



FOSTERING GENDER PARITY IN BANGLADESH

**GENDER BUDGET REPORT
2025-26**

Finance Division, Ministry of Finance
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Fostering Gender Parity in Bangladesh: Gender Budget Report 2025-26

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'Fostering Gender Parity in Bangladesh: Gender Budget Report 2025-26,' is prepared based on the latest data available in iBAS⁺⁺ and information provided by line ministries/divisions. Some of this information is provisional and subject to revision.

Fostering Gender Parity in Bangladesh: Gender Budget Report 2025-26

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Preface

Bangladesh today stands at a critical juncture in our history energized by the aspirations and promise of its youth and driven by a shared commitment to chart a course toward transparent, equitable, and inclusive progress. As we embark on this critical journey, the Interim Government remains dedicated to building a future characterized by accountability and effective governance, fostering a national spirit of unity and renewal.

In this forward-looking context, I welcome the release of the report titled '**Fostering Gender Parity in Bangladesh: Gender Budget Report 2025-26**', which seeks to improve the gender responsiveness of public spending. This report bears the testimony to our renewed commitment of creating an inclusive society where gender equality is not merely an aspiration, but a tangible reality reflected in our public expenditure. Guided by the Gender Finance Tracking (GFT) model, integrated seamlessly with our financial systems, this budget report promises to ensure transparency and accountability in addressing gender disparities through targeted investments across key thematic areas: women's empowerment and enhanced social status, economic participation and equality, access to public services, and women's education, health, and wellbeing.

Recognizing that sustainable national development hinges significantly on gender equality and women's active participation in economic, social, and political spheres, this Report highlights our resolve to systematically tackle structural barriers and widen opportunities for women across Bangladesh. By strategically allocating resources and tracking progress against clearly defined gender-sensitive criteria, we aim not only to uplift women but also to enhance overall socio-economic resilience and inclusive growth.

Our approach is anchored in collaboration, drawing upon the insights and expertise of diverse stakeholders, including ministries/divisions, civil society, academics, and development partners. As we continue this vital work, I call upon all segments of our society to actively participate and support these efforts, reinforcing a shared commitment to transparency, reform, and progressive governance.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the Finance Division, and other relevant bodies for putting in extraordinarily hard efforts which has culminated into this comprehensive and insightful report. Together, let us stride confidently toward a future where gender equality strengthens our nation's foundation and thus brings in prosperity and justice for all.



(Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed)

Adviser

Ministry of Finance

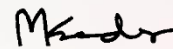
Foreword

Gender Budget Report is an annual flagship publication of the Finance Division. It presents budgetary allocations for women, their engagement in public service, and the government's efforts that foster women's development and establish their rights. In addition, the report focuses priority spending on women's welfare and recent achievements made by ministries/divisions.

Empowering women is the key to development. Accordingly, addressing the issue of women is embedded in our Constitution, legislation and national policy documents. Article 28 of the Constitution ensures equal rights for men and women in every sphere of the State and public life. The same Article requires the government to make special provision for the advancement of women. In accordance with the constitutional provisions, the National Women Development Policy 2011 emphasizes that the government would take the required actions to eliminate existing gender gaps. Moreover, mass public uprising in July 2024 has bolstered the clarion call for social justice for women which remained muzzled for long, inspiring policy reforms in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution. Proper resource utilization and equitable distribution across sectors are crucial for women's development.

The Finance Division has been publishing the Gender Budget Report since 2009. Initially, the report only covered 4 ministries, the scope of which has gradually expanded and now includes all the ministries/divisions of the government. The Gender Budget Report prioritizes gender equality throughout the budgeting process, emphasizing women's welfare. Stakeholders from all walks of life can get ideas on the government's allocation for women's welfare and the various initiatives taken by the government to address gender inequality. However, we must remember that increasing budget allocation alone is not the end in itself; a thorough analysis is required to assess how efficiently the budget has been utilized and what influence it has had on reducing gender discrimination.

Preparation of the gender budget report titled '**Fostering Gender Parity in Bangladesh: Gender Budget Report 2025-26**' alongside the national budget is a creditable initiative. I would like to thank line ministries/divisions for providing necessary inputs to prepare this report. I congratulate the Gender Budget Report Publication Committee of the Finance Division for successfully accomplishing this challenging task. I hope this report will serve as a valuable guideline for future action plans for women's advancement.



(Dr. Md Khairuzzaman Mozumder)

Secretary

Finance Division, Ministry of Finance

List of Acronyms

BANBEIS	Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BCC	Bangladesh Computer Council
BDT	Bangladeshi Taka
BES	Bangladesh Education Statistics
BIA	Benefit Incidence Analysis
BKSP	Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protishtan
BNQF	Bangladesh National Qualification Framework
BPO	Business Process Outsourcing
BSc	Bachelor of Science
CCA	Certificate Issuing Authorities
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CSBA	Community Skilled Birth Attendants
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic Acid
EFT	Electronic Fund Transfer
EPI	Expanded Programme on Immunization
FY	Fiscal Year
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFTM	Gender Finance Tracking Model
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
iBAS ⁺⁺	Integrated Budget and Accounting System
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ICTD	Information and Communication Technology Division
IHT	Institutes of Health Technology
IT	Information Technology
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LGD	Local Government Division
LPAD	Legislative and Parliamentary Affairs Division
MATs	Medical Assistant Training Schools
MBF	Ministry Budget Framework
MMR	Maternal Mortality Ratio
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
MO	Medical Officer

List of Acronyms

MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoDMR	Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief
MoEWOE	Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment
MoF	Ministry of Food
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoFL	Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock
MoHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MoHFW	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
MoHPW	Ministry of Housing and Public Works
MoIB	Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
MoInd	Ministry of Industries
MoLE	Ministry of Labour and Employment
MoPME	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
MoRA	Ministry of Religious Affairs
MoST	Ministry of Science and Technology
MoSW	Ministry of Social Welfare
MoTJ	Ministry of Textiles and Jute
MoWCA	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
MTBF	Medium-Term Budget Framework
NAP	The National Action Plan
NIPORT	National Institute of Population Research and Training
NTVQF	National Training and Vocational Qualification Framework
NWDP	The National Women Development Policy
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PHC	Primary Health Care
RCGP	The Recurrent, Capital, Gender and Poverty
RMO	Resident Medical Officer
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SHED	Secondary and Higher Education Division
SID	Statistics and Informatics Division
SSC	Secondary School Certificate
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
TFR	Total Fertility Rate
TMED	Technical and Madrasah Education Division
TSCs	Technical Schools and Colleges

List of Acronyms

TTTC	Technical Teachers Training College
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UCD	Urban Community Development
UGC	University Grants Commission of Bangladesh
UHFPO	Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
VTTI	Vocational Teachers Training Institute
VWB	Vulnerable Women Benefit
WB	World Bank
WEF	World Economic Forum
WID	Women in Development

Executive Summary

Bangladesh has made remarkable strides towards gender equality in recent decades under a strong legal and policy framework. The Constitution of Bangladesh guarantees women's equal rights, and national strategies like the National Women Development Policy (2011) prioritize gender equality with targets to raise women's labor force participation, reduce gender-based violence, and improve female education and health outcomes. These efforts have led to measurable progress: Bangladesh is now close to achieving universal girls' education, having reached gender parity at both the primary and secondary levels; women are increasingly represented in high-level leadership roles; and maternal mortality has declined by approximately 60 percent since 2000.

Yet significant gender gaps still exist. Women's labor force participation remains about 42.7 percent - roughly half that of men - with 96 percent of employed women working in informal, low-paid jobs lacking security.¹ The stigma of early marriage is still rampant (51 percent of young women married before 18) and we live in the grim reality that the world's highest rates of gender-based violence (70 percent of ever-partnered women have experienced intimate partner violence) occur in Bangladesh. Women also shoulder the vast majority of unpaid care work, severely limiting their time for paid employment or education. Hence, unsurprisingly, Bangladesh ranks 129th among 170 countries on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index and, despite regional leadership in education, remains 146th globally for women's economic participation. These deep-seated inequities underscore the need for sustained commitment and innovative approaches – including more effective gender-focused budgeting – to translate equal rights into lived reality for women and girls.

The Government of Bangladesh has institutionalized Gender Budgeting (GB) henceforward as a strategic instrument for promoting gender equality and driving this agenda forward. It symbolizes our renewed commitment to creating an inclusive society where gender equality is not merely an aspiration but a tangible reality reflected in our public expenditure. Introduced, on a pilot basis in FY 2009-10 in only four ministries, the GB now covers all 62 ministries and divisions. Approximately 33 percent of the national budget is currently designated for programmes aimed at promoting women's advancement. This includes significant funding for female education stipends, maternal and reproductive healthcare, skills training and microcredit for women, social protection allowances for vulnerable women, and other gender-focused interventions across sectors. The share of the national budget dedicated to these gender-responsive programmes has steadily increased from about 27 percent in FY2016-17 to 34 percent in FY2024-25. In FY 2025-26, this has amounted to around Tk 260,767 crore - 33 percent of the total budget and about 4.2 percent of GDP - devoted to initiatives for benefiting women. Notably, the gender-sensitive portion of the budget has been growing slightly faster than the overall budget, indicating an increasing prioritization of gender issues in fiscal policy. This broad mainstreaming of gender budgeting reflects the government's commitment to financing women's empowerment alongside men's development needs.

Bangladesh's Gender Budgeting is strategically embedded within the national budgeting and planning frameworks, reinforced by the robust Gender Financial Tracking (GFT) Model, integrated fully with the iBAS⁺⁺ system since FY2024-25. This model ensures accountability and transparency by accurately tracking gender-relevant expenditures in real-time, replacing previous ad-hoc methods with standardized criteria-based assessments of gender sensitivity ranging from "Not Gender Relevant" to "Fully Relevant". Budget allocations are categorized under four key thematic areas: (a) women's

¹ BBS Labour Force Survey 2022

empowerment and social status enhancement, (b) economic participation and equality, (c) improved access to public services, (d) education, health, and well-being. Specific initiatives include increasing women's participation in decision-making, promoting political empowerment, enhancing labor market integration and entrepreneurial growth, strengthening access to critical public services, social safety nets, climate adaptation measures, technology training, and comprehensive healthcare services. The fifth thematic area addresses "Not Gender Relevant" programmes or development projects, highlighting activities without gender sensitivity or direct linkage to women's development. Through this integrated approach, the Gender Budget Report FY2025-26 significantly advances gender equality and inclusive socio-economic development in Bangladesh.

The Gender Budget for FY2025-26, built on this strong foundation, aims to further narrow gender disparities through targeted investments and accountability. It aligns with Bangladesh's broader development goals that aims to increase women's workforce participation and reduce violence against women - and reinforces the country's commitments to international frameworks like the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Finance Division's ongoing practice of publishing the annual Gender Budget Report, through the GFT system, ensures transparency in how funds are allocated and their impacts. These tools enable Parliament, civil society, and the citizens to monitor progress and hold ministries accountable for outcomes. Through sustained political will, adequate financing, and the implementation of effective policy measures, the government is working to fulfill its constitutional obligation of ensuring equal rights and to ensure that women and girls enjoy equitable share for Bangladesh's development.

This document unfolds as follows: Chapter I: Introduction; Chapter II: Methodology; Chapter III: Gender Gap Analysis; Chapter IV: Review of Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure; Chapter V: Discussion on Gender Related Information of the Selected Ministry/Division, VI: Conclusion and Way Forward.

Chapter I: Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1** Bangladesh has attained significant progress in achieving gender equality over the past decades, underpinned by a robust legal and policy framework. The Constitution of Bangladesh explicitly guarantees equal rights- Article 28(1) of the Constitution prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, while Article 28(2) mandates that “women shall have equal rights with men in all spheres of the State and of public life.” These provisions, along with Article 10 (which calls for ensuring women’s participation in national life), provide a strong basis for taking affirmative action. Relevant National plans and policies reinforce this commitment. For example, the National Women Development Policy (2011) seeks equal rights for men and women in all areas of public life and requires the state to take proactive measures like making gender-responsive budget. Similarly, strategic documents of Bangladesh also treat gender equality as a cross-cutting issue, with targets to raise women’s labor force participation, reduce gender-based violence, and boost girls’ education and health outcomes.
- 1.1.2** These legal frameworks have yielded tangible gains. Bangladesh now leads South Asia on many gender-parity indicators. Universal primary education with nearly gender parity has been achieved, and girls’ secondary school enrollment even exceeds that of boys’. Government interventions such as free primary schooling and the Female Secondary School Stipend Programme have culminated into this surge. By the mid-2000s, Bangladesh was lauded as a regional success story in eliminating gender disparities in enrollment. Today the country enjoys near-universal girls’ enrollment at primary level and full parity at secondary level, a foundational achievement for women’s advancement. Women’s literacy rate is increasing steadily, and women are prominent in leadership roles. At the local level, one-third seats in Union Parishads (village councils) are reserved for women, meaning thousands of women serve as local councilors. As a result of these policies, female literacy and maternal health have improved markedly. Notably, the maternal mortality ratio has plummeted – deaths per 100,000 live births fell from about 434 in 2000 to 173 by 2017 (60% drop), and went further down to 123 by 2020. This success lies in expanded prenatal care, presence of skilled birth attendants, and prevalence of innovative schemes (such as maternity voucher programmes). Bangladesh is now called an “international exemplar” in maternal health. Indeed, Bangladesh’s rapid 5.3 percent annual decline in maternal deaths outpaced many peers and put the country on track to achieve its SDG targets in this area.
- 1.1.3** Despite notable progress in women's empowerment, greater attention must be directed towards addressing the remaining gender gaps. Female labor force participation remains far below that of men - only around 42.7 percent of adult women participate in the workforce, as of 2022, and this rate has stagnated in recent years. Moreover, 96 percent of employed women are in the informal sector with little job security or social protection. Deep-rooted social norms continue to enforce early marriage and disproportionate care burdens on women. Bangladesh still has one of the world’s highest child marriage rates - approximately 50 percent of young women (Age between 20 and 24 years) are married before age 18 - which often curtails girls’ education and life opportunities.² Gender-based violence is also widespread: a national survey in 2024 found 70 percent of ever-partnered women have experienced some form of intimate partner violence in their lifetime.³ Women shoulder the vast majority of unpaid care work - on average, Bangladeshi

² Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (2022)

³ Violence Against Women Survey (2024)

women spend 7.3 times more hours per day on domestic and care tasks than men,⁴ severely limiting their time for paid employment or education. In climate-vulnerable Bangladesh these burdens intersect with other risks. For instance, 74 percent of women in disaster-prone regions have experienced partner violence, compared to 68 percent in other areas - underscoring how gender inequality compounds vulnerability to shocks.⁵

1.1.4 Despite progressive policies, these persistent challenges illustrate the hurdles to achieving full empowerment of women. Key indicators highlight the deficits. Bangladesh’s Gender Inequality Index (GII) is 0.53, ranking 129th out of 170 countries – reflecting high maternal mortality, low women’s economic status, and other disparities. The World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Report 2024 likewise ranks Bangladesh 99th out of 146 countries overall, the best in South Asia, but with stark internal contrasts: Bangladesh is 146th in the world for women’s Economic Participation and Opportunity and 129th for Health and Survival. Such statistics underline that women remain economically less empowerment even where education or political representation has improved. Entrenched social norms and weak enforcement of laws contribute to these gaps. The Women’s Reform Commission and policy analysts observe that “lack of adequate coordination between implementing agencies, lack of proper financing, and an inadequate judicial system are some of the main reasons why women and girls are not adequately protected” from violence and discrimination in Bangladesh. Overall, deep-seated inequalities in labor, safety, and social roles remain as significant barriers. Addressing these will require sustained commitment and innovative approaches - including more effective gender-focused budgeting - to translate legal equality into tangible outcomes for Bangladesh’s women and girls.

1.1.5 Table 1 provides an overview of selected indicators of women’s status in Bangladesh, highlighting some of the persistent gender disparities. These data underscore the areas where further progress is needed, even as the country has made greater progress in others. It shows that key indicators such as female labor participation and gender-based violence remain concerningly poor, even though Bangladesh ranks relatively high globally due to its achievements in areas like education and political leadership. These gaps point to the critical importance of targeted interventions.

Table 1 : Selected Gender Inequality Indicators - Bangladesh

Indicator	Status (Latest)	Source
Gender Inequality Index (UNDP) - Rank (of 170)	0.531 – 129th (High inequality)	UNDP 2022
Female Labor Force Participation Rate	42.7% (Vs ~ 84% for men)	BBS Labor Force Survey 2022
Women Employed in Informal Sector	96.6% of employed women	BBS Labor Force Survey 2022
Women (20–24) Married Before Age 18	51%	UNICEF/UN Women/Plan Int. 2025
Ever-Married Women Experiencing IPV (lifetime)	70%	Bangladesh Violence Against Women (VAW) Survey 2024
WEF Global Gender Gap Rank (of 146)	59th (Overall) – but 139th in Economic Participation	WEF 2023

⁴ Bangladesh Time-Use Survey (2021)

⁵ Violence Against Women Survey (2024)

- 1.1.6** Figure 1 demonstrates the trend of gender budget allocation from FY 2017 to 2025. The left axis of Figure 1 shows the gender budget as a percentage of the total national budget; the right axis shows it as a percentage of GDP. The share of the budget dedicated to programmes for women’s advancement has steadily increased from about 27 percent in FY 2017 to 34 percent in FY2025. However, as a share of GDP, gender-focused spending peaked at 6.0 percent around FY2020–21 and dipped to 4.86 percent of GDP by FY2025. This indicates that while the gender budget is rising in proportion to the national budget, economic growth has outpaced these allocations in recent years.

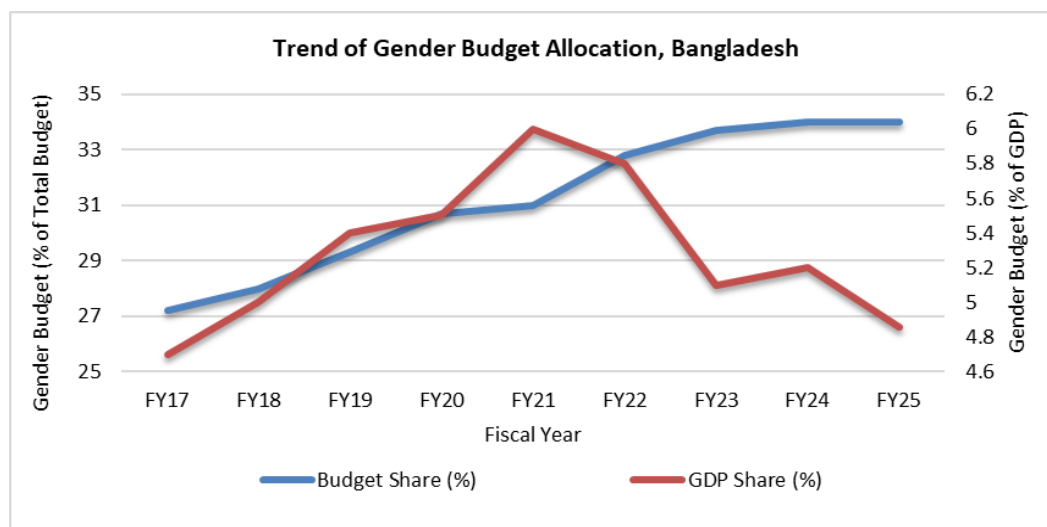


Figure 1: Trend of gender-responsive budget allocations in Bangladesh (FY2017–FY2025)
Source: Finance Division

- 1.1.7** Against this backdrop of both progress and persisting gaps, Bangladesh’s constitutional mandates and development plans converge on the need for proactive fiscal measures to advance gender equality. The Government has responded by institutionalizing gender budgeting as a key strategy to translate commitments into results. In essence, gender budgeting seeks to ensure public resources benefit women and men equitably, by integrating a gender lens into planning and expenditure. Bangladesh introduced gender budgeting in FY2009-10 when the Finance Division began issuing an annual Gender Budget report on a pilot basis for a few ministries. Over time the effort has expanded dramatically - by FY2024-25, 62 ministries/divisions (up from just 4 initially) are included in the process. Approximately one-third of the entire national budget is now exclusively renewed for gender-related programmes and projects. These include female education stipends, maternal and reproductive health services, skills training and microcredit for women, social protection allowances for vulnerable women, and gender-focused allocations across sectors. This broad mainstreaming of gender budgeting reflects Bangladesh’s commitment to financing women’s empowerment alongside men’s development needs.

1.2 Rationale for Gender-Responsive Budgeting in Bangladesh

- 1.2.1** Implementing gender budgeting is both an economic necessity and a social imperative for Bangladesh. Economically, unlocking women’s full potential is key to reaching national growth goals. Bangladesh aspires to become an upper-middle-income country by 2031. Achieving these targets requires accelerating workforce growth and productivity. Since women make up roughly half the population, raising female labor force participation, expanding women’s entrepreneurship, and investing in women’s education and health all contribute to faster, more

inclusive growth. For example, better maternal health and family planning enable women to participate more in the workforce, and educated girls grow into a more skilled labor pool. Conversely, not investing in women represents a lost opportunity for economic expansion. Socially, gender budgeting promotes fairness and human development. It aligns public spending with the constitutional promise that women “shall have equal rights with men”, and with citizens’ expectations of equity and justice. In practical terms, gender-responsive budgeting can improve women’s access to critical services (such as healthcare, education, sanitation, and safe transportation) and bolster social protection for families. By explicitly analyzing budget allocations through a gender lens, policymakers can identify and address gaps - for example by funding childcare support, vocational training for women, or cash transfers to female-headed households – thereby reducing gender-induced poverty and vulnerability. In short, gender budgeting directs resources to where they are needed most to level the playing field for women and other disadvantaged groups.

- 1.2.2** Gender budgeting is also instrumental for Bangladesh to meet its international commitments. The country ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1984 and has pledged to implement the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) and the Sustainable Development Goals (especially SDG 5 on gender equality and SDG 10 on reducing inequalities). Gender-responsive budgeting is recognized globally as a tool to achieve these objectives. Under the SDGs, Bangladesh must reduce gender disparities at home and report on indicators like girls’ education parity and women’s economic participation. By embedding gender analysis into the budget process, Bangladesh demonstrates compliance with CEDAW obligations to pursue policies eliminating discrimination and makes progress toward SDG targets (for instance, SDG 5.5 on women’s full participation in leadership, and SDG 5.3 on ending child marriage). In short, a gender-responsive budget directly supports Bangladesh’s national development vision and its broader global commitments to gender justice.

1.3 Global Standards and National Adaptation

- 1.3.1** Gender budgeting has become a widely endorsed public financial practice around the world. UN Women defines Gender budgeting as “a strategy that creates budgets that work for everyone by considering and analyzing the unique and diverse needs of every person”, ensuring that public expenditures advance gender equality. In practical terms, this is not a “separate” budget for women, but a methodology to mainstream gender perspectives across all government spending. It entails reviewing revenues and expenditures to assess their differential impacts on women and men, then adjusting allocations or programme designs to redress any inequities. The goal is not to favor one gender over another, but to ensure the budget as a whole works for everyone - that fiscal policies respond fairly to the needs of all genders.
- 1.3.2** Many countries have so far, pioneered gender budgeting mechanisms. For example, South Africa was an early trailblazer: its Women’s Budget Initiative (launched in 1995) helped institutionalize gender analysis in budget processes. The Philippines has a landmark Gender and Development (GAD) budget policy, which by law directs every government agency to spend at least 5 percent of its budget on gender equality programmes. Brazil produces annual “Gender Budget Statements” that break down how each ministry’s spending advances gender-related goals. In Rwanda and Uganda, gender budgeting is tied to performance frameworks that track results for women and girls. These global experiences demonstrate that gender budgeting can take various forms – from earmarked funds and gender-disaggregated budget statements to mandatory gender budget audits and targets - but the core principle is the same: analysis and accountability for how public

finances promote gender equity. International institutions like the IMF and World Bank have also begun to promote “gender-responsive” fiscal reforms (for instance, budgeting for childcare, maternity leave, or women’s entrepreneurship) as part of good governance.

1.3.3 Bangladesh’s gender budgeting approach gleans inspirations from such best practices while tailoring them to national realities. A key difference lies in the informal nature of much female work in Bangladesh. Unlike economies with mostly formal employment, Bangladeshi women often work in agriculture, home-based micro-enterprises, or labor-intensive factories (e.g. garments) rather than salaried office jobs. This means public investments must focus on sectors where many women earn their livelihoods - for example, rural infrastructure, agricultural extension services, informal skills training, and community healthcare - to effectively reach women. Bangladesh is also extremely vulnerable to climate shocks, which disproportionately affect women (who may lose livestock, crops, or homes in disasters and have fewer resources to cope). Therefore, Bangladesh’s gender budgeting explicitly links gender to climate resilience – funding initiatives like women-led disaster preparedness programmes, climate-smart agriculture training for female farmers, and expanded social safety nets after floods. Addressing urban–rural divides is another adaptation: rural women face higher poverty and child marriage rates than urban women, so gender budgeting measures target rural women’s education and empowerment (for instance, stipends and development programmes in districts with lagging gender indicators).

1.3.4 While Bangladesh adheres to the global gender budgeting concept endorsed by UN Women, it adapts implementation to local needs and contexts. It builds on successes observed abroad by instituting its own annual Gender Budget Reports and statements in the national budget documents. It is also planning gender budget audits of major projects (similar to South Africa’s equity audits) to ensure that large infrastructure or economic programmes do not inadvertently reinforce gender gaps. Through budget tagging, reporting, audits, and targeted initiatives. Bangladesh aims to ensure fiscal policies truly address the country’s unique socioeconomic context and the needs of Bangladeshi women as well as men.

1.4 Objectives of Bangladesh’s Gender Budgeting Initiatives

1.4.1 The primary goals of Bangladesh’s gender budgeting are achieving equity and accountability. On the equity side, the aim is to ensure that public investments and services reach women and other marginalized groups fairly. This means allocating sufficient resources to sectors most critical for women’s well-being - such as healthcare, education, water and sanitation, and social safety nets - while also making sure that large “gender-neutral” programmes in areas like infrastructure, industry, and energy are designed to equally benefit women, for example, by including targets for women’s employment, or safety measures for women in public spaces. In practice, the gender budgeting initiative will set specific targets for key gender-related outcomes - e.g. the percentage of girls enrolling in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields, the number of women with access to credit, or the rate of skilled birth attendants - and then align budget allocations to meet those targets.

1.4.2 On the accountability side, a central objective is transparency and oversight. The government plans to continue publishing an annual Gender Budget Report that reviews how each ministry’s spending contributes to the gender equality agenda. Over time, the new Gender Finance Tracking (GFT) system (introduced in FY2025) will enhance this process by clearly tagging and monitoring each budget line item intended to benefit women. This enables progress to be monitored against benchmarks, and helps civil society and Parliament hold officials to account for results. For

example, if a large infrastructure ministry ends up with only a tiny fraction of its spending benefiting women, while a small social welfare ministry dedicates a high share to women-centric programmes, gender budgeting analysis would flag this imbalance for corrective action in future budgets.

- 1.4.3** Bangladesh's gender budgeting initiative is supported and strengthened by development partners. The United Nations - UN Women in particular - has provided technical support to the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) and the Finance Division in integrating gender into planning and budgeting processes. The World Bank and IMF, through their development policy dialogues and recommendations, have encouraged Bangladesh to deepen gender-focused budgeting and have included gender analysis in some policy reform programmes. International NGOs and donors also participate in monitoring progress; for example, BRAC and other NGOs have collaborated with the government on community-level gender budgeting pilots in health and education, sharing lessons that informed the national rollout. In short, Bangladesh's gender budgeting initiative is embedded in a network of national plans and global partnerships that share the goal of gender-equitable development.

