were no further agenda items for discussion, the Chairperson thanked all participants for their valuable contributions and declared the meeting closed with a vote of thanks.

  
(Eheteshamul Russel Khan)  
Additional Chief Engineer (Planning)  
&  
Chairperson  
Gender and Development Forum

Copy Forwarded for Your Kind information & Necessary Action (not according to seniority):-

1. Chief Engineer, Department of Public Health Engineering, Government of Bangladesh, Dhaka.
2. Additional Chief Engineer (Works/Water Resources), Department of Public Health Engineering, Dhaka.
3. Project Director, Chattogram Hill Tracts Inclusive and Resilient Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Project, DPHE, Dhaka & Co-chair, FSM Support Cell, DPHE, Dhaka.
4. Project Director, Water Supply & Environmental Sanitation including Faecal Sludge Management Project in 32 Pourashava, DPHE, Dhaka.
5. Superintending Engineer, Feasibility Study & Design Circle, DPHE, Dhaka.
6. Superintending Engineer, Planning Circle, DPHE, Dhaka.
7. Superintending Engineer, Dhaka Circle, DPHE, Dhaka.
8. Superintending Engineer, Store Circle, DPHE, Dhaka.
9. Executive Engineer (Establishment), DPHE, Dhaka.
10. Executive Engineer, Chattogram Hill Tracts Inclusive and Resilient Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Project, DPHE, Dhaka.
11. Deputy Project Director, 30 Pourashava Water Supply and Sanitation Project (GoB-WB-AIIB), DPHE, Dhaka.
12. Deputy Project Director, Urban Water Supply and Sanitation in 23 Pourashavas Project in Bangladesh (GoB-IDB), DPHE, Dhaka.
13. Executive Engineer, Design Division, DPHE, Dhaka.
14. Executive Engineer, Survey Investigation & Research Division, DPHE, Dhaka.
15. Deputy Project Director, Inclusive and Integrated Sanitation & Hygiene Project in 10 priority Towns in Bangladesh, DPHE, Dhaka.
16. Executive Engineer, Research & Development Division, DPHE, Dhaka.
17. Deputy Project Director, Rural Water Sanitation & Hygiene for Human Capital Development Project, DPHE, Dhaka.
18. Executive Engineer, Arsenic Management Division, DPHE, Dhaka.
19. Executive Engineer, Training Division, DPHE, Dhaka.
20. Executive Engineer, Program & Co-ordination Division, DPHE, Dhaka.
- ✓ 21. Programmer, MIS Unit, DPHE, Dhaka.
22. Deputy Project Director, Water Quality Testing Management Strengthening Project, DPHE, Dhaka.
23. Social Development Officer, Dhaka Circle, DPHE, Dhaka.
24. Social Development Officer, Host and Rohingya Enhancement of Lives Project (HELP), DPHE, Dhaka.
25. Social Development Officer, Rural Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for Human Capital Development Project, DPHE, Dhaka.
26. Office copy.