1.5 Institutional Framework

- 1.5.1** Effective gender budgeting requires coordination across many actors and institutions. Within the government, the Ministry of Finance particularly the Finance Division is the technical lead, integrating gender guidelines into the annual budget circular and compiling the yearly Gender Budget Reports. The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) serves as the focal ministry advocating for women's issues and coordinates gender initiatives across sectors.⁶ In practice, MoWCA works closely with bodies like the National Council for Women and Child Development (chaired by the head of the government) and the Jatiya Mahila Sangstha (National Women's Organization) to oversee implementation and advocacy of gender-focused programmes. The Planning Commission (within the Planning Ministry) also integrates gender perspectives into development projects and monitors their progress. At the legislative level, a Parliamentary Standing Committee on the budget and a Women's Parliamentary Committee scrutinize budget allocations from the gender perspective.
- 1.5.2** Beyond government, civil society and think tanks have played key roles in advancing gender budgeting. Organizations like BRAC, Grameen Bank, and international development partners (including UN agencies and USAID-funded projects) have been instrumental in building demand for gender responsive budgeting. Since the mid-2010s, pilot projects in sectors like health and education – often supported by UNFPA, UNICEF, or other development partners - tested gender-sensitive planning templates that later informed the nationwide adoption of gender budgeting. NGOs now frequently assist local governments in producing district-level or municipal gender budget statements.
- 1.5.3** Legally, several mandates underpin Bangladesh's gender budgeting. The Budget Call Circular-1 issued by the Finance Division explicitly instructs all ministries to integrate gender considerations in their budget submissions and to report related expenditures. The National Women Development Policy 2011 even cites gender-responsive budgeting as an official commitment of the government. Various cross-sectoral policies and legal instruments (such as CEDAW) strengthen further legitimacy to gender budgeting efforts. Most recently, in the FY 2024–25 national budget

⁶ Selected some other Major Ministries/Divisions by Highest Gender-Relevant Allocation are Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, Secondary and Higher Education Division, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Ministry of Social Welfare, Local Government Division, Ministry of Agriculture.

the new Gender Finance Tracking (GFT) model was introduced, a mechanism to tag every expenditure as gender-related or not - thereby formally institutionalizing gender budgeting practice within public financial management. These measures ensure that gender budgeting is not a one-off project but a sustained part of the government's budget process.

1.6 Expected Outcomes

- 1.6.1** By making the national budget more gender-responsive, Bangladesh expects several positive outcomes. First, improved data and analysis: the reporting of the gender budgeting process will strengthen the collection of sex-disaggregated data and develop gender-specific metrics across sectors, making planning more evidence-based. Second, greater women's economic participation: by funding skills training, credit access, and entrepreneurship programmes targeted to women (especially among poor and rural communities), gender budgeting can help raise the female labor force participation rate and increase women's formal employment. This is critical since currently only about 42-43 percent of Bangladeshi women participate in the labor force and nearly all of them lack adequate job security. Third, better access to services for women and girls: it is expected to see continued increases in girls' school enrollment, maternal health coverage, and gender-responsive public services. These will be tracked by SDG indicators (e.g. SDG 4.5 on gender parity in education, SDG 5.6 on reproductive health access) to show concrete progress. For example, earlier gender-budget initiatives in Bangladesh have already helped boost female school enrollment to parity at primary and secondary levels and improve maternal health outcomes; a sustained gender budgeting focus could further reduce the maternal mortality rate and increase women's access to contraception.
- 1.6.2** On the social side, gender budgeting aims to tackle entrenched gender biases. By budgeting for gender-based violence prevention programmes and survivors' support services, Bangladesh can help reduce the extremely high prevalence of intimate partner violence (around 70 percent lifetime among women). By funding community awareness campaigns and legal aid enforcement, gender budgeting can complement legal reforms against child marriage – which remains widespread at 51 percent despite existing law - and support the implementation of those laws. Overall, a gender-responsive approach is expected to make government spending more responsive to community needs, thereby enhancing women's resilience to economic or environmental shocks. When women have better healthcare, education, and legal protections, society as a whole becomes more stable and productive.
- 1.6.3** Globally, Bangladesh's gender budgeting work also contributes to broader development goals. As one of the first countries to sustain a comprehensive gender budgeting programme for over a decade, Bangladesh serves as an example for other South Asian and Least Developed Countries looking to integrate gender into public budgeting. When Bangladesh graduates from LDC status (November 2026), its experience with gender budgeting will be instructive for other transitioning economies on how to maintain a focus on equity during development. Furthermore, Bangladesh's progress toward SDG 5 (gender equality) and SDG 10 (reducing inequalities) through gender budgeting will feed into global assessments of the SDGs. In recognition of these efforts, the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2024 ranked Bangladesh 99th out of 146 countries - the highest in South Asia - underscoring the country's positive momentum on many gender metrics. This strong global ranking, driven largely by gains in women's political empowerment and education, reflects Bangladesh's advances while also highlighting the work remaining to close economic gaps.

1.7 Toward Broader Coverage and Accuracy

- 1.7.1** Adequate caution has been taken to ensure accuracy and comprehensiveness of the data presented in this report. Considering the paucity of time in the preparation of this report along the national budget, some inconsistencies in the data may have inadvertently occurred. The current data collection framework for the gender budget predominantly focuses on sixteen key ministries and divisions that are most actively engaged in gender-responsive initiatives. As a result, gender-related expenditures from other ministries or divisions - despite their potential relevance to gender equality - may not be fully captured in this edition. Looking ahead, future iterations of this report will strive to further improve data accuracy and expand coverage to include a broader range of ministries and divisions, ensuring a more inclusive and representative analysis of gender-responsive budgeting efforts across the entire government.

Chapter II: Methodology

- 2.1** One of the key challenges for policymakers is managing resource distribution in the face of growing demand and constrained fiscal capacity. Gender budgeting offers a practical approach to address one of the core issues in economics addressing the optimal and equitable use of resources. It works as a strategic tool aimed at ensuring the equitable, efficient, and balanced allocation of a country's financial resources to meet the needs of all individuals, irrespective of gender. The growing relevance of gender-responsive budgeting is reflected in its adoption across a variety of development frameworks.
- 2.2** Gender budgeting is comparatively a new idea, and a widely accepted unified methodology of gender budgeting is yet to be developed. Countries use a wide variety of methodologies in developing gender budget based on their institutional and socio-economic contexts. One of the widely used models is the 5-Step Approach, developed in South Africa, which includes (1) analyzing the situation of women, men, girls, and boys; (2) assessing the gender responsiveness of policies; (3) assessing budget allocations; (4) monitoring spending and service delivery; and (5) assessing outcomes⁷. As a single uniformed framework for implementing gender budgeting does not exist, the analytical-methodological approach, together with the techniques and instruments utilized in a particular gender budgeting exercise, is contingent upon numerous elements, namely the budget side (expenditures or revenues), the budget item to be analyzed, the time horizon (short-term or long-term), the gender-related aspects of interest, and the specific question guiding the gender-sensitive analysis⁸.
- 2.3** Global scholars, institutions and organizations approach gender-responsive budgeting and its analysis distinctly. For instance, Diane Elson, a British economist and sociologist, suggested seven tools for gender sensitive analysis of budget. These tools offer generic methodologies that can be applied either individually or jointly to provide data that can enlighten policy and support civil society's demands for a more equitable distribution of government resources⁹. UN Women's Budget Group in 2018 defined gender budgeting as a tool for creating impact gender impact through economic policies undertaken by national governments.
- 2.4** The OECD provides an analytical framework for gender budgeting also suggested a tool for gender budgeting that covers three stages: 1) analysis of the issues; 2) restructuring of the budget to achieve gender equality outcomes and 3) embedding gender systematically within all budgetary processes. The OECD has adopted a differentiated approach, recognizing that there are multiple potential entry points within the budget cycle and across the network of institutional actors for promoting a gender-responsive approach. It refrained from adopting an 'ideological' preference as to which of these various approaches should be used¹⁰.
- 2.5** The preparation of this budget report followed a pragmatic approach. Gender budget report in Bangladesh is primarily based on several workshops and consultations which included representatives from all government ministries and divisions, members of civil societies, gender experts and academics. Participants are allowed to discuss various challenges and opportunities

⁷ Braxton, G. (2007) Gender Budgeting as a Tool for Poverty Reduction: Concepts, Practices, and Capacity Implication-The case Study of South Africa, The African Capacity Building Foundation Working Paper no. 13, September 2007, P. 7

⁸ Schratzenstaller, M. (2008) Gender Budgeting in Austria, CESifo DICE Report, p. 46

⁹ For more details about Diane Elson's seven tools for gender sensitive budget analysis, see UN Women, Europe and Central Asia (2025) Gender Responsive Budgeting for Public Officials and Practitioner at the Local Level, Resource pack.

¹⁰ UN Women (n.d) Gender Responsive Budgeting for Public Officials and Practitioner at the Local Level, Resource pack, Training Manual, p. 85.

relating to gender equality and other relevant aspects of gender budget reporting. Moreover, this report draws ideas from various countries and research publications. Furthermore, various global examples have provided valuable lessons on the best practices and strategies for addressing gender inequalities. A desk review was carried out with all collected documents. Finally, the lessons from various countries are examined to understand how these can be aligned with the socio-economic and cultural context of Bangladesh. The data collection of this report was carried out from January 2025 to May 2025.

- 2.6** Bangladesh has been implementing the Medium-Term Budget Framework (MTBF) approach for national budgeting since FY 2005-06. It was a landmark for budgeting, shifting away from the traditional line-item budgeting system. This framework develops a link between government policies, planning priorities, and the allocation of resources across ministries and divisions. The Budget Circular-1, issued by the Finance Division prior to budget preparation, instructs ministries and divisions to project their income and expenditures for the next three years. It also includes details on how programmes and projects contribute to women's development. It also requires government bodies to formulate their Medium-Term Budget Framework (MBF).
- 2.7** Although the focus of this report is on government allocation that assists women's development, it does not mean a separate allocation exclusively for women. Rather, it provides an analysis of the existing government expenditures across various ministries and divisions, which highlights the percentage of government allocations that contribute to the advancement of women. Previously, the Recurrent, Capital, Gender, and Poverty (RCGP) model was developed by the Finance Division to identify the gender-related allocations within the national budget, which was not integrated with the Integrated Budget and Accounting System (iBAS⁺⁺). In FY 2024-25, a significant advancement was made with the introduction of the Gender Finance Tracking model (GFTM), and it introduced a systematic tracking of gender-responsive financing across ministries and divisions. This model is also integrated with iBAS⁺⁺. As a result, the data can be generated more accurately and timely.
- 2.8** In the RCGP model, the ministries and divisions were grouped into three thematic areas such as (a) Women empowerment and enhancing their social dignity; (b) Improving women's productivity and participation in the labour market and income generating activities; and (c) Widening women's effective access to public services. Analyzing the primary mandates, various ministries and divisions are placed among these three thematic areas. Therefore, the RCGP model often did not accurately project the distribution of funds. However, the gender finance tracking model provides a more accurate and representative figure of the budget allocation of the government.
- 2.9** While developing the gender financial tracking model, the Finance Division organized a consultative workshop that included representatives from various ministries, civil society organizations, and gender experts. Valuable insights from the workshop helped in developing the framework for this model. A follow-up workshop was also conducted, involving Finance Division officials and representatives from other ministries. This session played a key role in shaping the format of the report, identifying gender gaps, and strengthening the measurement framework used to evaluate budget allocations for women's advancement. Additionally, international practices were also reviewed. Now, the gender finance tracking process is fully integrated into iBAS⁺⁺ which provides a more accurate picture of government allocation and expenditure on gender.

- 2.10** The GFT model (refer to Appendix-1 for details) categorizes gender relevance into four key thematic areas: (i) Women's empowerment and social status; (ii) Economic participation and equality; (iii) Increasing women's effective access to public service; and (iv) Education, health, and wellbeing for women's development. Recognizing that some government initiatives may not directly address gender issues, an additional thematic category-'Not Gender Relevant'-has been incorporated to capture such activities. Within these four thematic areas, 22 specific programmes areas or criteria are developed. It is also important to mention that based on the degree of relevance of each budgetary item, the model uses a criteria-based assessment framework to limit the degree. This relevance is divided into five categories as follows:

Table 2.1 Degree of influence for project/programmes of the Ministry/Division on women development

SL	Category of relevance	Percentage (%) of allocation will be used on women development	Degree of relevancy based on 22 women development criteria
1.	Not Gender Relevant	'0'	Projects/programmes that do not have any direct impact on the overall welfare of women.
2.	Somewhat Relevant	'1-33'	Projects/programmes that have minimal/minimal direct impact on the overall welfare of women
3.	Moderately Relevant	'34-66'	Projects/programmes that have a direct and moderate impact on the overall welfare of women
4.	Strongly Relevant	'67-99'	Projects/programmes that have a direct, significant and sustainable impact on the overall well-being of women
5.	Fully Relevant	'100'	Projects/programs that have a full and positive impact on women development.

To ensure accuracy and consistency in assigning gender relevance weights, statistical techniques are employed. A detailed explanation of the statistical techniques is provided in appendix 1.

- 2.11** The gender finance tracking model covers both the operating and development budgets. The gender relevance of a ministry's operating budget encompasses sub-activities-general activities, support activities, special activities, and transfer to local government (LG). These are determined based on the ministry's allocation of business and relevant policy documents, with careful consideration of participation levels and the number of male and female beneficiaries, including the proportion of working women and men.
- 2.12** In case of the development budget, projects and programmes are often complex and may align with multiple gender relevance criteria. Here, up to three criteria have been considered to evaluate gender relevance. Some of them have been included as the 'not-gender finance' category if appropriate. Finally, the overall gender relevance of a project or programme is determined using the statistical formula outlined in Appendix 1. If a project or programme meets only one gender relevance criterion, the gender-relevant finance should be calculated as the corresponding percentage (based on its relevance level) of the project's annual allocation.

Chapter III: Gender Gap Analysis

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 A gender gap is a manifestation of gender inequality, representing a disproportionate difference between men and women (boys and girls) in various domains—particularly in achieving development goals, accessing resources, and levels of participation.¹¹ It highlights inequalities in access to resources, services, and opportunities such as education, healthcare, technology, pensions, and social security. It also emphasizes disparities in participation in political, economic, and social activities, as well as differences in pay and compensation for work performed. This chapter focuses on the existing gender gaps in education, health, and economic participation to assess the effectiveness of government resource allocations. The report is structured around five thematic areas and twenty-two programme areas. Among these areas, this chapter analyzes two thematic areas: Education, Health and Well-Being for Women’s Development as well as Economic Participation and Equality. Notably, the second thematic area- Economic Participation and Equality has been included in the gender budget report for gap analysis for the first time. The remaining thematic areas will be addressed progressively in future editions.

3.1.2 Education is a fundamental tool for reducing the gender gap, offering transformative benefits for individuals and society. It empowers women by providing knowledge and skills that open doors to better employment opportunities and higher earnings. Education enables both boys and girls to challenge traditional gender roles and stereotypes, which are deeply embedded in social institutions and culture. An educated girl gains the opportunity to question societal norms that confine her roles to those of caregiver, mother, or housewife. Health directly influences women’s ability to participate in education and the workforce. Access to proper healthcare reduces maternal mortality rates, improves overall health outcomes, and enhances women’s capacity to participate fully in other social and economic activities. Therefore, prioritizing women’s health is essential for achieving gender equality and fostering sustainable development. Moreover, ensuring equal opportunities for women to engage in economic activities is not only a matter of gender equality and empowerment but also a prerequisite for the country’s economic growth and sustainable development. When women actively participate in the workforce, they not only strengthen their financial independence but also contribute to broader economic growth.

3.2 Snapshot of Gender Gap in Bangladesh

3.2.1 In spite of notable progress in recent times, gender inequality remains a significant issue in Bangladesh, affecting various aspects of life for women and girls, including education, employment, and health. Reducing these inequalities can lead to improved health outcomes for women and children, higher educational attainment, increased female labor force participation, accelerated economic growth, and the development of a fairer and more stable society. Bangladesh has demonstrated a strong commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women. The government has undertaken substantial efforts to establish a framework for gender mainstreaming, as reflected in its gender-responsive policies and budgetary allocations. This commitment is recognized in the World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Report 2024, which ranks Bangladesh moderately on the global index.¹² Bangladesh achieved a score of 0.689—the highest in South Asia placing 99th globally out of 146 countries. The country has closed 68.9 percent of its overall gender gap, although this marks a decline from 72.2 percent in 2023.

¹¹ UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia (2017), GENDER EQUALITY: Glossary of Terms and Concepts

¹² WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM, (2024), Global Gender Gap Report 2024

Table 3.1: Gender Gap Index

Sub Index	Score*		Latest Rank
	2023	2024	
Global Gender Gap Index	0.722	0.689	99 th
Economic participation and opportunity	0.438	0.312	146 th
Educational attainment	0.936	0.940	125 th
Health and survival	0.962	0.962	129 th
Political Empowerment	0.552	0.543	7 th

*Scores are on a 0-1 scale where 1 represents the optimal situation or “parity”. A parity score of 1 indicates full parity.

3.2.2 In 2024, the country’s Educational Attainment subindex score was 0.940 (94.0 percent), reflecting an increase of 0.4 percentage points from the previous year. Despite improvements in certain parity scores, Bangladesh continues to experience notable gender gaps. The Health and Survival subindex remains stable at 96.2 percent, whereas Economic Participation and Opportunity and Political Empowerment have both declined since 2023. Bangladesh recorded its lowest score - 31.1 percent – in Economic Participation and Opportunity, a sharp drop from 43.8 percent in 2023 and the country’s lowest performance in this sub-index since 2014. This decline is primarily attributed to income disparities between men and women and a reduction in women’s representation in leadership positions.¹³ Although Bangladesh continues to make progress in Political Empowerment, it still faces considerable challenges in improving outcomes in economic participation, health, and educational attainment across the board.

3.3 Gender Gap Analysis on Education and Health

3.3.1 The assessment of gender gaps in this report is limited to two thematic areas: (1) Education, Health, and Well-Being for Women’s Development, and (2) Economic Participation and Equality. Gender parity in education and health is analyzed using a set of sub-indicators drawn from various policy documents and reports produced by development partners. Although Bangladesh’s overall performance on gender equality is ahead of all other South Asian countries, its performance in educational attainment is mixed: Bangladesh ranks higher than Pakistan but lower than India, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives in this domain (see Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Existing Gender Gap in Education across six countries of Asia

Sub indicators	Countries											
	Bangladesh		India		Pakistan		Maldives		Sri Lanka		Indonesia	
	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)
Secondary enrolment	86.27	65.19	78.75	78.78	38.20	45.32	78.41	84.27	102.63	98.04	98.59	99.38
Tertiary enrolment	22.78	27.24	30.85	33.45	12.90	13.93	66.51	17.69	27.00	17.29	38.51	46.98
Graduates in STEM ¹⁴	20.6	79.4	42.7	57.3	36.00	64.00	10.6	89.4	40.6	59.4	37.00	63.00
Vocational training	2.89	6.48	1.85	2.98	0.69	1.29	-	-	3.30	4.07	12.54	14.98

Source: World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Report 2024, WB Gender Portal Report 2018,

¹³ Gender equality, World vision international, <https://www.wvi.org>

¹⁴ STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)

- 3.3.2** The table shows that Indonesia scores well across all four sub-indicators of education compared to Bangladesh, even though Indonesia's overall rank (100th) is lower than that of Bangladesh (99th). It is evident that India, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh have achieved near parity in secondary education enrolment. In fact, Bangladesh has a higher proportion of girls (86.27 percent) enrolled in secondary school than boys (65.19 percent), as shown in Table 3.2. However, a persistent gap remains in tertiary education enrolment in Bangladesh compared to India and Sri Lanka. In both Bangladesh and the Maldives, there is a significant gender disparity among STEM graduates, with males substantially outnumbering females. While Pakistan shows less disparity in STEM graduation, it exhibits a wide gender gap in other sub-indicators. A study revealed that at the university level, the number of female students enrolling in STEM subjects in Bangladesh is considerably lower than that of male students, despite girls having a higher pass rate at both secondary and higher secondary levels.¹⁵ Although girls demonstrate high academic aspirations and employment expectations, systematic gender differences persist in their chosen fields of study at both the tertiary level and in vocational training.
- 3.3.3** Considering national commitments, various government strategic documents such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), ministry policy papers, and other sectoral plans have been reviewed to identify broader targets for women's education. However, only comparable sub-indicators from those sources are presented here.

Table 3.3: Gender Gap in Education based on policy document

Sub-indicators	Current Scenario		Target under SDG 2030
	Male	Female	
Adult Literacy Rate (%)	78.2	73.0	-
Net Primary enrolment (%)	97.52	97.81	100
Primary School Dropout rate (%)	14.88	13.19	-
Net Secondary School enrolment (%)	66.6	80.02	100
Secondary School Dropout rate (%)	33.25	40.78	-
Gross Tertiary Enrolment (%)	23.77	21.95	-
TVET ¹⁶ enrolment rate (%)	-	27.2	-

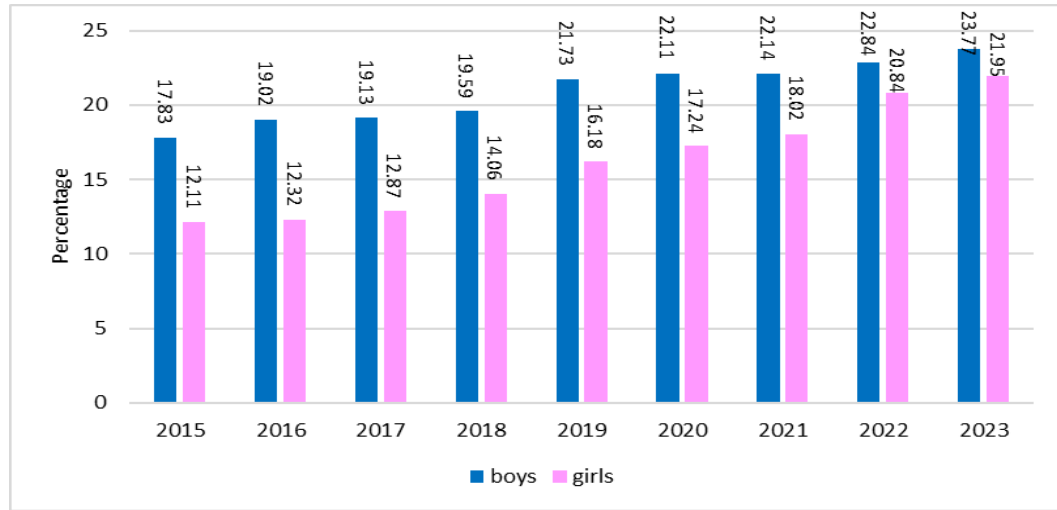
Source: SDG progress report, BANBEIS, BES 2023

- 3.3.4** Table 3.3 shows that females outperform males in net primary enrollment, net secondary enrollment, and primary school dropout rates (in which a lower rate is better). Bangladesh is very close to achieving the SDG 2030 target for net primary enrollment, and it appears this target will be met on time. While girls' enrollment at the primary and secondary levels has been relatively strong in recent years, the situation is notably different at higher levels of education. A persistent gender gap remains in adult literacy, secondary school dropout rates, gross tertiary enrollment, and enrollment in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). Moreover, the country continues to lag in areas such as adult literacy, secondary school retention, and both tertiary and TVET enrollment when compared to national targets.

¹⁵ Siddiqi, N and Braga, A (2019). Barriers to STEM education for rural girls: A missing link to innovation for a better Bangladesh, Centre for Universal Education at Brookings.

¹⁶ Technical and Vocational Education and Training

Figure 3.1: Trends in Gross Tertiary Enrolment in Bangladesh, 2015-2023



Source: Bangladesh Education Statistics, 2023

3.3.5 Figure 3.1 shows that the percentage of girls' enrolment at the tertiary level has been increasing over the years. In 2019, the progress was remarkable, with an increase of 2.3 percent from 14.06 percent in 2018. However, the rate of progress comparatively slowed over the next two years. Given this situation, there has been a persistent gender gap in gross tertiary enrolment across the years, which indicates that higher education for women in Bangladesh consistently faces challenges.

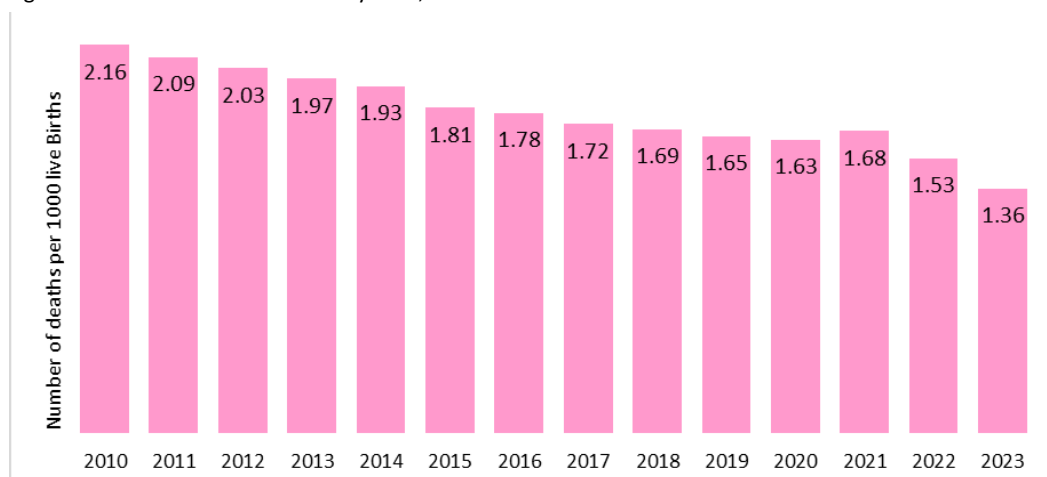
Table 3.4: Gender Gap in Health and Well-being Based on Policy Document

Sub-indicators	Current Scenario		Target under SDG 2030
	Male	Female	
Life Expectancy at birth (years)	70.8	74.2	-
Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) (per 100,000 live births)	-	123	70
Total Fertility Rate (TFR) per woman	-	2.20	-
Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (%)	-	59	-
Prevalence of stunting among children under 5 years of age (%)	27.9	28.0	-
Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to violence by a current or former intimate partner (%)	-	54.7	-
Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner (%)	-	6.2	-
Early marriage	-	32.90	0.00

Source: Global gender gap report 2024, SVRS 2023, MICS2019.

3.3.6 In terms of health and well-being, women have a slightly higher life expectancy at birth than men, as shown in Table 3.4. The life expectancy at birth for women and men was 54.5 and 55.3 years, respectively, in 1981, which increased to 74.2 and 70.8 years in 2022 over a span of 41 years. Regarding the prevalence of stunting among children under five, there is no discernible difference between boys and girls.

Figure 3.2: Trends in Maternal Mortality Ratio, 2010-2023



Source: Bangladesh Sample Vital Statistics 2023, BBS.

3.3.7 It is evident that there has been a consistent decline in the maternal mortality ratio in Bangladesh, which decreased from 2.16 per 1,000 live births in 2010 to 1.36 in 2023, as depicted in Figure 3.2. Various skill development training courses for health professionals, the introduction of Emergency Obstetric Care in each district, Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care services, the Maternal Health Voucher Scheme, and the provision of cash incentives have contributed to the reduction in MMR.¹⁷ However, the pace of progress was faster between 2010 and 2015, and the rate of reduction slowed thereafter, although the overall trend remained downward. Similarly, the total fertility rate also exhibited a consistent decline from 2010 to 2023, with a slight increase in 2023.

Table 3.5: Existing Gender Gap in Health and Well-being across six countries of Asia

Sub indicators	Countries					
	Bangladesh	India	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	Maldives	Indonesia
Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) (per 100,000 live births)	123.00	29.00	154.00	36.00	53.00	173.00
Total Fertility Rate (TFR) per woman	1.98	1.82	3.47	2.00	1.71	2.17
Births attended by skilled health personnel (%)	59.00	99.60	68.00	99.50	99.50	94.70
Prevalence of gender violence	23.00	N.A.	16.00	16.60	19.50	9.00
Early marriage	32.90	16.20	13.50	6.00	3.80	9.30

Source: WEF Global Gender Gap Report 2024

3.3.8 Even though there has been consistent improvement in most of the sub-indicators listed in Table 3.4, the country still needs to prioritize reducing the maternal mortality ratio. Among the five countries of Southeast Asia, Bangladesh has one of the highest maternal mortality rates, second only to Pakistan. However, the country ranks among the lowest globally and regionally in terms of early marriage rates. Other sub-indicators, such as stunting, the prevalence of violence, and the proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel, remain significantly behind compared to other countries. Nevertheless, as shown in Table 3.6, Bangladesh has made progress across all health and survival sub-indicators compared to 2023.

¹⁷ Bangladesh Economic Review, 2023

Table: 3.6 Progress toward bridging the gender gap in the health sector of Bangladesh

Sub indicators	Year 2023	Year 2024
Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) (per 100,000 live births)	173.00	123.00
Total Fertility Rate (TFR) per woman	2.00	1.98
Births attended by skilled health personnel (%)	59.00	59.00
Prevalence of gender violence	53.00	23.00
Early marriage	45.20	32.90

Source: WEF Global Gender Gap Report 2023 and 2024

- 3.3.9** Table 3.6 shows that Bangladesh made significant progress between 2023 and 2024 in reducing the maternal mortality ratio, total fertility rate, and prevalence of gender-based violence – partly due to increased budget allocations for women’s health and reproductive services. However, the country still lags behind its neighbors and the targets set in planning documents. Bangladesh continues to have the highest early marriage rate in South Asia. Therefore, to achieve the goals outlined in policy documents and to catch up with other South Asian countries, further steps are needed to reduce gender-based violence, maternal mortality, and early marriage, as well as to increase the number of trained birth professionals.

3.4 Gender Gap Analysis on Economic Participation and Equality

Gender parity in economic participation is analyzed using a set of sub-indicators derived from various policy documents and reports produced by development partners.

Table 3.7: Existing Gender Gap in Economic Participation of Some Asian Countries

Sub-indicators	Countries											
	Bangladesh		Pakistan		India		Sri Lanka		Maldives		Viet Nam	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Labor force participation rate	24.41	79.55	24.53	40.67	35.09	76.41	31.98	70.46	50.60	74.60	68.54	77.84
Estimated earned income in thousand \$	1.16	11.45	2.13	8.57	3.11	10.87	6.75	18.08	11.47	28.51	10.14	12.68
Legislators, Senior Officials and Managers	7.33	92.67	5.71	94.24	12.58	87.42	22.3200	77.68	18.66	81.34	25.99	74.01
Professional and Technical workers	20.24	79.76	26.39	73.6	33.07	66.93	49.10	50.42	46.10	53.90	43.94	56.06

Source: World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Report 2024

- 3.4.1** Table 3.7 illustrates that Vietnam has the smallest gender gap at 9.3 percent, indicating a relatively high level of female economic participation. In comparison, Bangladesh, India, and Sri Lanka exhibit significantly larger gender gaps, all exceeding 38 percent. Notably, despite Pakistan's low female participation rate of 24.53 percent, its gender gap is smaller at 16.14 percent due to a relatively low male participation rate. A significant income gap persists between men and women. In Bangladesh, women earn only \$1160 on average annually compared to \$11450 for men. Similar disparities exist in Pakistan and India. Although the Maldives and Vietnam show higher female earnings, men still earn substantially more. Leadership roles throughout the region remain predominantly male-dominated. Vietnam shows the lowest gap in leadership positions at 48

percent, although this figure remains substantial. Pakistan and Bangladesh display considerable disparities, with women comprising less than 8 percent of leadership roles. In the area of representation among Professional and Technical Workers, Sri Lanka stands out as a positive example, demonstrating nearly equal representation of genders. The Maldives and Vietnam also reflect relatively balanced participation levels, whereas Bangladesh and Pakistan face the largest gender disparities in this category.

- 3.4.2** With regard to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 5: Gender Equality and Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, governments have developed strategic action plans to meet the targets under these goals. Women's participation in the labour force has shown significant progress, increasing from 24 percent in the year 2000 to 36 percent in 2010, and reaching 41.5 percent in 2023.¹⁸

Table 3.8: Gender Gap in Economic Participation on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Sub-indicators	Current Scenario	Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
		2030
Labor force participation rate %	Female: 41.5, Male: 80.7	Female: 50%

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) 2023, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) progress report

- 3.4.3** Table 3.8 shows that the current gender gap in labour force participation stands at 39.2 percent, calculated as the difference between 80.7 percent for men and 41.5 percent for women. This indicates a substantial inequality, as less than half of working-age women participate in the labour force compared to men. To achieve the relevant SDG targets by 2030, women's labour force participation must increase by 8.5 percentage points.

- 3.4.4** In South Asia, over 80 percent of women in non-agricultural employment are engaged in informal work; in sub-Saharan Africa, the rate is 74 percent, while in Latin America and the Caribbean, it is 54 percent.¹⁹ Agriculture remains the dominant source of employment in South Asia, with 71 percent of women and 47 percent of men working in this sector. Almost all agricultural employment in the region is informal.²⁰ Throughout South Asia, women perform significantly more unpaid care and domestic work than men. In Pakistan, women undertake ten times more unpaid work than men; in India, nearly seven times more; and in Bangladesh, almost three times more.²¹

Table 3.9: Gender Gap in Formal and Informal Sector by Area in Bangladesh

Sub indicators	2010						2023					
	Rural		Urban		Total		Rural		Urban		Total	
	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)
Employed population by formal sector	4.4	10.7	19.0	27.8	7.7	14.6	2.76	18.75	11.5	29.8	4.3	22.06
Employed population by Informal sector	95.6	89.4	81.0	72.4	92.3	85.5	97.24	81.25	88.5	70.2	95.7	77.94

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) 2010, 2023

¹⁸ Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) 2002, 2010, 023

¹⁹ UN Women, Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016. Chapter 2, p. 71.

²⁰ UN WOMEN, Progressive of the World's Women: Transforming economies, realizing rights, 2015-16

²¹ UN WOMEN, Progressive of the World's Women: Transforming economies, realizing rights, 2015-16

3.4.6 Table 3.9 indicates a decline in female formal sector employment in both rural and urban areas. In contrast, there has been a notable increase in formal sector jobs for urban males, with employment rates rising from 27.8 percent in 2010 to 29.8 percent in 2023. This has led to a widening gender gap, with total male formal employment now exceeding that of females by more than five times (22.06 percent compared to 4.3 percent). Most working women remain in the informal sector, especially in rural areas, where this figure reaches as high as 97.24 percent. Conversely, there has been a reduction in informal employment among men, suggesting improved access to formal job opportunities. Overall, these trends demonstrate a growing disparity in formal employment, with women increasingly concentrated in informal work.

3.4.7 In terms of employment in South Asia, as illustrated in Figure 3.3, agriculture continues to be the primary source of employment for the working-age population throughout the region. This pattern is particularly prominent in Nepal and Bhutan, and also notable in Afghanistan and India. The services sector ranks as the second most significant source of employment. It is important to highlight that Sri Lanka is the only country in the region where the services sector employs more people than agriculture, while in Bangladesh, employment levels in both sectors are nearly equal. In contrast, the manufacturing sector remains relatively small across all countries in the region, accounting for employment ranging from 3 percent in Bhutan to 9 percent in Sri Lanka. Additionally, in several countries, employment in the construction sector is comparable to or even exceeds that of the manufacturing sector.²²

Figure 3.3: Employment rate by sector of activity in South Asia

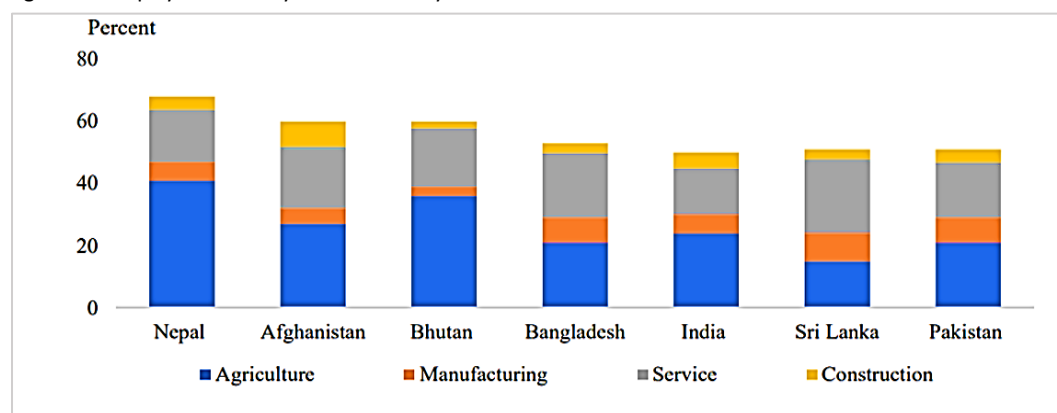


Table 3.10: Gender Gap in Employed Persons by Occupation in Bangladesh

Sub-indicators	2002				2010				2023			
	Rural		Urban		Rural		Urban		Rural		Urban	
	Female %	Male %	Female %	Male %	Female %	Male %	Female %	Male %	Female %	Male %	Female %	Male %
Administrative and Managerial	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.7	3.3	0.13	1.4	0.95	3.95
Professionals and Technical	2.8	3.2	8.0	6.0	2.4	4.1	5.8	8.1	2.94	7.27	14.63	13.7
Clerical Worker	1.2	2.5	3.8	8.2	0.4	1.8	1.3	4.3	0.16	0.91	1.3	2.02
Service and Sales Workers	11.6	17.4	15.5	33.2	16.4	21.3	14.9	26.9	1.21	17.07	28.98	7.89

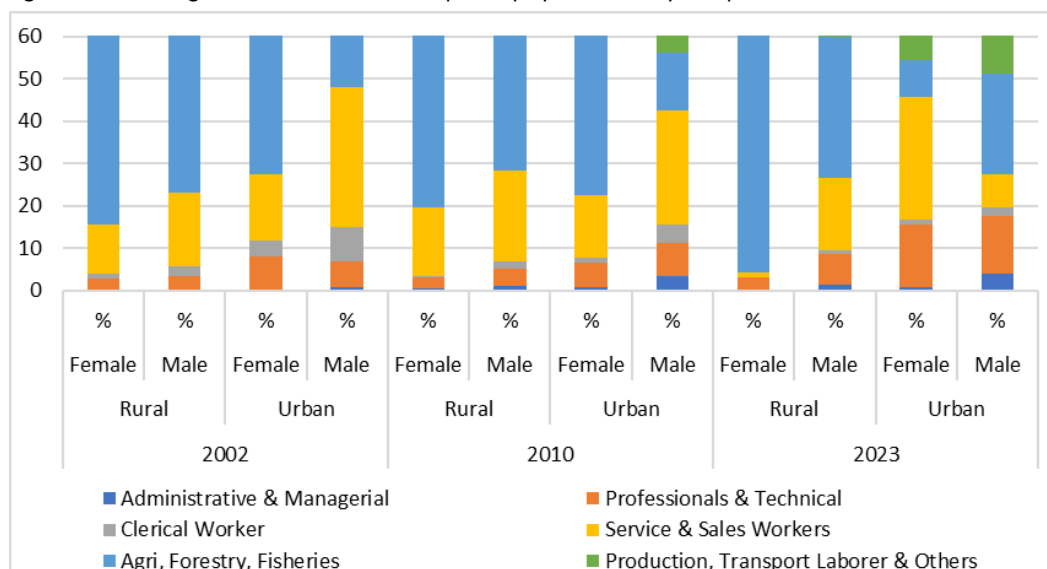
²² For the analyses in this section we use the following surveys: Afghanistan 2013/14 ALCS; Bangladesh 2005-2015 LFS; Bhutan 2003-2012 LSS; India 2004/05-2011/12 NSS-Thick, Pakistan 2005/06-2014/15 LFS; and Sri Lanka 2006-2015 LFS.

Sub-indicators	2002				2010				2023			
	Rural		Urban		Rural		Urban		Rural		Urban	
	Female %	Male %	Female %	Male %	Female %	Male %	Female %	Male %	Female %	Male %	Female %	Male %
Agri, Forestry, Fisheries	64.1	57.9	42.6	21.8	69.5	48.1	48.9	13.5	85.69	33.26	8.55	23.61
Production, Transport Laborer and Others	20.3	19.0	30.0	30.0	10.8	24.7	28.5	44.6	10.23	40.09	43.36	51.62
Total :	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Bangladesh BUREAU of Statistics (BBS) 2002, 2010, 2023

3.4.8 Table 3.10 highlights the significant underrepresentation of women in leadership positions, particularly in rural areas where their participation has declined from 0.6 percent in 2010 to only 0.13 percent in 2023. Although urban women have experienced modest improvements, they still lag behind men in overall leadership roles. However, notable progress has been observed among urban women in professional and technical occupations, with their representation reaching 14.63 percent in 2023 and now slightly surpassing that of urban men in this category. In contrast, rural women remain significantly underrepresented compared to their male counterparts. Additionally, there has been a decline in clerical employment for both genders in rural areas. Women's participation dropped from 1.2 percent in 2002 to 0.16 percent in 2023, while men's decreased from 2.5 percent to 0.91 percent. Although urban women continue to be underrepresented in clerical roles, the disparity has narrowed. In 2023, urban women accounted for 28.98 percent of the clerical workforce, surpassing men, who represented 7.89 percent. Rural women's employment in service and sales occupations has fallen sharply to 1.21 percent, potentially due to occupational shifts or reclassification. Moreover, rural women remain heavily employed in agriculture, comprising 85.69 percent of that sector in 2023, whereas men especially in urban areas, are increasingly moving away from agricultural work. Employment for rural women in production, transport labor, and related fields has also decreased, while men in these sectors have seen significant increases in 2023. Overall, urban women's workforce participation has risen to 43.36 percent, narrowing the gap with urban men, whose participation stands at 51.62 percent.

Figure 3.4: Percentage Distribution of Gender Gap in Employed Persons by Occupation



3.5 Underlying Causes for Gender Gap in Bangladesh

3.5.1 Various socio-economic and cultural factors continue to hinder women's advancement, particularly in education and employment. Major obstacles to women pursuing higher education include child marriage, early motherhood, lack of safety/security, and violence against women. Despite initiatives such as stipends, school meal programmes, and free textbook distribution, the primary school dropout rate remains close to 15 percent. Key factors contributing to persistent gender gaps in education include child marriage, the gendered division of labor at home, a high prevalence of early pregnancies, limited access to information on sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence, and - more recently - disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, stereotypical beliefs about girls' abilities in subjects like mathematics, engineering, and information technology lead to lower academic performance and diminished aspirations for careers in engineering and other physical sciences over time.

3.5.2 Health outcomes are likewise heavily influenced by social, economic, and environmental conditions beyond the health sector- such as poverty, education, employment opportunities, and physical security. Gender inequality itself is a critical determinant of health and remains a persistent challenge in Bangladesh. Women lag behind men in indicators such as literacy, tertiary education attainment, labor force participation, and access to mass media and mobile phones. They are more likely to drop out of school and less likely to secure formal employment. Even when employed, women tend to earn lower wages and are more vulnerable to job losses. Gender wage disparities for equal work, the underrepresentation of women in senior government positions and top management roles in the private sector, and women's limited participation in professional and technical fields collectively reinforce persistent gender inequality. Furthermore, prevailing patriarchal norms mean women often lack autonomy in making decisions about their own healthcare. All these factors, combined with a lack of awareness, contribute to women in Bangladesh falling behind on key education, health, and economic participation indicators.

3.6 Necessary Interventions

3.6.1 In light of the SDG 2030 agenda, national policy documents, and the recommendations of various reform commissions, specific actions are needed to close the gender gaps in the education, health, and economic sectors. This report presents a Gender Gap Reduction Matrix (attached as Appendix 3) based on discussions with key stakeholders and an examination of measures adopted by other countries. It outlines a strategic framework of activities required to reduce gender disparities in Bangladesh while acknowledging that alternative approaches may also be considered.

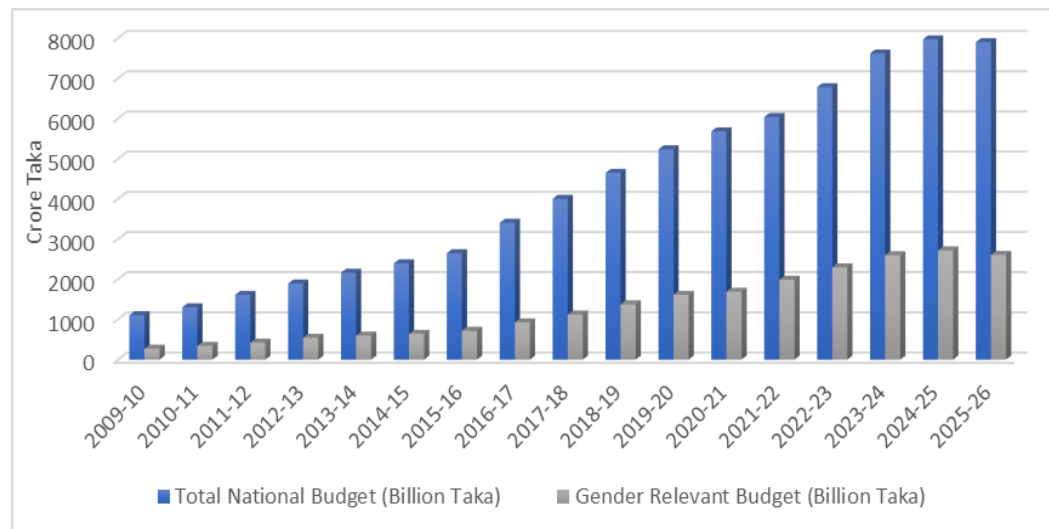
3.6.2 A number of committees will be formed, comprising the lead ministry or division, relevant associate ministries/divisions, academicians, representatives from civil society, and other stakeholders. These committees will meet at least three times per year to review progress on lagging indicators and recommend actions for improvement. The lead ministry/division, together with the associate ministries/divisions, will implement various activities, programmes, plans, and projects based on the committee's recommendations. Resources will be allocated under the Medium Term Budget Framework (MTBF) according to these planned activities, and progress will be assessed using the indicators outlined in each Ministry Budget Framework (MBF). Furthermore, a robust monitoring and evaluation framework will be developed and implemented to track the extent to which recommended actions are being carried out and to determine what changes are resulting from these actions in closing gender gaps.

Chapter IV: Review of Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure

4.1.1 Gender-responsive budgeting has become an essential fiscal approach, designed to systematically integrate gender equality objectives and address women's development needs through budgetary and administrative frameworks. In Bangladesh, this budgeting ensures that resource allocations consider the diverse and unique requirements of all genders, facilitating equitable and inclusive growth. By promoting fairness and enhancing governmental accountability, gender budgeting aligns closely with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), contributing to stronger, more equal societies. Over the past decade, Bangladesh has progressively institutionalized gender-responsive budgeting across numerous ministries and divisions, strategically targeting resources to minimize gender disparities and actively support women's empowerment. In the previous fiscal year, these targeted budgetary allocations continued to demonstrate the country's commitment to integrating gender perspectives into its national budget process.

4.1.2 Bangladesh introduced its first gender budgeting initiative in FY 2009-10, with an analytical report titled "Women's Advancements and Rights," presented alongside the national budget. At the very outset, this pioneering initiative covered four ministries: Education, Health and Family Welfare, Social Welfare, and Disaster Management. By 2012, an expanded review involving 20 ministries indicated that gender-responsive budgeting had become well-established within governmental processes. This institutionalization further advanced, reaching 43 ministries by FY 2016-17. In the most recent fiscal year, gender budget reporting encompassed 62 ministries and divisions, structured around four thematic areas. This broadening participation reflects significant progress in embedding gender equality considerations across diverse sectors of public administration.

Figure 4.1: Trends in Total National Budget Vs Gender relevant Budget (FY 2009 – 2026)



4.1.3 Figure 4.1 highlights trends in Bangladesh's overall national budget alongside the portion specifically dedicated to gender-relevant initiatives from FY 2009-10 to FY 2025-26, revealing sustained growth in both categories. In FY 2009-10, the total national budget was Tk 110,523 crore, with gender-specific allocations accounting for Tk 27,248 crore. Over subsequent years, both the overall and gender-relevant budgets have experienced considerable and steady expansion. By FY 2025-26, the total national budget significantly increased to Tk 789,999 crore, with gender-focused allocations reaching Tk 260,766.6 crore. This growth not only indicates broader budgetary expansion but also reflects intensified prioritization of gender equality and women's development

concerns. Notably, the pace of growth in the gender-responsive budget has slightly surpassed that of the overall budget, suggesting an increasing governmental commitment to proactively address gender-specific issues through fiscal policy.

4.2 Allocation and Expenditure of Gender-Relevant Budget

4.2.1 The gender finance tracking process in Bangladesh encompasses both the operating and development budgets, reflecting a broad-based commitment to gender equity in public finance. Over time, there has been not only a noticeable increase in the proportion of the national budget tagged as gender-relevant but also substantial growth in the actual size of these budget components. In FY 2025-26, the gender-responsive share of the operating budget continued its upward trajectory, suggesting that ministries and divisions are increasingly integrating gender considerations into core service delivery and administrative functions.

4.2.2 As shown in Table 4.1, gender-relevant allocations within the operating budget have steadily risen, reaching TK 170,985.9 crore in FY 2025-26, up from TK 165,094 crore in FY 2024-25. This marks a stable share of about 31.4 percent, aligning with the previous year's allocation and remaining within the historical range of 31.4 percent to 32.5 percent. In contrast, the development budget shows a slight decline in gender-relevant allocation, decreasing to TK 89,780.7 crore in FY 2025-26, which constitutes 36.6 percent of the total development budget from 37.9 percent in FY 2024-25. Despite this decrease, the allocation remains consistent with past proportions, suggesting a continued, though slightly moderated, emphasis on gender-sensitive development interventions such as infrastructure, education, and health.

4.2.3 Taken together, the total gender-relevant allocation in FY 2025-26 amounts to TK 260,766.6 crore, which is 33 percent of the national budget. This figure is broadly in line with previous years, indicating a sustained integration of gender priorities in fiscal policy. When viewed as a share of GDP, the allocation stands at 4.2 percent, slightly lower than the 4.9 percent recorded in FY 2024-25, but still reflecting significant investment in gender equity. This consistency underscores the government's ongoing prioritization of gender mainstreaming across both operational and development portfolios, although the slight dip in development allocations and GDP share may call for renewed efforts to expand impact, particularly in transformative sectors.

Table 4.1: Trend of Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure

(Taka in Crore)

Budget Description	Annual Budget/Expenditure								
	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
Operating Budget	544390.1	515546.6	512401.3	484202.7	454410.9	401134.2	418447.2	418900.5	368539.9
Gender Relevant Allocation	170985.9	165094.1	161298.4	157516.3	144091.7	123477.2	131344.5	132734.0	117125.8
As % of Operating Budget	31.4	32.0	31.5	32.5	31.7	30.8	31.4	31.7	31.8
Development Budget	245608.6	281453.3	231598.6	277582.5	260006.9	208250.5	259616.9	241607.0	205166.0
Gender Relevant Allocation	89780.7	106770.8	86703.7	102182.8	94192.1	75766.0	97424.1	88811.2	74039.3
As % of Development Budget	36.6	37.9	37.4	36.8	36.2	36.4	37.5	36.8	36.1
Total Budget	789998.7	796999.9	743999.9	761785.2	714417.8	609384.7	678064.2	660507.5	573706.0
Gender Relevant Allocation	260766.6	271864.9	248002.2	259699.0	238283.8	199243.2	228768.6	221545.2	191165.1
As % of Total Budget	33	34.1	33.3	34.1	33.4	32.7	33.7	33.5	33.3
Total GDP (Current price)	6244578.0	5597414.0	5645238.0	5006782.0	5048027.0	5048027.0	4449959.0	4439273.0	4439273.0
As % of Total GDP	4.2	4.9	4.4	5.2	4.7	4.0	5.1	5.0	4.3

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

4.3 Allocation by Thematic Group

4.3.1 In recent years, Bangladesh has demonstrated a sustained and strategic commitment to gender equality through increased gender-responsive allocations within the national budget. This is evident in the growing share of both operating and development budgets directed towards gender-relevant priorities. These allocations are aligned with four thematic areas that reflect the diverse challenges and needs of women and marginalized genders. As shown in Table 4.2, allocations for Education, Health, and Wellbeing for Women's Development have remained the highest, rising from Tk. 73,325 crore in FY 2022-23 to Tk. 82,867.7 crore in FY 2025-26. Notably, Economic Participation and Equality have experienced the most significant increase in absolute terms from Tk. 59,143 crore to Tk. 79,185.2 crore indicating an enhanced policy focus on integrating women into the economic mainstream. Funding for Women's Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status has also increased steadily, from Tk. 54,836 crore to Tk. 62,536 crore over time, showing continued investment in social inclusion and political representation. However, allocations for Increasing Women's Effective Access to Public Services show some fluctuation, with a marginal decline from Tk. 41,465 crore in FY 2022-23 to Tk. 36,177.9 crore in FY 2025-26, suggesting the need for policy attention to sustain progress in this area.

Table 4.2: Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure by Thematic Areas (Combined)

(Taka in Crore)

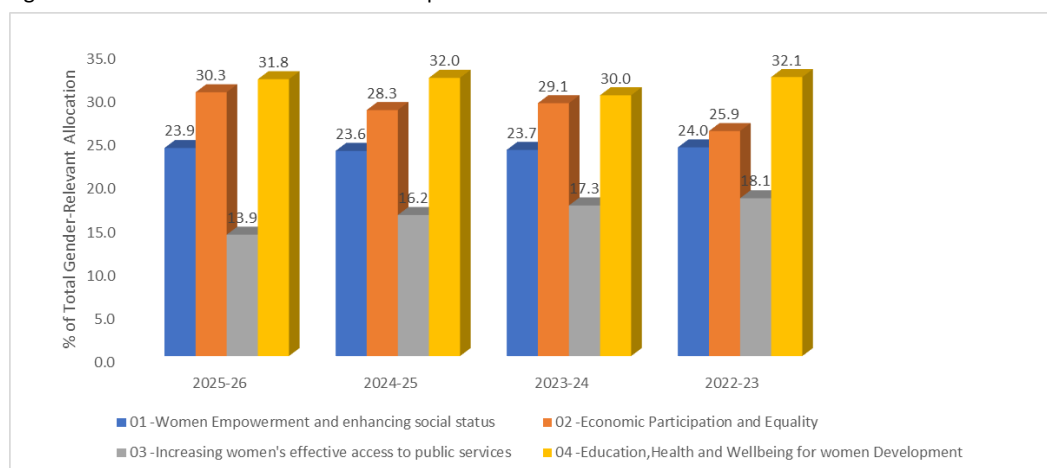
Thematic Areas	Annual Budget/Expenditure								
	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
01-Women Empowerment and enhancing social status	62535.9	64074.6	60503.3	61505.9	60801.4	54556.2	54836.4	57510.7	50650.4
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	24.1	23.6	24.4	23.7	25.5	27.4	24.0	26.0	26.5
% of Total Budget	7.9	8.0	8.1	8.1	8.5	9.0	8.1	8.7	8.8
02-Economic Participation and Equality	79185.2	76841.7	78252.9	75441.0	66095.8	51452.3	59142.9	57009.7	48458.2
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	30.4	28.3	31.6	29.0	27.7	25.8	25.9	25.7	25.3
% of Total Budget	10.02	9.6	10.5	9.9	9.3	8.4	8.7	8.6	8.4
03-Increasing women's effective access to public services	36177.9	44054.4	34889.5	44933.9	41053.7	36789.0	41464.6	41801.7	36845.9
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	14.0	16.2	14.1	17.3	17.2	18.5	18.1	18.9	19.3
% of Total Budget	4.6	5.5	4.7	5.9	5.7	6.0	6.1	6.3	6.4
04-Education,Health and Wellbeing for women Dev.	82867.7	86894.4	74356.5	77818.2	70333.1	56445.7	73324.8	65223.0	55210.6
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	31.9	32.0	30.0	30.0	29.5	28.3	32.1	29.4	28.9
% of Total Budget	10.5	10.9	10.0	10.2	9.8	9.3	10.8	9.9	9.6

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

4.3.2 Figure 4.2 reflects the shifting composition of gender-relevant budget shares across the four thematic areas over the period from FY 2022-23 to FY 2025-26. The relative share for Women's Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status remained steady, moving slightly from 24.0 percent to 24.4 percent, which confirms a consistent policy priority in this domain. Meanwhile, the share for Economic Participation and Equality rose significantly from 25.9 percent to 30.4 percent, signaling greater policy weight on initiatives like women's employment, entrepreneurship, and income generation. This shift suggests that policymakers increasingly recognize economic empowerment as a central pillar of gender equity. Conversely, the share allocated to Increasing Women's Effective Access to Public Services declined from 18.1 percent to 14 percent, despite its critical role in

enabling women's mobility, access to justice, and essential services. This drop warrants further exploration, especially in light of the persisting structural barriers women face in accessing public services.

Figure 4.2: Gender Relevant Allocations and Expenditures across Four Thematic Areas



Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

4.3.3 The Education, Health, and Wellbeing for Women's Development theme has consistently received the largest share of the gender budget, maintaining above 30 percent across the observed years, peaking at 32.1 percent in FY 2022-23 and slightly moderating to 31.8 percent in FY 2025-26. This consistent prioritization highlights the government's continued investment in foundational sectors that shape women's long-term well-being, such as maternal health, girl's education, and nutrition. Together, the trends across the four themes indicate a rebalancing within the gender budget, with increased emphasis on economic empowerment and core human development outcomes, while areas like public service access require renewed focus. With the total gender-relevant allocation reaching Tk. 260,766.6 crore in FY 2025-26 (33 percent of the total budget), the data reflect not only quantitative expansion but also evolving qualitative priorities in Bangladesh's gender-responsive fiscal strategy.

4.4 Thematic Group 1: Women Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status

4.4.1 The thematic area of Women Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status comprises diverse programmes, each varying in their degree of gender-specific relevance. The allocation of resources reflects a clear prioritization of initiatives aimed explicitly at women's advancement. According to the data in Table 4.3, budgetary allocations and expenditures from FY 2021-22 to FY 2025-26 demonstrate an overall upward trajectory, albeit with some fluctuations across specific programme areas. Notably, funding dedicated to specific gender policies and strategies decreased from Tk 685.1 crore in FY 2024-25 to Tk 602.8 crore in FY 2025-26, though this figure indicates recovery relative to the significant dip seen in FY 2022-23. Conversely, allocations to promote women's participation in political decision-making have consistently risen, reaching Tk 5,108 crore in FY 2025-26, reflecting a strengthened commitment toward women's inclusion in governance structures.

4.4.2 Support for women's active involvement in national and international forums increased markedly, with allocations rising from Tk 273.7 crore in FY 2024-25 to Tk 417.5 crore in FY 2025-26. This suggests a heightened emphasis on expanding women's presence and visibility in broader leadership contexts. However, funding aimed at enhancing the social status of women saw some

inconsistency, settling at Tk 14,283.6 crore in FY 2025-26-a decrease from the previous year's allocation but still exceeding actual expenditure from FY 2023–24. The most substantial portion of resources, amounting to Tk 35,711.4 crore in FY 2025-26, remains focused on reducing vulnerabilities, poverty, and risks for women through targeted social safety net programmes. Such a sustained high-level allocation underscores the government's strategic priority in addressing women's socio-economic insecurities. It is to be noted that funding designated for women's capacity building in climate change mitigation and adaptation slightly declined to Tk 6,412 crore in FY 2025-26 from Tk 6,880.9 crore in the preceding fiscal year. Although the reduction is modest, it highlights potential areas for enhanced policy attention, given women's pronounced vulnerability to climate-related impacts. Overall, the cumulative allocation for the thematic area totals Tk 62,536 crore in FY 2025-26. Despite yearly fluctuations within individual programme areas, this substantial overall funding signifies Bangladesh's continued and robust commitment to gender-responsive budgeting, reinforcing the nation's strategic prioritization of comprehensive women's empowerment initiatives.

Table 4.3: Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure by Programme Areas under Thematic Group-1

(Taka in Crore)

Thematics Areas	Gender Relevant Allocation/Expenditure											
	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23			2021-22		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
01- Women Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status												
0101- Implementation of specific gender policy-strategies or activities related to women empowerment and enhancing social status	602.8	685.1	586.3	833.4	796.8	491.7	657.7	540.2	266.0	711.2	513.0	362.5
0102- Women empowerment through participation in decision making and political structure	5108.4	4835.9	4458.6	4798.3	4529.6	3940.9	4949.2	4666.4	3689.0	4960.1	4951.3	4144.1
0103- Women's participation in national and international forums	417.5	273.7	240.7	402.8	551.0	512.5	227.0	245.2	221.7	269.8	274.2	259.4
0104- Increasing social status of women	14283.6	15614.4	14905.0	14396.7	14290.1	13094.2	12884.1	13329.0	12491.6	11698.8	11702.7	10893.6
0105- Reduce vulnerabilities, poverty, and risk of women by social safety-net	35711.4	35784.7	34705.2	34466.4	33830.5	30622.8	30286.3	32474.4	29606.2	25566.0	27348.9	24117.9
0106- Capacity Building of women in climate change mitigation and adaptation	6412.2	6880.9	5607.6	6608.3	6803.4	5894.2	5832.1	6255.6	4375.9	5901.9	5846.2	3705.6
Sub Total: 01	62535.9	64074.6	60473.4	61505.9	60801.4	54556.2	54836.4	57510.7	50650.4	49107.8	50636.3	43483.1

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

4.5 Thematic Group 2: Economic Participation and Equality

4.5.1 Comparing the thematic groups of “Women Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status” and “Economic Participation and Equality”, both categories attribute the highest gender relevance (100 percent) to initiatives implementing specific gender-focused policies. As depicted in Table 4.4, the allocation trends for gender-responsive expenditures within the thematic area of “Economic Participation and Equality” from FY 2021-22 to FY 2025-26 show steady increases overall, albeit with variations across individual programme areas. Notably, allocations dedicated to specific policy strategies promoting women's active involvement in production, labor markets, and income-

generating activities have fluctuated, with the allocation dropping to Tk 118.4 crore in FY 2025-26 from Tk 276.3 crore in the previous year. Despite this decrease, the consistent funding underscores ongoing policy efforts in targeted gender-specific interventions, although resource allocation may need review to sustain momentum in this critical area.

4.5.2 Funding aimed at ensuring decent work environments and workplace safety for women has risen to Tk 3,320.7 crore in FY 2025-26, showing incremental progress compared to Tk 3,207.8 crore in FY 2024-25. This positive trend highlights a growing governmental emphasis on creating secure working conditions, recognizing its direct impact on woman's sustained economic participation. The most substantial allocation within this thematic area continues to support women's active participation in the labor market and income-generating activities, amounting to Tk 46,764.7 crore in FY 2025-26. This considerable allocation signifies the centrality of economic inclusion as a foundational element of gender equality policy. Notably, funding specifically aimed at promoting women's entrepreneurship has experienced a slight increase, reaching Tk 14,700.9 crore in FY 2025-26 compared to Tk 14,404 crore in the prior year. This scenario demonstrates national priorities in the area of women's entrepreneurship.

Table 4.4: Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure by Programme Areas under Thematic Group-2

(Taka in Crore)

Thematics Areas	Gender Relevant Allocation/Expenditure											
	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23			2021-22		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
02- Economic Participation and Equality												
0201- Implementation of specific gender policy strategies or activities related to women's participation in production, labour market, and income-generating activities	118.4	276.3	276.8	215.8	397.7	320.5	338.6	338.3	250.8	164.6	328.2	239.1
0202- Ensuring decent work environment and safety	3320.7	3207.8	2883.0	4606.7	3919.6	3227.6	4179.7	3441.0	2737.1	3529.4	3472.6	2894.0
0203- Women's participation in labour market and income generating activities	46764.7	46243.0	44085.3	45555.8	37175.4	32772.7	33881.9	33657.8	29405.7	26368.1	24988.8	20762.3
0204- Increasing Women entrepreneurship	14700.9	14404.0	14590.0	13418.2	10971.1	8664.2	10625.2	10303.2	8701.1	7274.5	7381.0	5674.8
0205- Construction of infrastructure in remote areas for women	14280.5	12710.5	16417.8	11644.4	13631.9	6467.3	10117.5	9269.5	7363.6	8385.8	7210.5	6037.2
Sub Total: 02	78162.2	76841.7	78265.0	75441.0	66095.8	51452.3	59142.9	57009.7	48458.2	45722.3	43381.0	35607.4

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

4.5.3 Investment directed towards infrastructure development in remote and underserved areas for women has consistently grown, reaching Tk 14,280.5 crore in FY 2025-26-an increase from Tk 12,710.5 crore in FY 2024-25. This rising investment indicates a targeted policy effort to address geographic disparities and foster equitable access to economic opportunities for women in marginalized regions. In total, the gender-relevant budget allocation for the thematic area of Economic Participation and Equality reached Tk 78,162.2 crore in FY 2025-26, clearly reflecting a robust and sustained commitment by the national government to women's economic empowerment through targeted financial strategies and well-structured programmes. Continued focus on these allocations could significantly enhance women's economic independence and overall social equity.

4.6 Thematic Group 3: Increasing Women's Effective Access to Public Services

4.6.1 The thematic area “Increasing Women's Effective Access to Public Services” encompasses various initiatives with distinct degrees of gender relevance, aimed at improving women's equitable utilization of essential services. As outlined in Table 4.5, allocations and expenditures from FY 2021-22 to FY 2025-26 indicate focused governmental attention, albeit with some fluctuations across programme categories. Notably, funding for implementing targeted gender policy initiatives has surged remarkably, from Tk 86.2 crore in FY 2024-25 to Tk 473.6 crore in FY 2025-26, indicating a renewed strategic focus on ensuring equitable gender-specific outcomes in public service delivery. Consistent and substantial investment has been directed toward enhancing women's access to public properties and services, with a significant allocation of Tk 15,286.4 crore in FY 2025-26, despite a slight decrease from the previous fiscal year. This sustained high-level funding emphasizes continuous recognition of public service access as foundational for gender equity.

Table 4.5: Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure by Programme Areas under Thematic Group-3

(Taka in Crore)

Thematics Areas	Gender Relevant Allocation/Expenditure											
	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23			2021-22		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
03- Increasing women's effective access to public services												
0301- Implementation of specific gender policy-strategies or activities related to Increasing women's effective access to public services	473.6	86.2	80.9	26.9	41.4	517.6	45.1	35.1	324.5	35.4	43.1	257.4
0302- Access to public properties and services	15286.4	16501.6	13615.3	17060.1	13967.2	13241.5	15570.6	14418.5	12257.9	16250.8	15520.4	11724.7
0303- Ensure safety and movement of women	19548.5	26288.4	20080.9	26142.1	25503.9	21764.3	24694.8	26123.7	23204.0	22150.0	23020.5	22371.2
0304- Access to law and justice for women	689.6	920.8	907.6	1502.2	1326.0	1113.9	951.7	1050.1	899.9	862.4	853.2	687.1
0305- Ensure cyber security and reduce violence and oppression against women	179.9	257.4	205.8	202.6	215.2	151.8	202.4	174.4	159.5	193.7	195.5	168.2
0307- Increasing Women entrepreneurship	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9
0308- Construction of road infrastructure in remote areas for women	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0309- ICT training and its uses for women	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Sub Total: 03	36328.0	44054.4	34890.4	44933.9	41053.7	36789.0	41464.6	41801.7	36845.9	39492.3	39632.7	35209.4

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

4.6.2 Ensuring women's safety and mobility remains another major priority within this thematic area, receiving an allocation of Tk 19,548.5 crore in FY 2025-26. Although this allocation is notably lower than the previous year's budget of Tk 26,288.4 crore, it remains substantial, suggesting continued policy emphasis on creating safe and accessible public environments for women. Conversely, funding targeted at enhancing women's access to law and justice has shown fluctuations, declining to Tk 689.6 crore in FY 2025-26 from Tk 920.8 crore in FY 2024-25. This decrease may reflect shifting governmental resource priorities but highlights a potential area for reassessment given the critical role of legal access in promoting gender justice.

4.6.3 In addition, financial allocations specifically aimed at improving cyber security and reducing violence and oppression against women have experienced a modest reduction to Tk 179.9 crore in FY 2025-26, down from Tk 257.4 crore in FY 2024-25. Given the growing digital engagement of women and the corresponding risks of cyber threats, this area warrants increased policy attention and potentially greater resource allocation. The overall budget for this thematic group total Tk 36,328 crore in FY 2025-26. Despite variations across specific programmes, this allocation level continues to underscore the national government's commitment to systematically improving women's access to essential public services, ensuring their protection, and promoting their overall well-being.

4.7 Thematic Group 4: Education, Health, and Well-being for Women Development

4.7.1 The thematic group “Education, Health, and Well-being for Women Development” comprises diverse programmes, each differing in their gender-specific impact and associated funding levels. Table 4.6 illustrates the allocation and expenditure trends from FY 2021-22 through FY 2025-26, highlighting significant shifts in funding priorities. Notably, allocations specifically aimed at implementing targeted gender policies in education, health, and wellbeing increased substantially to Tk 268.5 crore in FY 2025-26, more than double the Tk 127.7 crore allocated in the previous fiscal year. This sharp rise signals a reinforced policy commitment to addressing critical gender equity issues through targeted interventions.

Table 4.6: Gender-Relevant Allocation and Expenditure by Programme Areas under thematic Group-4

(Taka in Crore)

Thematics Areas	Gender Relevant Allocation/Expenditure											
	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23			2021-22		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
04- Education, Health and Wellbeing for Women Development												
0401- Implementation of specific gender policy strategies or education, health, and well-being related activities for Women development	268.5	127.7	114.3	23.4	31.4	58.7	28.7	27.5	20.0	49.4	36.3	29.9
0402- Women education and skill development	58235.1	59130.1	52163.3	53353.0	47949.9	39231.2	49133.2	43670.7	37686.1	43929.4	42441.7	35416.0
0403- Training on frontier technology and its uses for women	5702.9	7767.9	6041.5	6840.0	5251.9	4466.1	6801.0	5154.1	4085.4	5862.5	5342.8	4208.2
0404- Women's access to reproductive, other health services and improved nutrition	15957.1	16709.4	13559.7	15001.9	14719.0	10438.7	14699.2	13926.3	11243.0	12032.7	12827.3	9721.1
0405- Participation of women in research and innovation activities	2704.1	3159.3	2477.9	2600.0	2380.8	2251.0	2662.7	2444.4	2176.1	2282.9	2262.6	2184.3
Sub Total: 04	82918.1	86894.4	74348.3	77818.2	70333.1	56445.7	73324.8	65223.0	55210.6	64156.8	62910.5	51559.5

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

4.7.2 Historically, the largest share within this thematic area has consistently been dedicated to women's education and skill development. However, in a marked deviation, this allocation decreased notably to Tk 58,235.1 crore in FY 2025-26 from Tk 59,130.1 crore in FY 2024-25. This reduction may reflect broader fiscal constraints affecting government spending priorities, despite

the continued recognition of education as essential for women's empowerment. Likewise, funding for training women in frontier technologies, after experiencing significant growth reaching Tk 7,767.9 crore in FY 2024-25, has seen a reduction to Tk 5,702.9 crore in FY 2025-26. Such a decrease suggests shifting budgetary constraints or strategic realignments, although maintaining substantial support indicates sustained acknowledgment of technology's importance in women's economic integration.

- 4.7.3** Allocations targeted at improving women's access to reproductive health services and nutritional outcomes have slightly declined to Tk 15,957.1 crore in FY 2025-26 from Tk 16,709.4 crore in FY 2024-25, potentially pointing toward adjustments in resource distribution amidst the current financial austerity. Similarly, funding for promoting women's participation in research and innovation activities has declined modestly to Tk 2,704.1 crore, down from Tk 3,159.3 crore in the preceding year. Despite these reductions in specific programme areas, the overall allocation for Education, Health, and Wellbeing for Women Development totals Tk 82,918 crore in FY 2025-26, indicating continued governmental intent to prioritize these sectors. Nevertheless, prevailing economic austerity measures present substantial challenges, necessitating careful monitoring and adaptive strategies to ensure the realization of targeted gender-equitable outcomes.

4.8 Selected 16 Ministries/Divisions by Highest Gender-Relevant Allocation (percent)

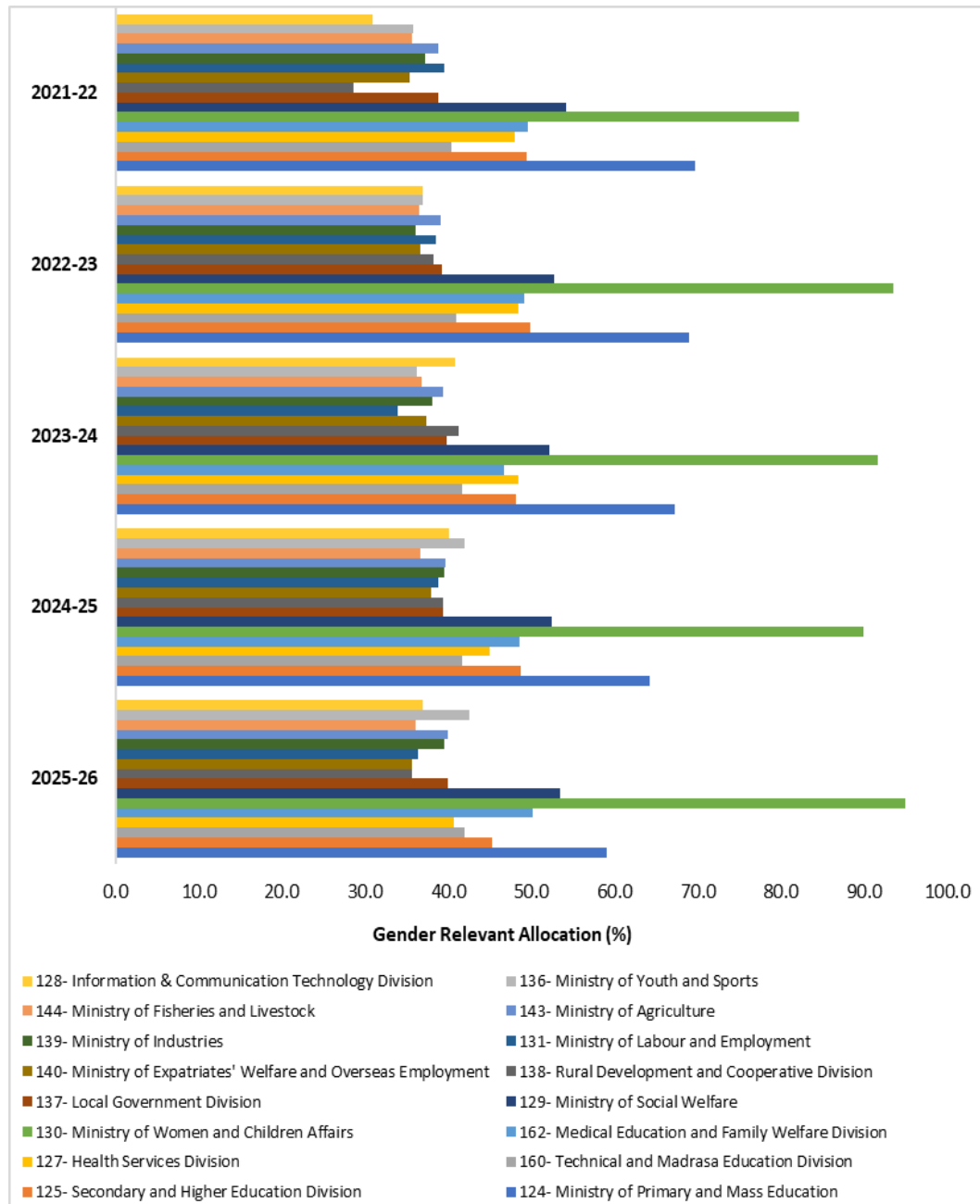
- 4.8.1** Table 4.6 presents the gender-relevant budget allocations across 16 selected ministries and divisions from FY 2021-22 to FY 2025-26. Among these, the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs consistently leads, receiving the highest percentage of gender-specific allocations, which notably peaks at approximately 95 percent in FY 2025-26. In contrast, the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education exhibits a gradual decline in allocations, decreasing from around 70 percent in FY 2021-22 to 62 percent in FY 2025-26. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Social Welfare maintains a relatively steady allocation, consistently ranging between 52 and 54 percent across the reviewed fiscal years, indicating a stable policy emphasis on gender inclusivity within social welfare programmes.

Table 4.6: Gender Relevant Allocation in Selected 16 Ministries/Divisions by Highest Gender-Relevant Allocation (%)

Ministry/Division	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22
130 - Ministry of Women and Children Affairs	94.9	90.0	91.6	93.5	82.2
124 - Ministry of Primary and Mass Education	61.5	64.1	67.3	68.9	69.7
162 - Medical Education and Family Welfare Division	50.2	48.6	46.7	49.1	49.5
125 - Secondary and Higher Education Division	47.2	48.7	48.1	49.8	49.4
136 - Ministry of Youth and Sports	42.6	42.0	36.3	36.9	35.7
129 - Ministry of Social Welfare	42.5	52.5	52.1	52.7	55.2
160 - Technical and Madrasah Education Division	42.0	41.6	41.6	41.0	40.3
127 - Health Services Division	40.6	45.0	48.4	48.4	48.0
137 - Local Government Division	39.9	39.4	39.8	39.2	38.8
143 - Ministry of Agriculture	39.9	39.7	39.4	39.0	38.7
139 - Ministry of Industries	39.5	39.5	38.1	36.1	37.2
128 - Information and Communication Technology Division	36.9	40.1	40.9	37.0	30.9
131 - Ministry of Labour and Employment	36.3	38.9	33.9	38.4	39.5
144 - Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock	36.0	36.6	36.8	36.6	35.6
138 - Rural Development and Cooperative Division	35.6	39.3	41.2	38.2	28.5
140 -Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment	35.5	37.9	37.4	36.6	35.4

- 4.8.2** Allocations within the Secondary and Higher Education Division and the Medical Education and Family Welfare Division have experienced minor fluctuations, remaining generally stable within a range of approximately 47 to 50 percent over the years. Notably, the Information and Communication Technology Division has shown substantial growth in gender-focused spending, rising from about 31 percent in FY 2021-22 to nearly 37 percent in FY 2025-26. This increase reflects a heightened recognition of technology as a critical sector for women's empowerment and participation. Conversely, the Health Services Division has observed a declining trend, dropping from approximately 48 percent to around 41 percent between FY 2021-22 and FY 2025-26. This decrease suggests a possible shift in resource priorities or constraints within the broader health budget, warranting attention to sustain gender-focused health initiatives.
- 4.8.3** The Ministry of Youth and Sports demonstrates a progressive commitment to gender relevance, increasing its allocation from approximately 36 percent in FY 2021-22 to about 43 percent in FY 2025-26. Similarly, the Technical and Madrasah Education Division maintains a steady allocation of around 41 to 42 percent, indicating consistent support for women's technical and vocational education. The Ministry of Agriculture slightly increased its allocation, from around 39 percent in FY 2021-22 to nearly 40 percent in FY 2025-26, reflecting sustained efforts to integrate gender considerations into agricultural policies.
- 4.8.4** In addition to the ten highest-spending ministries, six new ministries were reviewed to assess gender budget allocations. Among these, the Local Government Division holds the top position with nearly 40 percent allocated in FY 2025-26. The Ministry of Industries closely follows, maintaining a consistent allocation of around 39-40 percent over recent years. Notably, the Rural Development and Cooperative Division had the highest allocation among these newly included ministries during FY 2023-24 but declined to approximately 36 percent by FY 2025-26. The Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment achieved its peak gender-focused allocation of 38 percent in FY 2024-25, whereas the Ministry of Labour and Employment has steadily allocated around 39 percent throughout the five-year period. Lastly, the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock maintained a relatively stable allocation level at approximately 36 percent from FY 2022-23 through FY 2025-26, indicating minimal variation in gender-responsive funding priorities within this sector.
- 4.9 Highest Gender-Relevant Budget Allocations by Thematic Group across 16 Ministries/Divisions**
- 4.9.1** An analysis based on thematic areas reveals the distribution of the highest gender-relevant budget allocations across the selected 16 ministries and divisions. This detailed review highlights how individual ministries allocate resources to specific themes, underscoring the strategic focus and initiatives undertaken to advance gender equality. The breakdown facilitates a clearer assessment of the effectiveness and impact of gender-responsive budgeting, enabling stakeholders to identify strengths and potential gaps within these ministries and divisions.
- 4.9.2** Figure 4.4 illustrates the thematic distribution of gender-relevant budgets among the top 16 selected ministries and divisions, demonstrating clear funding priorities. The thematic area of "Education, Health, and Well-being for Women Development" consistently receives the most substantial share, ranging between 60 percent and 63 percent across the observed years. This robust allocation reflects the continued priority given to fundamental sectors like education and healthcare, crucial for sustained progress in women's well-being and empowerment. The theme of "Women Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status" remains relatively Steady, capturing around 18 percent to 19 percent of allocations, signifying sustained governmental support for women's social integration and empowerment.

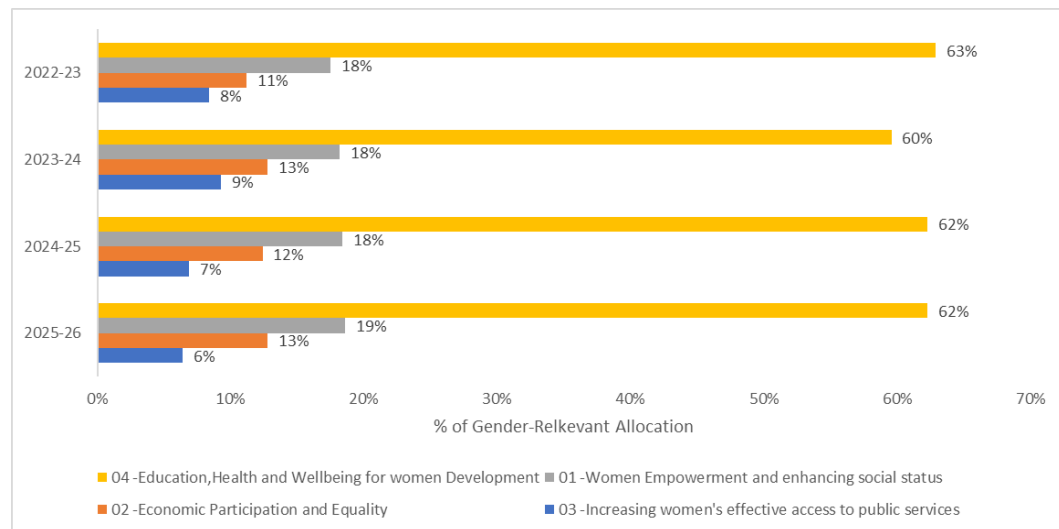
Figure 4.3: Selected Top 16 Ministries/Divisions for Gender Relevant Allocations



Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

4.9.3. The thematic area focusing on “Economic Participation and Equality” receives a comparatively smaller share, fluctuating between 11 percent and 13 percent. Although smaller in scale, this allocation underscores an ongoing, albeit modest, commitment to facilitating women's economic engagement and equality. Additionally, the thematic area of “Increasing Women's Effective Access to Public Services” captures between 6 percent and 9 percent of the gender-focused budget, suggesting a stable yet relatively limited emphasis on enhancing women's access to essential public infrastructure and services. Notably, the inclusion of six additional ministries this fiscal year has significantly influenced the thematic allocation percentages, indicating a broader institutional commitment and potential diversification of gender-responsive efforts.

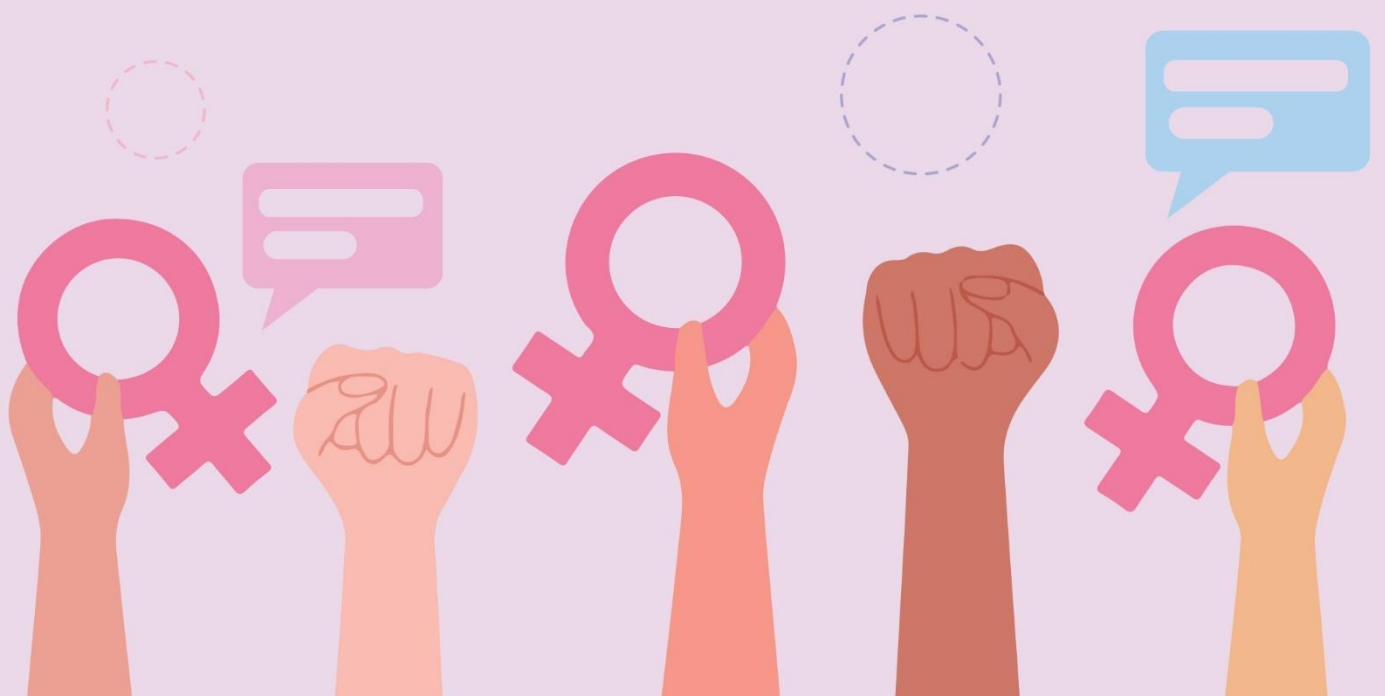
Figure 4.4: Thematic Breakdown of the Highest Gender-Relevant Budget across 16 Ministries/Divisions



Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

- 4.10** The effectiveness of these thematic budget allocations varies across ministries and divisions, influenced by factors such as policy priorities, institutional capabilities, and implementation frameworks. Detailed allocations and expenditure data for all 62 ministries and divisions are comprehensively presented in Appendix-2, enabling further assessment and informed policymaking to enhance gender-responsive budgeting practices.

Chapter V:
Discussion on Gender Related
Information of the Selected
Ministry/Division



Ministry of Women and Children Affairs

5.1 Introduction

Bangladesh has made remarkable strides in promoting women's development, particularly in the areas of education and political empowerment. Building on this progress, the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs remains committed to safeguarding the rights of women and children and integrating them meaningfully into the broader national development agenda. Through comprehensive empowerment programmes, the Ministry is actively implementing initiatives aimed at poverty reduction, expanding access to education, and supporting women entrepreneurs. These efforts are designed to ensure that women and children, especially those from marginalized communities, have the necessary opportunities and support to thrive.

The Government of Bangladesh's proactive measures to combat gender discrimination and uphold the dignity of women have earned recognition both nationally and internationally. Notably, Bangladesh has consistently been ranked as the top performer in South Asia in terms of gender equality, according to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report. In the 2024 edition of the report, Bangladesh was ranked 99th globally, maintaining its leadership in South Asia for the tenth consecutive year. While there has been a slight decline in its global standing, the country continues to outperform its regional peers in closing gender gaps. This sustained leadership reflects the impact and effectiveness of Bangladesh's gender-focused policies and underscores the government's unwavering commitment to advancing women's rights, empowerment, and equality.

5.2 Ministry/Division's Mandate Described/Enshrined in Relevant Laws and Policy Documents

The mandate of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) is firmly rooted in the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, which reflects the state's unwavering commitment to ensuring the rights and advancement of women. Articles 27, 28, 29, and 65(3) underscore the principles of equality and non-discrimination. In particular, Article 28(4) empowers the state to make special provisions for the advancement of women, recognizing their disadvantaged position in society and the need for affirmative action to ensure equality.

According to the Allocation of Business, MoWCA is entrusted with the comprehensive development of women and children. Its responsibilities include the formulation and implementation of policies related to women's empowerment, prevention of violence against women, ensuring safety and dignity of women in the workplace, and promoting their overall socio-economic development. The Ministry also plays a vital coordinating and monitoring role across different Ministries and Divisions through Women for Development (WID) and child-related focal points to ensure a cohesive and inclusive approach to development.

The Ministry's legal mandate is reinforced by several key legislative instruments and policy frameworks. The Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2010, along with its associated rules, aims to eliminate all forms of discrimination and ensure equal rights in both state and public life. In addition, a series of forward-looking policies have been introduced to promote gender equity and child development, including the National Women Development Policy 2011, the National Child Policy-2011, and the Integrated Policy on Early Childhood Care and Development 2013. Under the National Women Development Policy 2011, a 50-member National Women and Children Development Council chaired by the Head of State has been formed. Further legal instruments such as the Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) Act 2014, the Prevention of Child Marriage Act 2017, and its corresponding rules enacted in 2018, provide critical safeguards against gender-based violence and child rights violations.

To operationalize its commitment to gender equality and child welfare, the government has adopted the National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women and Children, which works in tandem with the National Women Development Policy. These strategic frameworks aim to develop women as educated, skilled human resources; promote their active participation in national development; and ensure their political, social, administrative, and economic empowerment.

Specific emphasis has also been placed on the development of the girl child. The National Child Policy 2011 explicitly calls for the elimination of all forms of abuse, neglect, and discrimination against female children, and commits to securing their rights to appropriate physical and mental development. Through the implementation of these laws and policies, MoWCA is actively contributing to the creation of an equitable, inclusive, and rights-based society for women and children in Bangladesh.

5.3 Women Employees and Beneficiaries of the Ministry/Division

5.3.1 Quantitative Information of the Male and Female Employees

Office name	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Secretariat	74	40	34	45.9
Department of Women Affairs	2279	935	1344	59.0
DNA Laboratory Department	10	7	3	30.0
Bangladesh Shisu Academy	241	208	33	13.7
Jatio Mohila Sangstha	496	319	177	35.7
Joyeeta Foundation	42	25	17	40.5
Total :	3142	1534	1608	51.2

5.3.2 Statistics of Beneficiaries

Programme	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Mother and Child Benefit Programme	1655280	-	1655280	100.0
Vulnerable Women Benefit (VWB)	1040000	-	1040000	100.0
Total :	2695280	-	2695280	100.0

5.4 Women's Share in Ministry's Total Allocation and Expenditure

(Taka in Crore)

Budget Description	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
Operating Budget	4659.3	4347.3	4305.9	3778.7	3799.5	3726.3	3507.0	3608.1	3391.7
Gender Relevant Allocation	4561.1	4250.2	4209.8	3694.3	3715.4	3648.5	3429.1	3529.4	3322.9
As % of Operating Budget	97.9	97.8	97.8	97.8	97.8	97.9	97.8	97.8	98.0
Development Budget	418.6	874.9	731.8	976.3	916.0	1175.7	783.4	794.5	836.2
Gender Relevant Allocation	259.6	447.5	473.2	659.5	665.8	753.6	583.7	571.0	508.8
As % of Development Budget	62.0	51.1	64.7	67.5	72.7	64.1	74.5	71.9	60.8
Total Budget	5077.9	5222.2	5037.8	4755.0	4715.5	4902.0	4290.5	4402.5	4227.9
Gender Relevant Allocation	4820.6	4697.6	4683.0	4353.7	4381.2	4402.1	4012.8	4100.3	3831.6
As % of Total Budget	94.9	90.0	93.0	91.6	92.9	89.8	93.5	93.1	90.6

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

5.5 Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure by Thematic Areas

(Taka in Crore)

Thematic Areas	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
01-Women Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status	3601.8	3418.1	3389.9	3143.8	3171.9	3089.7	2791.1	2816.3	2552.4
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	74.7	72.8	72.4	72.2	72.4	70.2	69.6	68.7	66.6
% of Total Budget	70.9	65.5	67.3	66.1	67.3	63.0	65.1	64.0	60.4
02-Economic Participation and Equality	199.5	272.9	296.1	275.1	271.7	259.4	400.0	418.0	376.6
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	4.1	5.8	6.3	6.3	6.2	5.9	10.0	10.2	9.8
% of Total Budget	3.9	5.2	5.9	5.8	5.8	5.3	9.3	9.5	8.9
03-Increasing women's effective access to public services	163.0	180.4	162.9	165.4	164.1	303.5	122.8	128.9	190.1
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	3.4	3.8	3.5	3.8	3.7	6.9	3.1	3.1	5.0
% of Total Budget	3.2	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.5	6.2	2.9	2.9	4.5
04-Education, Health and Wellbeing for Women Development	856.3	826.3	834.1	769.5	773.5	749.5	698.9	737.2	712.5
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	17.8	17.6	17.8	17.7	17.7	17.0	17.4	18.0	18.6
% of Total Budget	16.9	15.8	16.6	16.2	16.4	15.3	16.3	16.7	16.9

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

5.6 Impact of Priority Spendings of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

Priority Expenditure Sectors/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (Direct and Indirect)
Food Assistance Program for Vulnerable Women (VWB Programme)	The Vulnerable Women Benefit (VWB) programme is playing a vital role in improving the socio-economic conditions of poor and marginalized rural women in Bangladesh. As a result of this support, their food insecurity, nutritional deficiencies, and economic vulnerabilities have been significantly reduced, leading to greater social recognition and empowerment of women within their communities.
Mother and Child Benefit Programme	The programme is designed to improve the health and nutritional well-being of pregnant women and newborns, with a particular focus on those from disadvantaged households. As such, it serves as a critical driver of holistic development for women and children by promoting their overall welfare and enabling their meaningful engagement in society.
Child Development Centre and Adolescent Empowerment Programme	The programme promotes the comprehensive development of children while safeguarding their rights. Moreover, adolescent girls' clubs contribute significantly to guiding young girls toward becoming responsible, engaged, and active members of society.
Providing technical, vocational, income-generating, and productive training to women	Offering women technical, vocational, income-generating, and productivity-focused training enhances their involvement in economic activities, thereby directly contributing to their empowerment and advancement.
Prevention of violence against women and provision of legal assistance	To prevent violence against women and support victims, a range of services are being implemented, including legal aid, psychological counseling, safe shelter, social reintegration, and public awareness campaigns aimed at eliminating all forms of violence.

5.7 Women Advancement related KPIs of the Ministry/Division and Achievements

SI No	KPI	Unit	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
1.	Beneficiary coverage under the social security programmes				
a.	% of VWB coverage (87,71,000 Person)	%	78.67	78.67	90.26
b.	% of Mother and Child Benefit Programme coverage (85,00,767 Person)	%	33.09	35.28	42.28

5.8 Mentionable Success Stories of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs has made remarkable progress in advancing the status and well-being of women across Bangladesh through a range of targeted interventions. Under the Vulnerable Women Benefit (VWB) Programme, food assistance and vocational training have been provided to 10,40,000 women living below the poverty line, significantly improving their food security and livelihood opportunities. Similarly, the Mother and Child Benefit Programme has extended financial allowances to 16,55,280 mothers, ensuring better nutrition for both mothers and their newborns during critical stages of development.

To promote economic self-reliance, a total of 33,850 women have received various forms of training for self-employment, while about Tk. 61 crore 68 lakh has been disbursed as microcredit to support women in launching income-generating activities. In parallel, the Ministry has taken important steps to ensure the safety and well-being of working women by providing safe accommodation to 6,899 women in Karmajibi Mahila Hostels across the country.

In the realm of legal and medical support, 57,708 women and children have received critical assistance in addressing health and legal challenges. The National Forensic DNA Profiling Laboratory has also completed 2,634 DNA sample tests, playing a pivotal role in ensuring justice for victims of gender-based violence.

Mental health support has also been prioritized through the National Trauma Counseling Centre (NTCC) and its Regional Trauma Counseling Centres (RTCCs), which together have provided psychosocial counseling to 16,036 women and children affected by violence. Additionally, the National Helpline Centre (109) has assisted a total of 23,44,957 individuals, offering immediate support, guidance, and referrals for victims of violence and abuse nationwide.

These initiatives collectively reflect the Ministry's strong commitment to empowering women, protecting their rights, and promoting gender equality through comprehensive, nationwide support systems.

5.9 Challenges of Women's Development Goals

The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs continues to face several structural and socio-cultural challenges in advancing its women's development agenda. One of the major operational constraints is that many of the Ministry's field offices function from rented accommodations, which undermines both the efficiency and continuity of administrative and programmatic activities. Furthermore, there is a critical shortage of qualified personnel to adequately supervise and manage the wide range of social security programmes under the Ministry's purview. This human resource gap limits the effective delivery and monitoring of essential services for women.

Additionally, limited financial resources constrain the expansion of existing social security initiatives, thereby preventing the inclusion of a greater number of deserving beneficiaries—particularly from marginalized and vulnerable groups. Beyond logistical and resource-based

limitations, the implementation of women-focused development programmes is often hindered by deep-rooted religious prejudices, misinterpretations of religious teachings, and conservative social attitudes. These cultural barriers, coupled with a general lack of awareness about women's rights, significantly restrict the outreach and impact of empowerment initiatives. Addressing these challenges is critical to ensuring that gender-responsive policies translate into tangible improvements in the lives of women across the country.

5.10 Recommendations/Way Forward

To ensure the effective realization of gender equality and the protection of women and children, the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs outlines several forward-looking recommendations. A top priority is the full implementation of the National Action Plan (2018–2030), which aims to build a society free from all forms of violence against women and children by the year 2030. Expanding the coverage of key social protection schemes such as the Vulnerable Women's Benefit (VWB) Programme and the Mother and Child Benefit Programme is also essential to reaching a larger share of marginalized beneficiaries and improving their quality of life.

In order to institutionalize efforts against gender-based violence, it is crucial to establish a National Centre on Gender-Based Violence. This centre will serve as the central authority for coordinating, monitoring, and supervising national initiatives to prevent violence and empower women and children. Complementing this, integrated referral systems should be introduced in government hospitals at both the district and upazila levels, allowing victims of violence to access medical, psychological, legal, and rehabilitation services under one coordinated framework.

To support evidence-based policymaking and response, the development of a comprehensive national database focused on violence against women and children is urgently needed. Additionally, dedicated databases should be created for One-Stop Crisis Centres and One-Stop Crisis Cells to streamline service delivery and monitor case outcomes. Finally, in a phased manner, the Directorate of DNA Laboratory Management's screening laboratories must be upgraded to fully functional profiling laboratories to ensure timely and accurate forensic support in cases involving gender-based violence. These recommendations, when implemented, will significantly strengthen the institutional framework for gender equality, protection, and empowerment.

Ministry of Primary and Mass Education

6.1 Introduction

Primary education serves as the foundation for an individual's personal development and long-term growth. Recognizing its critical importance, the Government of Bangladesh took a significant step after liberation by nationalizing 36,165 primary schools along with the positions of 157,724 primary school teachers. The nationalization of an additional 26,193 primary schools, marking a major milestone in the country's commitment to expanding and strengthening primary education.

To further advance the quality and inclusiveness of education, the Government has implemented a range of modern and forward-looking programmes. As of now, there are 114,630 primary educational institutions across the country, including 65,567 government primary schools, catering to 16,217,406 students from pre-primary to class five. The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education is working tirelessly to ensure that all children in Bangladesh have access to quality primary education.

To achieve the goal of universal and equitable primary education, the Ministry has adopted a comprehensive approach that includes community engagement, quality assurance, and a particular emphasis on gender inclusion. A key element of this strategy is the promotion of women's participation, both as beneficiaries and decision-makers. In line with this, the Ministry has introduced several targeted policies, such as the School Management Committee (SMC) Policy, Teacher Recruitment Policy, Teacher Transfer Policy, Stipend Guidelines, School Level Improvement Plan (SLIP) Guidelines, and the National School Meal Policy. These policies are designed to create meaningful opportunities for women's involvement in the management and administration of primary education, including their active participation in school governance and in teacher recruitment and transfer processes. Through these initiatives, the Ministry aims to build an inclusive, gender-responsive education system that empowers women and benefits all learners.

6.2 Ministry/Division's Mandate Described/Enshrined in Relevant Laws and Policy Documents

The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education operates under strong constitutional obligations, most notably Article 17 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh declares primary education to be free and compulsory for all children. In line with this constitutional directive, the core responsibilities of the Ministry include formulating and implementing policies on primary and mass education, overseeing and monitoring compulsory primary education programmes, and executing non-formal education initiatives to promote mass literacy. The Ministry is also tasked with curriculum development, preparation, printing, and distribution of textbooks, conducting training and research related to primary and mass education, and coordinating with other government bodies, institutions, and NGOs, particularly in the areas of mass and adult education.

The National Women Development Policy 2011—formulated based on the Constitution and the principles of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)—outlines several responsibilities for the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education in advancing gender equality. These include ensuring regular attendance of girls in schools, protecting girls from physical and mental abuse within educational settings, promoting nutritional education, and taking necessary actions to ensure access to education for girls with disabilities.

The National Education Policy 2010 further reinforces the Ministry's role in promoting women's rights and gender equity in education. It emphasizes the need to increase female enrollment and retention at all levels of education, implement strategies to reintegrate dropout students—particularly girls—into the mainstream system and foster a positive portrayal of women in educational content. This includes incorporating more biographies of distinguished women and women's writings into primary and secondary curricula, as well as ensuring a school environment that is attractive and welcoming to all children, especially girls. The policy also encourages giving preference to women in the recruitment of teachers at the lower primary level to create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for young students.

In furtherance of its commitment to gender equity, the Ministry has adopted a recruitment policy mandating that 60 percent of newly appointed primary school teachers be women. Additionally, to support the work-life balance and overall well-being of female teachers, family considerations—such as placement near a spouse's or parent's residence—are taken into account during transfers and postings. These gender-responsive measures reflect the Ministry's dedication to ensuring equitable access, safe learning environments, and inclusive education for all, particularly girls and women, in line with national and international commitments.

6.3 Women Employees and Beneficiaries of the Ministry/Division

6.3.1 Quantitative Information of the Male and Female Employees

Table 1: Information of Secretariat/Department/Organization

Office name	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Secretariat	105	81	24	22.9
Department of Primary Education	6197	5161	1036	16.7
Compulsory Primary Education Implementation Monitoring Unit	27	22	5	18.5
Bureau of Non-Formal Education	223	196	27	12.1
National Academy for Primary Education	45	36	9	20.0
Children Welfare Trust	1142	474	638	55.9
Total :	7739	5970	1739	22.5

Table 2: Teacher Information

Programme	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Government Primary School	384513	132731	251782	65.5
Private Primary Schools	26846	9484	17362	64.7
Abtedayi Madrasah	19099	13246	5853	30.6
Kindergarten School	172405	65769	106636	61.9
NGO. School (Grade 1-5)	6996	1528	5468	78.2
Primary Section of Madrasah	11277	9198	2079	18.4
Primary Section of High School	17534	7497	10037	57.2
Shishu Kalyan Primary School	986	305	681	69.1
Other NGOs Education Centre	3066	216	2850	93.0
Others	7571	3264	4307	56.9
Total :	650293	243238	407055	62.6

Source: Directorate of Primary Education

6.3.2 Statistics of Beneficiaries

Table 3: Number of students enrolled in primary education-2022 (Pre-primary-5th)

Institution	Total	Male	Female	Percentage of Female
Government Primary School	9289142	4371781	4917361	52.9
Private Primary School	704142	352412	351730	50.0
Abtedayi Madrasah	611,115	312,053	299,062	48.9
Kindergarten School	3675955	1892342	1783613	48.5
NGO. School (Grade 1-5)	416579	206076	210503	50.5
Primary Section of Madrasah	441102	218834	222268	50.4
Primary Section of High School	685774	329254	356520	52.0
Child Welfare Primary School	25957	12448	13509	52.0
Other NGOs Educational Centres	224984	108095	116889	52.0
Others	142656	73707	68949	48.3
Total :	16217406	7877002	8340404	51.4

6.4 Women's Share in Ministry's Total Allocation and Expenditure

(Taka in Crore)

Budget Description	2025-26	2024-25			2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised		Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
Operating Budget	24004.8	22683.8	22359.2		22703.8	22360.8	19000.1	20117.0	19916.4	17564.8
Gender Relevant Allocation	18389.5	17376.1	17129.8		17263.9	17043.9	14468.3	15345.3	15196.8	13418.2
As % of Operating Budget	76.6	76.6	76.6		76.0	76.2	76.2	76.3	76.3	76.4
Development Budget	11398.2	16135.5	12764.0		12018.4	8121.1	7231.1	11641.6	7784.7	6250.4
Gender Relevant Allocation	3370.7	7524.9	7218.9		6101.7	4588.2	4085.4	6521.3	4395.7	3528.7
As % of Development Budget	29.6	46.6	56.6		50.8	56.5	56.5	56.0	56.5	56.5
Total Budget	35403.0	38819.3	35123.2		34722.2	30481.9	26231.2	31758.5	27701.0	23815.2
Gender Relevant Allocation	21760.3	24901.0	24348.8		23365.6	21632.2	18553.7	21866.6	19592.4	16946.9
As % of Total Budget	61.5	64.2	69.3		67.3	71.0	70.7	68.9	70.7	71.2

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

6.5 Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure by Thematic Areas

(Taka in Crore)

Thematic Areas	2025-26	2024-25			2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised		Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
01-Women Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status	287.6	289.2	178.9		198.8	176.3	149.5	191.8	184.2	128.0
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	1.3	1.2	0.7		0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.8
% of Total Budget	0.8	0.7	0.5		0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.5
02-Economic Participation and Equality	43.7	77.3	50.9		72.8	45.4	40.3	106.8	43.7	30.8
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	0.2	0.3	0.2		0.3	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.2
% of Total Budget	0.1	0.2	0.1		0.2	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.1
03-Increasing women's effective access to public services	479.7	464.0	470.0		630.4	581.8	548.6	482.7	478.3	430.3
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	2.2	1.9	1.9		2.7	2.7	3.0	2.2	2.4	2.5
% of Total Budget	1.4	1.2	1.3		1.8	1.9	2.1	1.5	1.7	1.8
04-Education, Health and Wellbeing for Women Development	20949.4	24070.5	23649.0		22463.6	20828.7	17815.3	21085.3	18886.3	16357.8
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	96.3	96.7	97.1		96.1	96.3	96.0	96.4	96.4	96.5
% of Total Budget	59.2	62.0	67.3		64.7	68.3	67.9	66.4	68.2	68.7

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

6.6 Impact of Priority Spendings of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

Priority Expenditure Sectors/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (Direct and Indirect)
Skill development of teachers	Teachers' training plays a vital role in Bangladesh's efforts to improve the quality of primary education. On average, around 15,000 teachers receive Basic Training for Primary Teachers (BTPT) each year, with approximately 64 percent of the trainees being women. In addition, subject-specific training—including Information and Communication Technology (ICT)—is provided to teachers on a regular basis. These initiatives are significantly enhancing the professional skills of teachers, particularly female educators, thereby contributing to more effective teaching and learning outcomes in primary schools.
Establishment of new schools, expansion of existing infrastructure, reconstruction, repair and renovation	Approximately 20 million students are benefiting from the construction of 50,000 need-based classrooms under PEDP-4, along with an additional 65,000 classrooms built through two other initiatives, and the annual renovation of 45,000 schools.
School Feeding Programme	To address high dropout rates among students from poor and marginalized communities and to enhance their nutritional intake, the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) has approved a project titled School Feeding Programme in Government Primary Schools. Beginning on July 1, 2025, approximately 3.13 million students across 150 upazilas will receive mid-day meals as part of this initiative.
Providing stipend/tuition allowance to poor students	The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education is currently providing stipends to 11.6 million students. This initiative has led to a notable increase in net enrollment and attendance rates, while also contributing significantly to the reduction in student dropout rates.
Illiteracy Eradication Programme	Women constitute half of the 4.5 million beneficiaries of the literacy programme. As a result, the programme is significantly contributing to enhancing the social status of previously uneducated women and increasing their involvement in income-generating activities.
Resumption of primary scholarship	Steps have been undertaken to reintroduce primary-level scholarships starting in 2025 with the aim of promoting education among children, particularly encouraging school attendance and retention among girls.

6.7 Women Advancement related KPIs of the Ministry/Division and Achievements

SI No	KPI	Unit	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
1.	Percentage of female teachers in primary education (GPS)	%	64.19	64.8	65.5
2.	Enrollment rate of girls in primary school is		51.17	49.5	51.4

6.8 Mentionable Success Stories of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education has made significant contributions to the advancement of women through its wide-reaching initiatives in the education sector. The Ministry oversees the majority of primary education institutions in Bangladesh, currently serving approximately 70 percent of all primary-level students nationwide. Of these, 51.4 percent are girls, highlighting the Ministry's success in expanding access to education for female students. This growing access is playing a transformative role in shaping a brighter and more empowered future for girls across the country.

One of the most impactful measures has been the reservation of 60 percent of primary school teaching positions for women. This policy has not only created increased employment opportunities for educated women but has also enhanced their social standing and contributed to broader goals of women's empowerment within communities. Women also play a pivotal role in implementing the country's universal primary education agenda, particularly in achieving 100 percent enrollment and ensuring the completion of the education cycle. To encourage their engagement, the Ministry organizes "Mother's Day" annually at the school level, which serves as a platform to raise public awareness and promote active community participation.

In addition, policies such as the stipend programme and the school feeding initiative (Mid-Day Meal) have been designed to foster greater involvement of mothers in their children's education. Currently, nearly 11.6 million students are receiving stipends, which are distributed directly through mobile applications. Importantly, the funds are transferred to the mothers' mobile phones, further reinforcing their role in their children's education and strengthening their financial inclusion and decision-making capacity at the household level. These initiatives collectively demonstrate the Ministry's strong commitment to advancing women's empowerment through inclusive and gender-responsive educational policies.

6.9 Challenges of Women's Development Goals

Despite significant progress in expanding access to primary education, several challenges continue to hinder the achievement of women's development goals under the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education. One major barrier is the absence of effective school health programmes, which are critical for ensuring the physical well-being of students, particularly girls. Without such programmes, many female students face health-related obstacles that affect attendance and learning outcomes. Additionally, adolescent girls are more vulnerable to dropping out of school due to a lack of appropriate guidance and support in navigating the physical and psychological changes of puberty. This gap in life-skill education and counseling services often leads to early school leaving and missed opportunities for personal and academic development. Furthermore, inadequate funding for essential educational materials and resources remains a persistent challenge. Many schools are unable to provide the necessary support systems—such as learning aids, gender-sensitive facilities, and tailored instruction—that are crucial for ensuring an inclusive and equitable learning environment for girls. Addressing these challenges is essential for advancing gender equality and ensuring that all girls can fully benefit from primary and mass education initiatives.

6.10 Recommendations/Way Forward

To promote gender equity in primary education and empower future generations of women, several strategic actions need to be undertaken by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education under the Gender Budget for FY 2025-26. First, there is a need to actively promote women's education through robust social mobilization campaigns that raise awareness about the importance of girls' schooling and encourage community-level support for female learners.

To reduce the financial burden on families and improve school attendance, essential educational materials such as textbooks, clothing, and school bags need to be distributed to all children, with particular attention given to ensuring full inclusion of girl children. In remote and underserved regions, improving transportation and communication infrastructure are vital to ensure that girls can safely and easily access educational institutions.

Strengthening school-community engagement is also critical. Regular parent-teacher meetings in primary schools need to be institutionalized to enhance parental involvement, monitor student progress, and create a more supportive learning environment for girls. In parallel, effective and enforceable measures must be implemented to ensure that girls attend school regularly and are protected from sexual harassment, exposure to harmful content such as pornography, and all forms of physical or psychological abuse—whether within the school or in its surrounding environment.

Curriculum reforms need to emphasize the positive contributions of women in society and uphold the principles of gender equality. Moreover, girls with special needs must be prioritized in the provision of educational support services, including targeted grants and inclusive learning facilities, to ensure that no child is left behind. Finally, the introduction of a comprehensive and effective school health programme is essential for safeguarding the physical and mental well-being of all students, particularly girls, and for enabling them to pursue their education in a healthy and supportive environment.

Medical Education and Family Welfare Division

7.1 Introduction

The primary objective of the Medical Education and Family Welfare Division is to enhance access to quality health education, strengthen and expand universal family planning, maternal and child health, adolescent health, and reproductive health services. This includes the development of infrastructure related to health education and family planning, as well as the expansion of training programmes and opportunities for capacity building.

The Division plays a vital role in promoting socio-economic development by improving key demographic indicators such as family planning outcomes, maternal and child health, and by reducing mortality rates among mothers and children. It also contributes to manage population growth and alleviates pressure on national resources, thereby supporting both socio-economic advancement and sustainable development goals. The Division prioritizes the health and well-being of women through the expansion of health, family planning, and nutrition services; the implementation of targeted programmes for maternal, child, adolescent, and reproductive health; improvements in medical, nursing, and midwifery education; the enhancement of healthcare infrastructure; and the application of research, training, and technology to improve service delivery and education outcomes.

7.2 Ministry/Division's Mandate Described/Enshrined in Relevant Laws and Policy Documents

Article 15(a) of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh guarantees healthcare as a fundamental right for all citizens. Furthermore, Article 18(1) recognizes the development of public health as one of the core responsibilities of the State. To fulfill these constitutional commitments, the availability of skilled healthcare professionals—such as doctors, nurses, and other health workers—is essential. In this context, the Medical Education and Family Welfare Division is actively engaged in developing a competent healthcare workforce through the establishment and operation of Medical Colleges, Nursing Colleges, and Medical Technology Institutes. Additionally, the Division contributes to ensuring public healthcare by supporting population management, promoting reproductive health, advancing safe motherhood, and facilitating healthy childbirth.

In alignment with the National Health Policy 2011, the Division plays a pivotal role in enhancing the overall quality of healthcare for both women and men. It does so by producing qualified health professionals and ensuring equitable access to services, especially for disadvantaged and marginalized populations. Priority areas include reducing maternal and infant mortality, strengthening reproductive and family planning services, improving maternal and child health at the grassroots level, making family planning services more acceptable and accessible to low-income groups, and modernizing medical and nursing education to address national healthcare needs.

The Bangladesh Population Policy 2012 focuses on developing a skilled workforce and harnessing demographic dividends, with a strong emphasis on women's health and gender equality. Its strategic objectives include ensuring equal access to education, health, and nutrition; mainstreaming gender considerations in grassroots and educational initiatives; providing inclusive reproductive healthcare for marginalized communities; promoting rights-based family planning and adolescent health services; discouraging child marriage; and empowering women through increased participation in socio-economic and political processes while actively combating gender-based violence.

Under the Bangladesh National Strategy for Maternal Health 2019–2030, the Medical Education and Family Welfare Division is tasked with delivering comprehensive maternal healthcare throughout a woman's life cycle. This includes the strategic planning and allocation of resources for maternal and neonatal care, implementation of quality assurance systems, and mobilization of communities through health-focused awareness and empowerment programmes.

The National Women Development Policy 2011 outlines several objectives that are directly relevant to the mandate and activities of the Medical Education and Family Welfare Division. Specifically, Section 16.6 emphasizes the need to develop women into educated and skilled human resources, while Section 16.14 calls for the adoption of appropriate measures to ensure women's health and nutrition. Additionally, Section 34 of the policy, which focuses on Health and Nutrition, presents several critical priorities aligned with the Division's responsibilities. These include ensuring women's right to nutrition and achieving the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health across all life stages—childhood, adolescence, youth, pregnancy, and old age. The policy further underscores the importance of incorporating women's reproductive health and rights into population planning and implementation processes. Strengthening women's access to primary healthcare, reducing maternal and child mortality, and providing education and training on nutrition are also highlighted. Moreover, it calls for improvements in reproductive health services and promotes women's active participation in the selection and decision-making processes regarding family planning methods by eliminating gender-based discrimination.

7.3 Women Employees and Beneficiaries of the Ministry/Division

7.3.1 Quantitative Information of the Male and Female Employees

Office name	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Medical Education and Family Welfare Division	133.0	97.0	36.0	27.1
Directorate General of Family Planning (Head Office and Field Level Manpower)	36956.0	11282.0	25678.0	69.5
Directorate General of Medical Education (Head Office and Medical Colleges, Medical Assistant Training School (MATs) and Institute of Health Technology (IHT))	6787.0	4545.0	2242.0	33.0
National Institute of Population Research and Training (NIPORT)	437.0	302.0	135.0	30.9
Directorate General of Nursing and Midwifery	4000.0	1000.0	3000.0	75.0
Total :	48313.0	17226.0	31091.0	64.4

7.3.2 Statistics of Beneficiaries

Programme	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Directorate General of Family Planning	28158063	2819185	25338878	90.0
Directorate General of Medical Education (Head Office and Medical Colleges, Medical Assistant Training School (MATs) and Institute of Health Technology (IHT))	46654	20448	26206	56.2
National Institute of Population Research and Training (NIPORT)	6755	2895	3860	57.1
Directorate General of Nursing and Midwifery	34000	3400	3860	11.4
Total :	28245472	2845928	25372804	89.8

7.4 Women's Share in Ministry's Total Allocation and Expenditure

(Taka in Crore)

Budget Description	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
Operating Budget	4983.6	4833.6	4525.5	5366.9	4260.0	3592.6	4768.4	4304.4	3092.4
Gender Relevant Allocation	2582.6	2502.1	2328.8	2693.8	2237.8	1921.7	2414.9	2194.9	1610.7
As % of Operating Budget	51.8	51.8	51.5	50.2	52.5	53.5	50.6	51.0	52.1
Development Budget	5902.4	6448.9	2283.2	3254.0	1991.3	1192.8	2813.8	2392.8	1765.8
Gender Relevant Allocation	2878.4	2976.6	995.0	1334.7	837.0	493.4	1306.6	971.6	698.4
As % of Development Budget	48.8	46.2	43.6	41.0	42.0	41.4	46.4	40.6	39.6
Total Budget	10886.0	11282.4	6808.6	8620.9	6251.3	4785.4	7582.2	6697.2	4858.2
Gender Relevant Allocation	5461.0	5478.6	3323.8	4028.5	3074.8	2415.1	3721.5	3166.5	2309.1
As % of Total Budget	50.2	48.6	48.8	46.7	49.2	50.5	49.1	47.3	47.5

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

7.5 Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure by Thematic Areas

(Taka in Crore)

Thematic Areas	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
01-Women Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status	81.4	14.5	66.9	16.0	13.3	7.4	14.1	14.8	8.8
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	1.5	0.3	2.0	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.4
% of Total Budget	0.7	0.1	1.0	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
02-Economic Participation and Equality	161.2	159.1	55.7	251.9	99.4	59.5	114.5	89.4	56.8
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	3.0	2.9	1.7	6.3	3.2	2.5	3.1	2.8	2.5
% of Total Budget	1.5	1.4	0.8	2.9	1.6	1.2	1.5	1.3	1.2
03-Increasing women's effective access to public services	0.0	0.0	0.0	109.7	93.0	47.6	109.7	54.1	20.1
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.7	3.0	2.0	2.9	1.7	0.9
% of Total Budget	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	1.5	1.0	1.4	0.8	0.4
04-Education, Health and Wellbeing for Women Development	5218.4	5305.1	3201.1	3651.1	2869.2	2300.5	3483.3	3008.3	2223.4
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	95.6	96.8	96.3	90.6	93.3	95.3	93.6	95.0	96.3
% of Total Budget	47.9	47.0	47.0	42.4	45.9	48.1	45.9	44.9	45.8

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

7.6 Impact of Priority Spendings of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

Priority Expenditure Sectors/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (Direct and Indirect)
Construction, modernization, and expansion of medical universities/colleges, nursing and midwifery colleges/institutes, and family planning service centres/institutions	Improving and expanding undergraduate and postgraduate medical education, along with nursing, midwifery, alternative medical, and allied health education, will lead to an increase in the number of female doctors, nurses, and paramedics. Consequently, the representation of women within the skilled and trained healthcare workforce will grow. This development will also enable women to access affordable and locally available alternative treatments, thereby contributing to better health outcomes for women. Additionally, door-to-door services delivered by field health workers - particularly in the areas of family planning and reproductive healthcare—will significantly enhance the health of mothers and adolescents. The expansion of these services will not only promote safe motherhood but also greatly increase the participation of healthy and capable women in economic activities.

Priority Expenditure Sectors/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (Direct and Indirect)
Conducting family planning activities to improve maternal, child and reproductive health	• As a result of quality family planning programmes, women and men will be motivated to adopt family planning methods to have well-planned families. • Maternal health services will enhance the nutritional status of pregnant mothers and ensure safe deliveries, leading to overall improvements in women's health. • The health of women and adolescents will be improved through providing necessary medicines, home-to-home services to health field workers, and suitable reproductive health services according to needs. • Awareness-raising through reproductive health promotion will encourage adolescents and women to have children at the appropriate time, reducing mortality risks, ensuring safe motherhood, and protecting their health ultimately leading to increased participation of women in economic activities.
Conducting recruitment/ placement activities in medical education and family planning service providers	Skilled doctors, nurses, and other healthcare professionals-including a significant number of women are trained and deployed, thereby increasing the overall availability of qualified health personnel in proportion to the population. This growth in skilled and gender-inclusive manpower will enhance women's access to affordable and locally available alternative treatments, ultimately contributing to improved health outcomes for women. Furthermore, the expansion of family planning programmes can encourage both women and men to adopt modern contraceptive methods and embrace planned parenthood, promoting the formation of well-structured and healthy families.
Conducting activities related to the development of technology-based medical education and family planning service management	The establishment of simulation laboratories in medical and nursing colleges will enable the provision of modern, hands-on healthcare training, which will contribute significantly to improving healthcare services for underprivileged communities, irrespective of gender. Additionally, the automation of admission processes for MBBS, BDS, Allied Health, Nursing, and Midwifery programmes ensures a transparent and merit-based selection of qualified candidates. This contributes to the development of a pool of competent healthcare professionals including females, ultimately benefiting all segments of society, regardless of gender. Furthermore, the implementation of e-management systems in the distribution of family planning services, along with automation in human resource management and health sector reporting, will enhance women's access to health education and services. These advancements will strengthen the efficiency and outreach of health and family planning services across various administrative levels. The social status and recognition of women earning livelihoods through medical education will also be elevated. Increased female participation in the dissemination and utilization of health-related information will lead to improved public awareness, reduced health risks, and the emergence of a capable and empowered group of women contributing meaningfully to the health sector and broader society.
Conducting training and research activities	Skilled and well-trained healthcare personnel are capable of delivering high-quality medical services, thereby enhancing the overall standard of medical education. This improvement will benefit underprivileged populations across the country, irrespective of gender. The increased representation of

Priority Expenditure Sectors/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (Direct and Indirect)
	women among skilled health professionals can further contribute to the enhancement of family planning, child healthcare, and reproductive health services. This will ensure better protection of women's health and promote safe motherhood. Consequently, more women will be able to participate in economic activities, fostering greater empowerment and inclusion in society. Moreover, research findings will play a vital role in shaping evidence-based policies and strategies aimed at improving the quality of medical education, as well as maternal, newborn, child, adolescent, and reproductive health services—delivering equitable benefits to disadvantaged communities regardless of gender.

7.7 Women Advancement Related KPIs of the Ministry/Division and Achievements

SI No	KPI	Unit	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
1.	Total Fertility Rate (TFR)	Average number of children per mother	2.05 (BSVS, 2021)	2.15 (BSVS, 2022)	2.17 (BSVS, 2023)
2.	Maternal Mortality Ratio	Per Thousand Live Births	1.68 (BSVS, 2021)	1.6 (BSVS, 2022)	1.36 (BSVS, 2023)
3.	Child Mortality Rate (Under 5 Years)	Per Thousand Live Births	28	31 (BDHS-2022)	33 (BSVS, 2023)
4.	Neonatal mortality rate (less than 1 month)	Neonatal mortality rate (less than 1 month) Per thousand live births	-	17 (SVRS-2022)	20 (BSVS, 2023)
5.	Rate of attendance of skilled health workers at birth	Rate of attendance of skilled health workers at birth Per hundred	53 (BDHS,2017)	70 (BDHS, 2022)	70 (BDHS, 2022)

Source: BSVS: Bangladesh Sample Vital Statistics, BDHS: Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey

7.8 Mentionable Success Stories of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

The Medical Education and Family Welfare Division has made commendable progress in advancing women's health and empowerment through a series of impactful initiatives and programmes. One of the most significant success stories lies in the work of the Directorate General of Family Planning, which has been at the forefront of delivering client-centred services and raising awareness on family planning, maternal and child health, reproductive health, adolescent care, and nutrition across all levels, including the grassroots. Over the past few years, a large volume of contraceptives has been distributed, contributing to enhanced access to reproductive health services. Simultaneously, institutional deliveries, antenatal, and postnatal care have seen a notable increase. These interventions have resulted in significant improvements in key demographic indicators, reflecting the Division's critical role in national development. For instance, the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) dropped from 2.20 in 2022 to 2.17 in 2023, while the population growth rate declined from 1.4 percent to 1.33 percent during the same period. The rate of skilled health worker attendance at childbirth rose to 70 percent in 2022, and institutional delivery rates reached 65 percent. Maternal mortality per 100,000 live births fell from 168 in 2021 to 136 in 2023, while neonatal mortality remained stable at 20 per 1,000 live births. These figures underscore the Division's effectiveness in strengthening women's access to health services and promoting safe motherhood.

Further progress has been achieved in the realm of nursing and midwifery education. The number of seats in government-run courses increased from 930 in 2020 to 1,130 in 2023, expanding opportunities for women to enter skilled healthcare professions. Additionally, autonomous, semi-autonomous, and private grant-in-aid institutions have contributed significantly to the enhancement of higher medical education and research, along with improved service quality in maternal, newborn, adolescent, and reproductive health. Specialized nursing programmes have also been introduced to ensure the production of highly competent healthcare professionals.

To support these educational advancements, a considerable number of medical and family planning institutions have been renovated or repaired in recent years, improving the delivery and management of both educational and healthcare services. Notably, the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) has approved a project for the construction of 19 modern hostels in 10 medical colleges. Once implemented, this initiative will facilitate better residential facilities for students and contribute to the production of a new generation of qualified medical professionals. Collectively, these achievements reflect the Division's steadfast commitment to women's development through health, education, and institutional strengthening.

7.9 Challenges of Women's Development Goals

Despite commendable progress in expanding health services and promoting gender equality, the Medical Education and Family Welfare Division continues to encounter several critical challenges in achieving women's development goals. One of the foremost obstacles is the acute shortage of doctors, nurses, and medical technicians, particularly when compared to international standards. This human resource gap significantly hampers the delivery of timely and quality healthcare services to women, especially in rural and underserved areas. Moreover, poor, marginalized, and vulnerable populations—most notably women—face persistent difficulties in accessing healthcare due to geographical, financial, and social constraints. Cultural and religious taboos, combined with the lack of gender-sensitive behavior from some healthcare providers, further discourage women from seeking necessary medical attention. Additionally, socio-economic issues such as child marriage, poverty, insecurity, and the absence of responsible guardianship undermine women's autonomy and well-being. Nutritional deficiencies among women of reproductive age and young children remain a pressing concern, limiting their physical development and resilience. The limited presence of skilled health professionals has also resulted in a lower-than-expected rate of supervised childbirths, increasing risks for both mothers and newborns. Furthermore, many health institutions lack appropriate initiatives to promote and ensure institutional deliveries for all expectant mothers. Addressing these interrelated challenges is essential to create a more inclusive, equitable, and effective health system that truly advances women's development in Bangladesh.

7.10 Recommendations/Way Forward

To advance women's health and empowerment in a sustainable and impactful manner, several strategic actions are recommended. First and foremost, it is essential to continue the provision of prenatal, natal, and postnatal emergency services, along with skilled midwifery care, to improve maternal health outcomes across the country. Promoting planned parenthood by encouraging couples to adopt both short and long-term family planning methods is also crucial to achieving demographic balance and enhancing reproductive rights. Simultaneously, awareness-raising initiatives on reproductive health should be intensified, particularly among adolescents and young adults, to foster informed decision-making from an early age.

Equally important is the need to conduct regular training and motivational programmes to ensure that healthcare providers demonstrate sensitivity and respect toward female patients. To enhance service delivery at the grassroots level, skilled healthcare personnel must be appointed to Union Health and Family Welfare Centres, Mother and Child Welfare Centres, and community clinics, coupled with continuous capacity-building initiatives.

Empowering women through education and economic inclusion must be a priority. This includes increasing women's participation in technological and technical education, providing scholarships for higher education and research, and facilitating access to affordable loans and technological support for women entrepreneurs. Furthermore, targeted campaigns must be strengthened to challenge and dismantle harmful religious taboos and social prejudices that restrict women's access to healthcare and education.

Ensuring the robust implementation of laws designed to combat gender-based violence is fundamental to creating a safe and equitable environment for women. Lastly, fostering women's leadership at all levels-social, economic, and political-will serve as a catalyst for broader systemic change and ensures that women's voices are central to development planning and policy execution.

Secondary and Higher Education Division

8.1 Introduction

Skilled human resources are essential for sustainable national development and economic growth, while education plays a critical role in this process. To empower women equally, special emphasis has been placed on expanding female education through initiatives such as stipends, increased enrollment, dropout prevention, free textbooks, and promotion of science and technology. Currently, secondary-level enrollment stands at about 58%, with a student-teacher ratio of 1:16. These efforts have positively impacted women's roles as skilled contributors to the workforce. Supportive policies and an inclusive educational environment are being developed to promote higher education, through 174 universities. However, many challenges remain, including modernizing curricula, enhancing education quality, training qualified teachers, and ensuring access for disadvantaged and marginalized communities. The Secondary and Higher Education Division has a key role in overcoming these challenges to build a creative, skilled, and globally competitive population.

8.2 Ministry/Division's Mandate Described/Enshrined in Relevant Laws and Policy Documents

The Secondary and Higher Education Division is responsible for formulating and implementing policies related to the management of education from post-primary to tertiary levels, in line with the state's constitutional commitment under Articles 15 and 17 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to provide education as a fundamental right. As per the Allocation of Business, the Division is actively working to eliminate illiteracy among women, with a particular focus on educating girls and women and equipping them with training in fields such as engineering, science, and technology. Initiatives include providing stipends to encourage girls' enrollment and offering free education for female students up to the graduation level.

Education is viewed as a key instrument for human resource development and achieving a 'Poverty-Free Bangladesh,' as reflected in the Division's policies. To support this vision, the comprehensive National Education Policy 2010 and National Women's Development Policy, 2011 were formulated. This policy outlines a range of guidelines for women's advancement, including fostering awareness and confidence among women, promoting gender equality, enhancing women's participation in decision-making and socio-economic development, encouraging self-employment, and ensuring their involvement in various sectors. It also emphasizes eliminating discrimination in the recruitment of female teachers and giving priority to equally qualified women in hiring for primary and secondary levels. The National Information and Communication Technology Policy, 2018 outlines several initiatives to promote women's development through ICT. It emphasizes regularly updating the ICT curriculum across all education levels to align with domestic and global market demands and prepare for the Fourth Industrial Revolution. The policy also aims to establish one public university in each division as an ICT Centre of Excellence and support the creation of similar centres focused on emerging technologies to boost women's participation in higher education. Additionally, it calls for high-speed internet access in computer labs at all educational institutions to enhance female students' understanding of ICT.

8.3 Women Employees and Beneficiaries of the Ministry/Division

8.3.1 Quantitative Information of the Male and Female Employees

Office name	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Secretariat	210	160	50	23.8
Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education	6246	3783	2463	39.4
Regional Secondary and Higher Education Offices	177	127	50	28.2

Office name	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
District Education Offices	801	588	213	26.6
Upazila Secondary Education Offices	2483	2117	366	14.7
Government Teacher Training Colleges	813	588	225	27.7
Government secondary schools	18861	13986	4875	25.8
Government schools and colleges	1594	1138	456	28.6
Government colleges	39414	29349	10065	25.5
Private universities	86779	61614	25165	29.0
Private secondary schools	289312	196733	92579	32.0
Higher Secondary Teacher Training Institutes	182	140	42	23.1
University Grants Commission	319	277	42	13.2
Universities	47150	38037	9113	19.3
Department of Educational Engineering	1689	1550	139	8.2
Department of Inspection and Audit	77	60	17	22.1
National Academy of Education Management (NAEM)	56	48	8	14.3
Bangladesh Bureau of Education Information and Statistics (BANBASE)	620	554	66	10.6
Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO	21	16	5	23.8
National Curriculum and Textbook Board	201	176	25	12.4
Prime Minister's Education Assistance Trust	98	88	10	10.2
International Mother Language Institute	72	52	20	27.8
Bangladesh Accreditation Council	68	48	20	29.4
Total :	497243	351185	146014	29.4

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Education Information and Statistics (BANBASE), as of April 30, 2025

8.3.2 Statistics of Beneficiaries

Programme	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
School level education (government)	15061	10406	4655	30.91
School level education (private)	278228	190391	87837	31.57
College level education (government)	27703	19789	7914	28.57
College level education (private)	105086	75748	29338	27.92
Universities	16399	11930	8469	27.25
Private universities	16245	11173	5072	31.22
Total :	858722	319437	139285	30.36

8.4 Women's Share in Ministry's Total Allocation and Expenditure

(Taka in Crore)

Budget Description	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
Operating Budget	30450.9	28566.8	30816.8	25933.3	25178.9	24398.0	23360.9	23586.7	22403.7
Gender Relevant Allocation	13713.3	12946.0	12842.2	11520.7	11309.5	10896.4	10642.4	10697.4	10087.4
As % of Operating Budget	45.0	45.3	41.7	44.4	44.9	44.7	45.6	45.4	45.0
Development Budget	17113.1	15541.5	8416.6	16905.7	8952.6	7862.9	16600.5	10064.6	8092.0
Gender Relevant Allocation	8727.7	8537.9	4782.4	9068.1	4891.9	4329.0	9274.6	5496.2	4482.0
As % of Development Budget	51.0	54.9	56.8	53.6	54.6	55.1	55.9	54.6	55.4
Total Budget	47564.0	44108.3	39233.4	42839.0	34131.5	32261.0	39961.4	33651.3	30495.7
Gender Relevant Allocation	22441.0	21484.0	17624.6	20588.8	16201.4	15225.4	19917.0	16193.5	14569.3
As % of Total Budget	47.2	48.7	45.0	48.1	47.5	47.2	49.8	48.1	47.8

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

8.5 Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure by Thematic Areas

(Taka in Crore)

Thematic Areas	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
01-Women Empowerment and enhancing social status	3494.2	3304.7	3218.2	2931.1	2582.9	2490.7	2732.1	2755.8	2587.0
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	15.6	15.4	18.1	14.2	15.9	16.4	13.7	17.0	17.8
% of Total Budget	7.0	7.5	8.6	6.8	7.6	7.7	6.8	8.2	8.5
02-Economic Participation and Equality	140.4	134.0	107.5	141.5	141.5	90.6	140.6	111.7	89.8
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.6
% of Total Budget	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.3
03-Increasing women's effective access to public services	5.9	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
% of Total Budget	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
04-Education, Health and Wellbeing for Women Development	18800.5	18045.2	14298.6	17516.2	13477.0	12644.2	17044.3	13326.1	11892.5
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	83.8	84.0	81.2	85.1	83.2	83.0	85.6	82.3	81.6
% of Total Budget	37.9	40.9	38.6	40.9	39.5	39.2	42.7	39.6	39.0

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

8.6 Impact of Priority Spendings of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

Priority Expenditure Sectors/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (Direct and Indirect)
Enhancing the standard of secondary education	To improve the quality of secondary education, key initiatives include conducting studies and baseline surveys, developing and updating curricula, decentralizing education management, providing teacher training, and establishing model schools and colleges. Better quality education leads to higher academic performance, critical thinking skills, and overall student achievement. It helps produce a more competent and skilled workforce including women, contributing to national economic growth and development.
Improvement of physical infrastructure in public and private educational institutions	Priority has been placed on constructing new buildings for educational institutions (schools and colleges) at various levels, repairing and renovating existing facilities, and building new structures in underdeveloped areas, as these efforts are crucial for expanding access to education. This ensures a quality environment for female students.
Offering stipends to students at the secondary and higher secondary levels	Offering student scholarships has been prioritized, as it plays a vital role in increasing female enrollment for female student's education rates, reducing dropout rates, and promoting gender equality.
Expansion of University Network, Enhancement of Research Activities, and Development of Physical Infrastructure	This sector has been prioritized to develop specialized and productive human resources, foster innovations, and address unemployment by expanding opportunities for more students in vocational and higher education alongside general education.

8.7 Women Advancement related KPIs of the Ministry/Division and Achievements

SI No	KPI	Unit	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
1	Student enrollment rate at the secondary level (6th-10th)	%	60.71	60.17	57.82
2	Secondary school dropout rate (6th-10th)	%	34.95	36.07	34.99
3	Male-female ratio at the secondary level (6th-10th)	Ratio	46:54:00	46:54:00	46:54:00
4	Student enrollment rate at the higher secondary level (11th-12th)	%	37.89	36.57	42.99
5	Student dropout rate at the higher secondary level (11-12th grade)	%	19.02	19.93	19.37
6	Male-female ratio at the higher secondary level (11-12th)	Ratio	48:52:00	48:52:00	47.5:52.5
7	Student enrollment rate in professional degree courses	%	6.41	4.43	4.93
8	Rate of undergraduate and postgraduate degree holders	%	4.04	4.24	4.43
9	Student enrollment rate in higher education	%	20.24	19.47	20.18

8.8 Mentionable Success Stories of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

- Under the 'Performance Based Grants for Secondary Institutions (PBGSI)' programme implemented by the Secondary and Higher Education Department, a total grant allocation of Tk 31.5625 crore has been targeted for FY 2025-26, aiming to benefit 40,025 females—comprising 39,500 female students and 525 female teachers.
- Under the 'Strengthening Reading Habit and Reading Skills Among Secondary Students' initiative, the target for FY 2025-26 is to engage 2.5 million students in reading activities. Based on the average participation rate of approximately 55 percent of female students in 2024-25, an estimated 1.375 million female students are expected to take part in reading habit development activities in 2025-26.
- Under the 'Dissemination of New Curriculum Scheme', a total of 12,600 district and upazila-level trainers are planned to be prepared in FY 2025-26, with approximately 2,520 of them (20%) expected to be female trainees. From September 2024 to April 2025, a total of 590 female trainees received training through the National Academy of Education Management (NAEM).
- Over the past three years, a total of 449,634 undergraduate and equivalent level students received stipends and tuition support amounting to Tk 242.66 crore. Of this, approximately Tk 140.53 crore was distributed to 260,371 female students. In FY 2024-25, the stipend programme is continuing, targeting around 95,700 female students at the undergraduate and equivalent levels.
- Out of 9,063,422 students admitted at the secondary level, 4,96,073 (55%) are female. Out of 4,926,266 students admitted at the college level, 2,537,998 (52%) are female. Out of 34,959 students in teacher training, 15,293 (44%) were female students. Out of 134,748 students in vocational education, 85,936 (64%) are female students. Out of 1,065,276 students studying in public and private universities, 398,681 (37%) are female students.

8.9 Challenges of Women's Development Goals

In the context of secondary and higher education in Bangladesh, several persistent and interrelated challenges continue to hinder the advancement of gender equality, particularly for female students. The absence of a healthy, safe, and women-friendly environment in many educational institutions remains a significant barrier to sustained academic participation and achievement. Inadequate social security contributes to this issue, as girls and young women often face various forms of gender-based violence and harassment, including eve-teasing, sexual harassment, workplace insecurity, and more severe forms of abuse such as dowry-related violence, rape, abduction, human trafficking, acid attacks, and restrictive family practices. These factors not only jeopardize personal safety but also discourage continued education.

Prevailing social superstitions and deeply rooted negative attitudes towards girls' education further exacerbate the problem. Child marriage remains a critical concern, cutting short educational opportunities for many girls and exposing them to early health and social vulnerabilities. Compounding these challenges is a widespread lack of awareness about reproductive health and menstrual hygiene management (MHM), which often leads to absenteeism and increased dropout rates among adolescent girls. Furthermore, the increasing threat of cyberbullying and peer ragging within digital and physical learning spaces creates additional psychological distress for female students, deterring their active participation in academic life.

Dropout rates among girls remain alarmingly high, fueled by a combination of these socio-cultural and institutional barriers. Gender-based discrimination in accessing equal opportunities, both within and beyond the classroom, limits the potential of female students to compete and excel on an equal footing with their male counterparts. Moreover, many educational institutions, particularly those offering co-educational programmes, lack adequate women-friendly facilities. The shortage of gender-sensitive infrastructure—such as safe and accessible sanitation, clean drinking water, designated common rooms, and suitable accommodation—significantly hampers the ability of girls and young women to pursue education in a supportive and dignified environment.

Addressing these challenges requires urgent and coordinated action. It is essential to integrate gender-sensitive planning, resource allocation, and institutional reforms within the Gender Budget framework to ensure that the Secondary and Higher Education Division contributes meaningfully to building an inclusive and empowering education system for all.

8.10 Recommendations/Way Forward

To strengthen gender equality in education, particularly within the scope of the Secondary and Higher Education Division, a set of practical and forward-looking measures need to be implemented in the Gender Budget for FY 2025-26. Expanding accommodation facilities through the construction of hostels and dormitories in both public and private educational institutions is essential to support female students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Efforts must also be directed toward ensuring women's participation and rights in infrastructure development projects, enabling them to benefit equally from institutional growth. Special attention is required to facilitate access to education for women living in slums, as well as for poor and working women, by removing economic and social barriers.

Creating a supportive and inclusive environment in educational institutions is vital. This includes establishing women-friendly toilets and wash blocks in all schools, colleges, universities, government offices, and key public spaces. Dedicated spaces for women in educational institutions

also need to be provided to ensure their safety and allow for recreational activities. Promoting a safe learning environment must be complemented by awareness-building among parents and the broader community. Programmes that foster social consciousness and challenge harmful gender-based prejudices should be scaled up. Organizing seminars and awareness sessions on issues like child marriage prevention and reproductive health across educational institutions can play a pivotal role in shifting cultural norms.

To achieve lasting gender equality, it is important to promote equal roles for women and men in wealth distribution and decision-making within families, society, and the workplace. Cross-sectoral empowerment efforts must be intensified, including the introduction of daycare centres at workplaces to better support working women. Equal access to fundamental rights must be guaranteed through continued policy commitment.

With the current female enrollment rate at the secondary level standing at approximately 58 percent, dedicated measures need to be adopted to raise this figure and ensure parity in educational attainment. Bangladesh must also leverage its demographic dividend by scaling up secondary school enrollment and providing targeted workforce training for women. Increasing female participation in teacher training and eliminating gender disparities in all forms of education and skill development are essential to this goal. Finally, future policy decisions must strategically address gender inequality by expanding women's access to higher education and securing equal opportunities for them in the labor market. These actions are critical for realizing the nation's commitment to inclusive growth and equitable development.

Ministry of Youth and Sports

9.1 Introduction

One-third of the country's total population comprises youth a dynamic, creative, and highly productive segment that holds immense potential for national development. Recognizing this, the Ministry of Youth and Sports is playing a pivotal role in harnessing the energy and capabilities of young people by promoting self-employment opportunities and fostering entrepreneurship. Simultaneously, in today's globalized world, sports serve as a powerful platform to showcase a nation's progress and achievements on the international stage. Beyond contributing to social and economic advancement, sports play a significant role in strengthening international relations and promoting a positive image of the country abroad.

Importantly, sports also serve as a catalyst for advancing gender equality. Well-structured and inclusive sports initiatives promote the physical and mental development of women, while also enhancing their skills, knowledge, and confidence. Participation in sports not only expands women's financial capabilities but also cultivates leadership qualities, paving the way for greater empowerment. Acknowledging these multifaceted benefits, the Ministry of Youth and Sports is committed to ensuring equal participation of both men and women in all areas of sports. Special emphasis is placed on increasing women's representation in sports organizations and leadership roles at every level, thereby fostering an environment where gender equity in sports becomes a reality.

9.2 Ministry/Division's Mandate Described/Enshrined in Relevant Laws and Policy Documents

The Ministry of Youth and Sports is entrusted with the responsibility of developing skilled human resources by providing training and creating opportunities for self-employment, particularly targeting unemployed youth. Through its various programmes, the Ministry aims to integrate young people into the mainstream of national development. It promotes voluntary participation in development initiatives by recognizing and rewarding successful youth entrepreneurs and providing financial assistance to youth-led organizations. Additionally, the Ministry plays a pivotal role in identifying sporting talent and fostering a conducive environment for sports in both rural and urban areas.

The importance of effectively utilizing the potential of the youth has been emphasized in several key policy frameworks, including the National Women Development Policy 2011, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the National Youth Policy 2017 (currently under review for the 2025 update), and the National Sports Policy 1998 (also under revision). These policies highlight the critical need for skill development and training to promote self-employment among the youth. In this regard, the Ministry of Youth and Sports is working to unleash the full potential of young people by fostering both physical and intellectual development.

A major focus of the Ministry is to ensure the active participation of young women in all spheres of national life. To achieve this, it is implementing women's empowerment strategies and policies aimed at eliminating all forms of discrimination against young women. As part of this effort, sports centres are being established in all divisional cities, and the construction of mini stadiums in every Upazila is underway. Furthermore, targeted initiatives are in place to identify and train female sports talents, thereby promoting women's participation in all types of sports.

The National Youth Policy recognizes all Bangladeshi citizens aged 18–35, regardless of gender, as youth and focuses on their overall welfare and development. Section 8.3.21 of the 2017 Policy calls for incentive measures to promote young women entrepreneurs. Section 10.4.5 mandates steps to ensure the safety of young women in all areas of society, while Section 10.4.6 advocates for the reservation of seats for young women in all forms of public transport. In line with these provisions, the Ministry has strived to ensure that the forthcoming Youth and Sports Policy is gender-sensitive and inclusive.

The National Sports Policy 1998 also outlines specific measures for the advancement of women in sports. Sections 2.3 and 2.10 emphasize the need to enhance women's involvement in sports activities and ensure their representation in sports organizations and leadership positions at all levels. Through these combined legislative and policy efforts, the Ministry of Youth and Sports continues to work toward building an inclusive, equitable, and empowered youth society across Bangladesh.

9.3 Women Employees and Beneficiaries of the Ministry/Division

9.3.1 Quantitative Information of the Male and Female Employees

Office name	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Secretariat	111	88	23	90.0
Directorate of Youth Development	5076	4378	698	56.2
Directorate of Sports	327	270	57	57.1
National Sports Council	406	351	55	11.4
Bangladesh Sports Education Institute (BKSP)	369	336	33	8.9
National Youth Development Institute	55	41	14	25.5
Bangladesh Krirasebi Kalyan Foundation	2	2	0	0.0
Total :	6346	5466	880	13.9

9.4 Women's Share in Ministry's Total Allocation and Expenditure

(Taka in Crore)

Budget Description	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
Operating Budget	982.6	977.7	952.7	920.8	915.1	748.5	869.7	841.6	683.5
Gender Relevant Allocation	308.4	306.2	296.6	289.1	285.5	232.7	277.1	264.0	212.7
As % of Operating Budget	31.4	31.3	31.1	31.4	31.2	31.1	31.9	31.4	31.1
Development Budget	1440.4	1234.1	628.0	382.5	601.7	497.1	405.7	786.5	604.2
Gender Relevant Allocation	723.1	622.0	307.7	183.6	255.3	222.1	194.1	384.1	294.4
As % of Development Budget	50.2	50.4	49.0	48.0	42.4	44.7	47.8	48.8	48.7
Total Budget	2423.0	2211.8	1580.6	1303.3	1516.8	1245.6	1275.4	1628.1	1287.7
Gender Relevant Allocation	1031.5	928.2	604.3	472.7	540.8	454.8	471.2	648.1	507.1
As % of Total Budget	42.6	42.0	38.2	36.3	35.7	36.5	37.0	39.8	39.4

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

9.5 Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure by Thematic Areas

(Taka in Crore)

Thematic Areas	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
01-Women Empowerment and enhancing social status	383.68	439.65	346.38	302.41	338.02	285.08	328.97	519.15	396.38
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	37.19	47.37	57.32	63.97	62.50	62.69	69.81	80.11	78.16
% of Total Budget	15.83	19.88	21.91	23.20	22.29	22.89	25.79	31.89	30.78
02-Economic Participation and Equality	221.08	161.38	92.36	68.62	82.52	75.24	37.72	26.90	21.24
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	21.43	17.39	15.28	14.52	15.26	16.54	8.00	4.15	4.19
% of Total Budget	9.12	7.30	5.84	5.27	5.44	6.04	2.96	1.65	1.65

Thematic Areas	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
03-Increasing women's effective access to public services	15.14	0.44	7.22	0.37	0.37	0.26	10.36	9.93	9.93
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	1.47	0.05	1.19	0.08	0.07	0.06	2.20	1.53	1.96
% of Total Budget	0.62	0.02	0.46	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.81	0.61	0.77
04-Education,Health and Wellbeing for Women Development	411.64	326.74	158.30	101.31	119.88	94.19	94.16	92.08	79.59
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	39.91	35.20	26.20	21.43	22.17	20.71	19.98	14.21	15.69
% of Total Budget	16.99	14.77	10.02	7.77	7.90	7.56	7.38	5.66	6.18

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

9.6 Impact of Priority Spendings of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

Priority Expenditure Sectors/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (Direct and Indirect)
Training, loan, and employment of unemployed youth	In the medium term, the provision of microloans to trained young women is expected to generate income opportunities for at least 48,150 individuals. Additionally, approximately 510,000 young women are currently participating in a wide range of vocational training programmes, including housekeeping, tailoring, cattle rearing, nursery management, block printing and batik work, bamboo and cane crafts, embroidery, designer blanket production, fashion design, shoe making, and poultry farming. These skill development initiatives are designed to build a competent and self-reliant workforce, thereby contributing significantly to poverty alleviation, the empowerment of women, and the promotion of social stability through the reduction of inequality.
Age-based training and grants to underprivileged sports persons	Women with sporting talent are identified at the grassroots level and nurtured into skilled athletes through age-appropriate training programmes of varying durations, thereby contributing to increased female participation in sports. In FY 2025-26, a total of 1,652 elderly and destitute women athletes will receive financial allowances as part of targeted support measures. Furthermore, the provision of sports grants and the distribution of equipment have significantly enhanced women's engagement in sports and created new opportunities for income generation and economic empowerment.
Organizing and participating in sports competitions at local, national, and international levels	The participation of women in national and international sports competitions generates considerable enthusiasm among young women, inspiring them to pursue careers as professional athletes. By representing the country in sports such as football, cricket, and other competitive events, women not only contribute to national pride but also play a vital role in promoting gender equality. Their achievements serve to empower other women and raise awareness of the vast potential women possess in the field of sports and beyond.
Development of physical infrastructure in the field of youth and sports	The construction of youth training centres and women's sports complexes has significantly enhanced women's participation in sports. These facilities play a vital role in nurturing skilled female athletes and empowering them to engage actively in various sectors of society.

9.7 Women Advancement related KPIs of the Ministry/Division and Achievements

SI No	KPI	Unit	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
1.	Participation of women in physical education at undergraduate level	%	21	24	32

9.8 Mentionable Success Stories of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

This Ministry has achieved commendable progress in promoting women's empowerment through a wide range of skill development initiatives and social awareness programmes. Approximately 761,000 young women have been trained in various income-generating trades such as housekeeping, sewing, livestock rearing, nursery management, block-batik and printing, bamboo and rattan crafts, nakshi kantha, and poultry farming. As a result of these capacity-building efforts, income opportunities have been created for 65,201 young women through the provision of financial support in the form of loans. These initiatives have contributed to the development of a skilled, productive, and socially conscious youth population.

To further promote youth engagement in national development, the government has expanded its training programmes across all 64 districts, 10 metropolitan areas, and 491 upazilas. These programmes are complemented by post-training self-employment initiatives, youth loan facilities, and poverty alleviation measures that foster economic self-reliance among women. In addition to vocational training, the Ministry/Division has been actively involved in facilitating technology transfer and implementing a range of social initiatives, including environmental awareness campaigns, voluntary blood donation drives, anti-eve-teasing activities, and HIV/AIDS prevention efforts. By raising awareness about women's legal rights, health, and other social concerns, these programmes empower young women and help ensure that they enjoy equal opportunities alongside their male counterparts.

Institutional support for women-led organizations has also been significant. Out of the 23,602 youth organizations registered with the Department of Youth Development, 1,210 are led by women and dedicated to advocating for women's rights and empowerment.

In the field of sports, the Ministry of Youth and Sports has undertaken projects such as the "Further Development of Dhaka Dhanmondi Women's Sports Complex" and the "Improvement of Sports Training Quality for Female Trainees of BKSP (Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protishtan)." These initiatives have helped enhance the performance of women athletes in national and international arenas. Women's football and cricket teams, among others, have brought national pride by securing medals in international competitions, supported by the improved infrastructure and training facilities provided through these projects.

Collectively, these multifaceted efforts highlight the Ministry's sustained commitment to empowering women, promoting gender equality, and enabling inclusive national development.

9.9 Challenges of Women's Development Goals

Despite notable progress, several socio-cultural and structural challenges continue to hinder the effective implementation of women's development initiatives. A significant barrier remains the prevailing social and religious conservatism in many communities, where a large segment of the population discourages women's participation in activities beyond traditional household roles. This cultural mindset limits women's access to education, employment, and public engagement. Child marriage persists as another major challenge, undermining efforts to empower young women and prevent early dropouts from education, ultimately restricting their potential for self-

reliance and active citizenship. Additionally, the lack of education, coupled with low levels of confidence and societal trust, further restricts women's advancement. In many cases, the absence of support or cooperation from male colleagues and business partners, and the social stigma associated with women's leadership or entrepreneurship, pose serious obstacles to the Ministry of Youth and Sports' programmes aimed at promoting women's development. These challenges must be systematically addressed through targeted awareness, inclusive policy enforcement, and community engagement to ensure meaningful progress in gender equality.

9.10 Recommendations/Way Forward

To further enhance the empowerment and active participation of young women in national development, several forward-looking recommendations are proposed. Priority should be given to young women in the disbursement of loans intended for trained youth, with increased financial support aimed at facilitating their self-employment and entrepreneurship. Additionally, targeted incentives and grants should be provided to women-led youth organizations to enable them to organize awareness programmes on critical social issues such as the prevention of child marriage, dowry, terrorism and militancy, drug abuse, and domestic violence.

In the realm of sports, it is essential to ensure equal representation of women in the Executive Committees of all Sports Associations to promote inclusive leadership. Adequate arrangements must also be made to provide sports equipment and infrastructure for female athletes. Their achievements should be formally recognized through the awarding of certificates and honors, thereby encouraging greater participation in sports. Furthermore, the development of women-friendly infrastructure-including dedicated dressing rooms, washrooms, and day-care facilities-should be ensured in every sports complex to create a safe and supportive environment for women and girls in sports and physical activities.

Ministry of Social Welfare

10.1 Introduction

Bangladesh has emerged as a remarkable example of inclusive development on the global stage in recent years. The country has achieved substantial progress in raising per capita income, enhancing human resource capacity, and implementing effective strategies for climate change adaptation. However, this rapid economic advancement has also given rise to growing income inequality, largely due to sudden structural transformations within the economy.

In response to these challenges, the Ministry of Social Welfare has taken an active role in addressing social disparities by implementing more than fifty social security programmes. These include allowances for the elderly, widows, and persons with disabilities, as well as targeted support for the poor, homeless, destitute women, orphans, vulnerable children, and marginalized individuals. Central to these initiatives is the Ministry's strong commitment to ensuring the active participation of women, with the objective of fostering their socio-economic upliftment and empowerment.

Women comprise the majority of beneficiaries under these programmes—accounting over 50 percent—which highlights the Ministry's dedication to gender equity. By prioritizing support for disadvantaged women through its policies and services, the Ministry aims to reduce all forms of discrimination within families and communities and to extend the benefits of national development to those who have historically been left behind.

10.2 Ministry/Division's Mandate Described/Enshrined in Relevant Laws and Policy Documents

The Ministry of Social Welfare implements its programmes in alignment with both national commitments and international obligations, as outlined in the Constitution of Bangladesh and various legal and policy frameworks. These include the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), and other global declarations. Article 15(d) of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh explicitly affirms the right to social security, stating that every citizen has the right to receive state assistance in situations of poverty resulting from unemployment, illness, disability, widowhood, orphanhood, old age, or other comparable conditions. In addition to these constitutional mandates, the Ministry is actively engaged in promoting gender equality and eliminating discrimination against women. This is carried out in accordance with several legislative instruments, including the Children Act, 2013, the Orphanage and Widows' Charter Act, 1944, and the Special Benefits for Women Detained in Jails Act, 2006. These laws empower the Ministry to protect the rights of vulnerable groups, particularly women and children, and to ensure equitable access to social welfare services. Through these efforts, the Ministry plays a pivotal role in fostering a just and inclusive society where all individuals, regardless of gender or circumstance, are provided with dignity and support.

10.3 Women Employees and Beneficiaries of the Ministry/Division

10.3.1 Quantitative Information of the Male and Female Employees

Office name	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Secretariat	105	81	24	22.9
Department of Social Services	9189	5939	3250	35.4
National Disability Development Foundation	1880	1178	702	37.3
Bangladesh National Social Welfare Council	21	17	4	19.0
Neuro-Developmental Disabilities Protection Trust	31	18	13	41.9
Physically Handicapped Welfare Trust (Maitri Shilpa)	150	125	25	16.7
Total :	11376	7358	4018	35.3

10.3.2 Statistics of Beneficiaries

Programme	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Old Age Allowance	6001000	2909088	3091912	51.5
Widow and Husband abandoned Allowance	2775000	0	2775000	100.0
Allowance for the Disabled	2900000	1786318	1113682	38.4
Stipends for the Handicapped	100000	46711	31395	31.4
Burnt and Disabled Rehabilitation Fund	199840	129896	69944	35.0
Improvement of living standards of Hijra, Bede, and other backward communities	114309	59530	women-42,150 Hijra-12,629	36.9
Total :	12090149	4931543	7124083	58.9

10.4 Women's Share in Ministry's Total Allocation and Expenditure

(Taka in Crore)

Budget Description	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
Operating Budget	13257.03	11893.82	11731.51	11033.13	10945.44	10573.24	9399.10	9323.39	8936.89
Gender Relevant Allocation	5656.41	6331.27	6264.08	5895.46	5852.91	5700.93	5045.62	5007.97	4848.70
As % of Operating Budget	42.67	53.23	53.40	53.43	53.47	53.92	53.68	53.71	54.25
Development Budget	734.18	975.58	445.17	1183.65	606.80	471.61	798.81	698.41	526.53
Gender Relevant Allocation	285.75	420.36	197.57	467.64	269.27	209.05	332.93	304.06	232.32
As % of Development Budget	38.92	43.09	44.38	39.51	44.38	44.33	41.68	43.54	44.12
Total Budget	13991.21	12869.40	12176.68	12216.78	11552.24	11044.85	10197.91	10021.80	9463.42
Gender Relevant Allocation	5942.16	6751.63	6461.65	6363.10	6122.18	5909.98	5378.55	5312.03	5081.02
As % of Total Budget	42.47	52.46	53.07	52.08	53.00	53.51	52.74	53.00	53.69

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

10.5 Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure by Thematic Areas

(Taka in Crore)

Thematic Areas	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
01-Women Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status	5370.9	5920.7	5892.4	5544.8	5492.6	5369.4	4710.0	4673.8	4538.7
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	90.4	87.7	91.2	87.1	89.7	90.9	87.6	88.0	89.3
% of Total Budget	38.4	46.0	48.4	45.4	47.5	48.6	46.2	46.6	48.0
02-Economic Participation and Equality	105.1	150.3	130.3	128.0	131.9	127.9	130.1	125.1	117.7
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	1.8	2.2	2.0	2.0	2.2	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.3
% of Total Budget	0.8	1.2	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.2
03-Increasing women's effective access to public services	143.2	165.8	67.6	204.7	111.8	96.4	138.6	128.2	105.9
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	2.4	2.5	1.0	3.2	1.8	1.6	2.6	2.4	2.1
% of Total Budget	1.0	1.3	0.6	1.7	1.0	0.9	1.4	1.3	1.1
04-Education, Health and Wellbeing for Women Development	323.1	514.8	371.4	485.6	385.9	316.3	399.9	384.9	318.8
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	5.4	7.6	5.7	7.6	6.3	5.4	7.4	7.2	6.3
% of Total Budget	2.3	4.0	3.1	4.0	3.3	2.9	3.9	3.8	3.4

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

10.6 Impact of Priority Spendings of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

Priority Expenditure Sectors/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (Direct and Indirect)
Social Security	A range of social security programmes is currently being implemented to support vulnerable and marginalized populations. These include the Old Age Allowance, Widow and Deserted Women Allowance, stipends for students with disabilities, and cash transfer initiatives for Hijra, Bede, and other socially excluded communities. Social protection for approximately 69.13 lakh women is being ensured through the inclusion of 100 percent women in the widow allowance programme and a mandatory minimum of 50 percent female beneficiaries in other programmes. These measures are contributing to the enhancement of women's social standing, fostering their empowerment, and significantly reducing their risk of falling into poverty.
Interest-free Microcredit Programme	This initiative plays a vital role in poverty reduction and in fostering the inclusion of persons with disabilities from both rural and urban areas into the workforce as capable and skilled individuals. Through targeted training programmes, it equips them with the necessary skills to improve their employability and achieve greater self-reliance. Importantly, women comprise nearly 50 percent of the beneficiaries, which directly supports their empowerment and strengthens their active participation in society.
Protection of Underprivileged Children under government management	To safeguard the rights and well-being of underprivileged children, comprehensive support is being provided through access to housing, food, clothing, education, and healthcare. These efforts aim to uphold and protect children's rights within society, ensuring their overall development and inclusion.
Protection of rights, development, and provision of services to persons with disabilities	These initiatives aim to integrate persons with disabilities into the mainstream of society by transforming them into skilled human resources. This is achieved through the provision of housing facilities, access to education and training, and the distribution of assistive devices, all tailored to meet their specific needs. Special priority is given to women with disabilities to ensure their access to quality education, healthcare, and safe housing. As a result, the initiatives help to mitigate their vulnerabilities and reduce potential risks and losses.

10.7 Women Advancement related KPIs of the Ministry/Division and Achievements

SI No	KPI	Unit	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
1.	Old Age Allowance (Base Line 1,10,96,400 persons)	%	44.20	48.62	54.08
2.	Widow Allowance (Base Line 51,32,093 persons)		39.90	48.20	54.07

10.8 Mentionable Success Stories of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

The Ministry of Social Welfare has undertaken significant initiatives to strengthen the social safety net programme and promote women's empowerment across Bangladesh. A major achievement includes the provision of old age allowances to 60.01 lakh individuals, widow and deserted women

allowances to 27.75 lakh recipients, and disability allowances to 29 lakh persons with disabilities. To ensure gender inclusiveness, the Ministry has made it mandatory that 100 percent of the beneficiaries of widow allowances be women, and at least 50 percent of the recipients of old age and disability allowances be female.

Beyond financial support, the Ministry has emphasized the socio-economic upliftment of women through vocational training. Skill development programmes are delivered through various training centres operated under the UCD (Upazila Coordination and Development) offices. In FY 2023-24, a total of 21,496 individuals received training from 80 skill development centres under the Ministry, of which 9,028 were women representing 42 percent of total individuals. These trained women are not only contributing financially to their households but also managing their family responsibilities effectively, demonstrating the dual impact of empowerment and social responsibility facilitated by the Ministry's interventions.

10.9 Challenges of Women's Development Goals

Despite progress in promoting gender equity, several critical challenges remain in achieving the development goals for women under the Ministry of Social Welfare. As of May 2025, approximately 39.59 percent of women in Bangladesh are identified as having disabilities. However, only 38.6 percent of these women are currently receiving allowances and stipends under social safety net programmes. This reveals a significant gap in the inclusion and support of women with disabilities, indicating the need for more targeted and inclusive interventions.

Moreover, although women in Bangladesh enjoy a higher life expectancy than men, the number of women receiving old age allowances remains disproportionately low. This underrepresentation points to systemic issues in outreach, access, and eligibility determination that must be addressed to ensure equitable support for elderly women.

Another notable challenge is the low representation of girl orphans in privately run orphanages receiving capitation grants. Currently, grants are provided annually to 1.1 lakh children in private orphanages, yet less than 15 percent of the beneficiaries are girls-despite the fact that girl orphans often face higher risks of neglect, exploitation, and vulnerability. A major contributing factor is the limited number of private girls' orphanages across the country. Addressing this imbalance requires urgent policy attention, increased investments, and the expansion of gender-responsive care facilities to ensure that vulnerable girls are not left behind.

10.10 Recommendations/Way Forward

To promote inclusive and gender-responsive social welfare services, the Ministry of Social Welfare needs to undertake a series of strategic measures under the Gender Budget for FY 2025-26. First, targeted initiatives need to be implemented to enhance the inclusion of women in all social protection programme designed for persons with disabilities. This includes ensuring women's participation in disability identification processes and improving their access to associated benefits and services.

A dedicated social security programme also needs to be introduced to provide regular cash assistance to women who are primary caregivers of children with disabilities. This will serve to recognize and support their critical caregiving roles, which are often overlooked in mainstream welfare provisions.

In addition, the widow allowance programme needs to be expanded to reach a broader population of eligible widows, ensuring that more women in vulnerable circumstances receive the financial assistance necessary for their livelihood and dignity.

The Ministry also needs to develop and implement community-driven child protection initiatives that specifically target girl children. These efforts should aim to extend the reach of social security benefits to girls from underprivileged backgrounds and those affected by social injustices, ensuring a more equitable and protective environment for them.

Furthermore, to improve the effectiveness of gender-focused interventions, it is essential to establish and operationalize an integrated set of standardized indicators. These indicators will allow for consistent assessment and measurement of the outcomes and impacts of all ongoing activities and projects related to women's development, thereby enhancing transparency, accountability, and strategic planning in future interventions.

Technical and Madrasah Education Division

11.1 Introduction

Human resource development is crucial for sustainable economic growth and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, as well as addressing the challenges of the 4th Industrial Revolution and becoming a middle-income country. To support this, Bangladesh has taken initiatives to expand and improve technical and vocational education (TVET) and enhance the quality of madrasah education. The main goal of the Technical and Madrasah Education Division is to develop a skilled, morally grounded workforce through technical and vocational education. It also focuses on improving education quality through research, training, policy and curriculum development, project implementation, teacher registration, financial support, textbook distribution, and the integration of ICT and broadband in classrooms.

Enrollment in technical education rose significantly from 1 percent in 2008 to 18.17 percent in 2022, with women making up 27.68 percent of students, due to comprehensive programmes and effective implementation. To modernize madrasah education, strategies were introduced under the Education Policy 2010, and the Islamic Arabic University Act 2013 was enacted to oversee higher-level madrasah education.

11.2 Ministry/Division's Mandate Described/Enshrined in Relevant Laws and Policy Documents

Efforts are underway to implement the National Education Policy 2010, the National Skill Development Policy 2022, and the Bangladesh National Qualification Framework (BNFQ) to uplift socio-economic conditions through quality TVET. The BNFQ also aims to create a global standard for evaluating the skills of Bangladeshi expatriate workers. Since 2022, thirteen trades have been finalized in SSC (vocational) and Dakhil (vocational) syllabuses, aligned with the National Technical and Vocational Qualification Framework (NTVQF). Additionally, the Diploma in Engineering curriculum has been updated to include core and emerging technologies relevant to future job markets.

National Skills Development Policy 2022 aims to ensure:

- a) Implement extensive traditional and non-traditional skills training programmes to increase employment opportunities for women;
- b) Review and revise existing programmes to make them more inclusive and supportive of women;
- c) Offer accommodation, and stipends for low-income families, and ease admission requirements to boost female participation in skills development training;
- d) Ensure the availability of separate restroom facilities for male and female trainees;
- e) Appoint female trainers and evaluators where feasible;
- f) Establish and enforce anti-harassment policies in all training institutions;
- g) Conduct gender awareness campaigns across all institutions;
- h) Guarantee equal access to services regardless of gender.

Skills Development Strategy outlines several key priorities:

- Implementing the strategies and objectives outlined in the National Skills Development Policy (NSDP) 2022
- Developing an educated, competent, and skilled workforce to drive economic growth

- Expanding and diversifying technical and vocational education and training (TVET), with a strong focus on ICT and emerging sectors such as aquaculture, leather processing, textiles, mechanical engineering, mining, surveying, instrumentation and process control, construction, environmental management, garment design, and electromedical technology
- Modernizing rural TVET institutions to reduce poverty and curb urban migration, taking into account the resources available in those areas
- Promoting private sector involvement in the delivery of technical and vocational education

11.3 Women Employees and Beneficiaries of the Ministry/Division

11.3.1 Quantitative Information of the Male and Female Employees

Office name	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Secretariat	129	102	27	20.9
Directorate of Technical Education	102	88	14	13.7
Non-government educational institutes	41,021	29,607	11,412	27.8
Technical teachers training colleges	77	69	8	10.4
Polytechnic institutes	6799	5590	1209	17.8
Technical School and College	4232	3672	560	13.2
Directorate of Madrasa Education	34	27	7	20.6
Government Madrasahs'	88	79	9	10.2
Bangladesh Madrasa Teachers Training Institute	39	34	5	12.8
Non-government Madrasah Education Institutes	178465	15189	28276	15.8
Total :	230986	54457	41527	18.0

11.3.2 Statistics of Beneficiaries

Programme	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Technical and Vocational Education (Government)	11076	8436	2640	23.8
Technical and Vocational Education (Non-government)	41021	29609	11412	27.8
Madrasa Education (Government)	71	62	9	12.7
Madrasa Education (Non-government)	128451	101675	26776	20.8
Total :	180619	139782	40837	22.6

Ref: Bangladesh Education Statistics 2024, BANBEIS.

11.4 Women's Share in Ministry's Total Allocation and Expenditure

(Taka in Crore)

Budget Description	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
Operating Budget	8997.6	8215.0	8253.7	7779.2	7363.9	6868.8	7170.8	7065.6	6340.9
Gender Relevant Allocation	3857.5	3595.8	3598.7	3417.8	3291.8	3055.3	3129.5	3086.0	2808.8
As % of Operating Budget	42.9	43.8	43.6	43.9	44.7	44.5	43.6	43.7	44.3
Development Budget	3680.4	3568.5	1699.6	2822.8	2619.8	1220.5	2557.0	2086.0	1424.6
Gender Relevant Allocation	1466.5	1310.7	672.9	990.7	919.4	274.7	856.0	651.4	299.0
As % of Development Budget	39.9	36.7	39.6	35.1	35.1	22.5	33.5	31.2	21.0

Budget Description	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
Total Budget	12678.0	11783.4	9953.3	10602.0	9983.7	8089.4	9727.8	9151.6	7765.5
Gender Relevant Allocation	5324.0	4906.5	4271.6	4408.5	4211.1	3330.1	3985.5	3737.4	3107.8
As % of Total Budget	42.0	41.6	42.9	41.6	42.2	41.2	41.0	40.8	40.0

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

11.5 Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure by Thematic Areas

(Taka in Crore)

Thematic Areas	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
01-Women Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status	13.1	13.1	3.6	13.0	12.6	3.3	20.4	12.2	2.9
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.5	0.3	0.1
% of Total Budget	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0
02-Economic Participation and Equality	21.6	22.5	8.9	19.6	9.4	5.7	11.6	10.1	3.2
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	0.4	0.5	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.1
% of Total Budget	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0
03-Increasing women's effective access to public services	4.2	5.4	1.2	2.4	0.1	0.0	2.3	0.3	0.0
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0
% of Total Budget	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
04-Education, Health and Wellbeing for Women Development	5285.2	4865.6	4257.8	4373.5	4189.1	3321.1	3951.2	3714.8	3101.7
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	99.3	99.2	99.7	99.2	99.5	99.7	99.1	99.4	99.8
% of Total Budget	41.7	41.3	42.8	41.3	42.0	41.1	40.6	40.6	39.9

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

11.6 Impact of Priority Spendings of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

Priority Expenditure Sectors/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (Direct and Indirect)
Infrastructural development	Infrastructural development efforts are ongoing to enhance the quality of technical education and expand institutional capacity. For instance, capacity-building initiatives are underway for 64 Technical Schools and Colleges (TSCs), and the establishment of one TSC in each of 100 upazilas is nearing completion. Additionally, construction of four women's polytechnic institutes is in progress in the Sylhet, Barisal, Rangpur, and Mymensingh divisions. Work is also advancing on four engineering colleges in Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, and Rangpur divisions, along with the development of polytechnic institutes in 23 districts. These institutions are providing women with access to technical education, enabling them to actively contribute to national development.
Teachers training and skill development activities	To enhance the skills of teachers and staff in institutions under the Directorate of Technical Education, regular training programmes are being conducted. In FY2021-22, a total of 4,153 subject-specific training sessions were provided, followed by 1,028 sessions in 2022-23. Additionally, 651,000 youth and young women have received skill development training through the ongoing ASSET project.

Priority Expenditure Sectors/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (Direct and Indirect)
Establishing linkages with industries and academia	Job fairs are regularly organized in all government technical institutes across the country, including the Women's Polytechnic Institutes in Dhaka, Rajshahi, Khulna, and Chittagong under the Directorate of Technical Education. These events are creating employment opportunities for female students in both domestic and international organizations.
Stipends for female students	Providing stipends is helping to increase women's participation in technical education. Through this education, women will be equipped with skills, transforming them into a competent workforce and enhancing their employment opportunities.
Establishment of new technical institutes	Four women's polytechnic institutes will offer Diploma in Engineering courses to 1,600 female students, increasing women's participation in technical education. Women from disadvantaged and remote areas of the country will be given access to technical education. This will help develop skilled female professionals and enhance their employment opportunities.

11.7 Women Advancement related KPIs of the Ministry/Division and Achievements

SI No	KPI	Unit	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
1.	The ratio of male and female students at the secondary level (9 th -10 th)	Ratio	67.5:32.5	70.4:29.6	69.7:30.30
2.	The ratio of male and female students at the higher secondary level (11 th -12 th)	Ratio	73:27:00	71:29:00	69.9:30.1
3.	The ratio of students in technical education	Ratio	73:27:00	73:27:00	71:29:00
4.	The ratio of students at the Dakhil level (6 th -10 th)	Ratio	44.4:55.6	44.3:55.7	45.4:54.6
5.	The ratio of students at the Alim level (11 th -12 th)	Ratio	49:51:00	49:51:00	49.1: 50.9
6.	The ratio of students in madrasa education	Ratio	46.5:53.5	46.3:53.7	47.1:52.9

11.8 Mentionable Success Stories of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

Currently, Women's Polytechnic Institutes operate in Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, and Rajshahi, offering Diploma in Engineering courses, with new institutes being established in Sylhet, Barisal, Rangpur, and Mymensingh. To encourage greater female participation, women-friendly trades have been introduced, and students' hostels along with hygienic, gender-sensitive toilets are being constructed in all technical institutions. As a result, female enrollment in technical education has risen to 27.97 percent. Total enrollment at the school level of technical and vocational education is 481973 out of which girls' enrollment is 146073 (30.31%). Total enrollment at the college level of technical and vocational education is 831821. The girls' enrollment in this level is 239533 (28.79%). In basic training in TVET and national skills training out of total 305555 trainees, the number of girls is 101900 (33.35%). In madrasa, out of the total enrolled 2796191 students', the number of girls are 1479208 (52.90%). In teachers training (TTC&VTI) out of 594 trainees, women are 83 (13.98%) (Ref: BANBEIS, Bangladesh education statistics-2024).

To promote female participation in technical education, all female students in government and private technical institutions approved by the Bangladesh Technical Education Board are receiving stipends and free textbooks. These stipends are disbursed through the G2P (Government-to-Person) Payment System. In FY 2023-24, a total of TK 213.37 crore was distributed to 7,74,549 students. For FY 2024-25, the target is to distribute TK 433.09 crore to 11,74,549 students across 4,900 institutions.

11.9 Challenges of Women's Development Goals

In the context of the Technical and Madrasah Education Division, several challenges persist in achieving women's development goals. One of the primary obstacles is the limited interest among female students in enrolling in technical and madrasah education programmes, largely due to prevailing traditional and cultural norms that discourage women from pursuing non-conventional or religious educational streams. This situation is further compounded by inadequate financial investment, which falls short of the actual requirements needed to promote gender-responsive initiatives within these educational sectors. Moreover, deeply entrenched conservative social attitudes and the existing socio-economic structure continue to hinder efforts to mainstream female participation. These barriers are reinforced by widespread gender-biased perceptions and the absence of a cohesive, inclusive mindset at both institutional and community levels. Collectively, these challenges underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions and enhanced resource allocation to ensure meaningful progress toward gender equality in technical and madrasah education.

11.10 Recommendations/Way Forward

To strengthen gender equality in the Technical and Madrasah Education Division, a set of targeted and strategic actions need to be implemented. First, efforts must be made to increase women's enrollment in technical education institutions to at least 50 percent, ensuring balanced participation and empowering women with skills relevant to the modern labor market. To make madrasah education more inclusive and aligned with national development goals, a modernized curriculum needs to be developed that incorporates science, technology, and life skills. This should be complemented by the establishment of an independent Madrasah Education Department and a Bangladesh Madrasah Education Board, which will provide the institutional capacity to deliver quality, technology-driven education while upholding religious values.

In parallel, there is a need to expand the scope and frequency of public awareness campaigns to challenge gender stereotypes and encourage families to support girls' participation in technical and madrasah education. A gender-sensitive curriculum needs to be designed and implemented to reflect the diverse needs of both male and female students and promote equitable learning outcomes. Furthermore, educational institutions must provide a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment that enables girls and women to thrive academically. To retain female students and ensure sustained participation, it is essential to guarantee both financial and social security through stipends, mentorship, and protective measures. These reforms will collectively contribute to a more equitable and resilient education system and help Bangladesh advance its national and international commitments to gender equality.

Health Services Division

12.1 Introduction

Access to quality healthcare plays a vital role in promoting sustainable human development, as it directly contributes to improved productivity, enhanced well-being, and accelerated economic growth. Recognizing this, the Health Services Division remains firmly committed to ensuring equitable and inclusive healthcare for all citizens of Bangladesh. With a strategic focus on the development of the health, nutrition, and population sectors, the division formulates and implements comprehensive plans that address the needs of both men and women. These plans are operationalized through a network of affiliated departments, ensuring effective service delivery across the country. While equal access for all remains a core objective, the division places particular emphasis on promoting women's active involvement in the healthcare workforce - whether as doctors, nurses, or surgeons. Expanding the presence of female healthcare professionals not only empowers women within the medical field but also enhances the health system's ability to respond to the specific health concerns and priorities of women across diverse communities.

12.2 Ministry/Division's Mandate Described/Enshrined in Relevant Laws and Policy Documents

The mandates of the Ministry/Division, as outlined in relevant laws and policy frameworks, reflect a strong commitment to gender equality as both a core human right and a key driver of sustainable development. National Women Development Policy-2011 of Bangladesh underscores the importance of enhancing women's health, rights, and overall well-being throughout their lives.

The National Health Policy 2011 is designed to ensure inclusive access to health, nutrition, and reproductive services for every citizen, regardless of gender, socio-economic status, or geographic location, with particular emphasis on the needs of women and children. Key objectives of the policy include promoting health awareness through media to support access based on equity and justice; ensuring efficient and equitable resource allocation especially for the poor, unemployed, and marginalized; fulfilling constitutional obligations under Articles 15(a) and 18(1) by expanding access to basic healthcare and improving national health and nutrition outcomes; reducing maternal and child mortality; establishing safe delivery services in rural areas; strengthening family planning programmes to achieve replacement-level fertility; and reducing maternal mortality and fertility rates among disadvantaged women while ensuring equal access to mental and reproductive health services across all stages of women's lives.

The National Population Policy 2012 further reinforces these priorities by setting specific goals for enhancing women's health and empowerment. It highlights the need to reduce maternal and child mortality, ensure safe motherhood, and eliminate gender-based discrimination in reproductive health and family planning programmes. The policy also emphasizes inclusive employment strategies for both women and men across public and private initiatives, prevention of violence, trafficking, and sexual harassment, raising awareness on reproductive health for both genders, and ensuring equal access to health, nutrition, education, and employment opportunities for boys and girls alike.

12.3 Women Employees and Beneficiaries of the Ministry/Division

12.3.1 Quantitative Information of the Male and Female Employees

Office name	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Category: Grade 1-9				
Doctors	29743	18350	11393	38.3
Director General	1	1	0	0.0
Addl. Director General/OSD/Equivalent	11	8	3	27.3
Director/ Principal/Vice Principal/OSD/Equivalent	189	157	32	16.9
Deputy Director/OSD/Equivalent	314	249	65	20.7
Assistant Director/Civil Surgeon/OSD/Equivalent	487	407	80	16.4
Deputy Civil Surgeon/UHFPO/OSD/Equivalent	3199	2238	961	30.0
Professor	396	289	107	27.0
Associate Professor	1006	766	240	23.9
Assistant Professor	1513	1047	466	30.8
Senior Consultant	306	246	60	19.6
Senior Lecturer	6	4	2	33.3
Junior Consultant	2095	1393	702	33.5
Junior Lecturer	30	15	15	50.0
Other posts (pay scale 7 and 8)	531	339	192	36.2
Assistant Surgeon/OSD/Equivalent	19659	11191	8468	43.1
Category: Grade 10	596	515	81	13.6
Category: Grade 11-16				
Sub Asstt. Community Medical Officer	3343	2149	1194	35.7
Field Worker	17268	9553	7715	44.7
Health Inspector	700	553	147	21.0
Assistant Health Inspector	3000	1257	1743	58.1
Health Assistant	13568	7743	5825	42.9
Medical Technologist	6763	5540	1223	18.1
Total :	104724	64010	40714	38.9

12.4 Women's Share in Ministry's Total Allocation and Expenditure

(Taka in Crore)

Budget Description	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
Operating Budget	19404.8	16383.9	15447.6	17220.5	14186.5	11586.8	13430.2	13260.7	11009.1
Gender Relevant Allocation	9120.9	8291.3	7791.0	8922.4	7212.9	5950.4	6833.3	6713.9	5628.3
As % of Operating Budget	47.0	50.6	50.4	51.8	50.8	51.4	50.9	50.6	51.1
Development Budget	11617.2	13741.3	5668.8	12209.1	9345.5	7069.0	15851.5	9791.0	6660.2
Gender Relevant Allocation	3462.6	5255.3	2663.0	5317.6	4286.1	3320.1	7337.3	4517.2	3068.8
As % of Development Budget	29.8	38.2	47.0	43.6	45.9	47.0	46.3	46.1	46.1
Total Budget	31022.0	30125.2	21116.5	29429.6	23532.0	18655.8	29281.7	23051.7	17669.3
Gender Relevant Allocation	12583.4	13546.5	10454.0	14240.0	11499.0	9270.5	14170.7	11231.1	8697.1
As % of Total Budget	40.6	45.0	49.5	48.4	48.9	49.7	48.4	48.7	49.2

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

12.5 Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure by Thematic Areas

(Taka in Crore)

Thematic Areas	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
01-Women Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status	519.4	556.1	472.9	1237.7	788.3	628.5	824.1	666.0	561.6
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	4.1	4.1	4.5	8.7	6.9	6.8	5.8	5.9	6.5
% of Total Budget	1.7	1.8	2.2	4.2	3.3	3.4	2.8	2.9	3.2
02-Economic Participation and Equality	26.5	49.4	30.7	1233.7	654.1	503.4	742.9	449.6	394.9
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	0.2	0.4	0.3	8.7	5.7	5.4	5.2	4.0	4.5
% of Total Budget	0.1	0.2	0.1	4.2	2.8	2.7	2.5	2.0	2.2
03-Increasing women's effective access to public services	789.0	858.1	739.3	973.1	713.5	1053.3	695.6	686.9	847.3
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	6.3	6.3	7.1	6.8	6.2	11.4	4.9	6.1	9.7
% of Total Budget	2.5	2.8	3.5	3.3	3.0	5.6	2.4	3.0	4.8
04-Education, Health and Wellbeing for Women Development	11248.6	12082.9	9211.1	10795.5	9343.2	7085.3	11908.1	9428.7	6893.4
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	89.4	89.2	88.1	75.8	81.3	76.4	84.0	84.0	79.3
% of Total Budget	36.3	40.1	43.6	36.7	39.7	38.0	40.7	40.9	39.0

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

12.6 Impact of Priority Spendings of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

Priority Expenditure Sectors/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (Direct and Indirect)
Providing services through community clinics	Women's empowerment has been strengthened through the establishment of community groups and community support groups centered around community clinics.
Healthcare opportunities for both common and complex diseases are being ensured by expanding the infrastructure of district and upazila-level hospitals and deploying the required manpower.	Women now have increased access to medical care for common and complex diseases.
Expanding the activities of specialized hospitals to ensure state-of-the-art health care for complex and critical diseases of the population through both general and referral systems.	Women now have greater access to advanced and specialized medical services, helping to protect them from physical, mental, and financial hardship.

12.7 Women Advancement related KPIs of the Ministry/Division and Achievements

SI No	KPI	Unit	2023-24
1.	Infant Mortality Rate (under five)	Per thousand live births	27.20
2.	Maternal Mortality Rate	Per thousand live births	145
3.	Delivery rate by Trained Birth Attendant	Per hundred	74
4.	Child Malnutrition (under five)	Per hundred	26
5.	Expansion of the coverage of the Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI)	% of the targeted population	87

12.8 Mentionable Success Stories of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

The Health Services Division has made notable progress in promoting women's advancement through improved access to healthcare and gender-sensitive service delivery. A major achievement is the establishment of community clinics to enhance primary healthcare coverage across the country. In line with the government's policy of setting up one community clinic for

every 6,000 people, a total of 14,878 community clinics have been established so far. Women and children constitute approximately 80 percent of the beneficiaries of these clinics, demonstrating their critical role in addressing gender-specific health needs at the grassroots level. Notably, around 4,000 of these clinics now provide normal delivery services, with this number steadily increasing, thereby contributing significantly to safe motherhood and reduced maternal mortality, particularly in rural and underserved areas.

In response to a directive by the High Court Division of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, the Health Services Division has developed a comprehensive protocol titled "Health Sector Response to Gender-Based Violence". This marks a transformative shift in policy from encouraging responses to enforcing systematic support for survivors of gender-based violence (GBV). The protocol has already been piloted in 13 upazilas across Moulvibazar and Jamalpur districts, and its implementation is expected to result in more effective prevention strategies and timely medico-legal services for survivors.

Further progress in institutionalizing the health sector's response to GBV includes the formulation of several important tools and interventions. A Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on medico-legal services for survivors of GBV has been developed, alongside a national protocol to guide healthcare providers in delivering survivor-centred care. To enhance the capacity of service providers, a web-based training module on the Clinical Management of Rape (CMR) has been introduced in both Bengali and English. This module is also available in app format to increase accessibility for mobile phone users. Survivor kits have been made available to support treatment and medico-legal documentation, reinforcing the system's readiness to respond to incidents of GBV. Furthermore, a circular has been issued to institutionalize the delivery of medico-legal services for GBV survivors across the health system. The government has also initiated the establishment of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) services at major health facilities, including Medical College Hospitals (MCH), District Sadar Hospitals (DSH), and Upazila Health Complexes (UzHCs).

These efforts reflect a sustained and structured approach to integrating gender responsiveness into the health sector. The Health Services Division's initiatives have significantly contributed to improving women's access to quality health services and building a more resilient and inclusive health system in Bangladesh.

12.9 Challenges of Women's Development Goals

The Health Services Division continues to face several critical challenges in advancing women's development goals, particularly within the framework of gender-responsive budgeting for FY2025-26. A key concern is the limited progress in building a gender-responsive health workforce. While women form a significant portion of frontline service providers, their representation remains disproportionately low in strategic leadership and decision-making roles. This gender imbalance at the policy level restricts the integration of women's perspectives in health planning and governance. Furthermore, the absence of comprehensive sex-disaggregated data presents a major obstacle in developing evidence-based policies. Without reliable gender-specific data, it becomes difficult to assess needs, measure outcomes, or effectively target health interventions that address the unique requirements of women and girls.

In addition, the irregular availability of maternal and adolescent health-related medicines, supplies, and reproductive health equipment poses a significant barrier to achieving key health outcomes for women. This shortfall is particularly pronounced in rural and underserved areas, where service disruptions can have life-threatening consequences. The lack of adequate oversight

mechanisms at the community level further exacerbates these challenges, as weak monitoring limits accountability and responsiveness in service delivery. Another pressing issue is the insufficient provision of women-friendly health services. Many facilities lack the infrastructure, trained personnel, and supportive environments necessary to meet the specific needs of female patients with dignity and sensitivity. Addressing these challenges requires targeted investment, institutional reforms, and stronger inter-sectoral coordination to ensure that the health system becomes truly responsive to the rights and realities of women across all stages of life.

12.10 Recommendations/Way Forward

To strengthen the gender responsiveness of the Health Services Division under the Gender Budget for FY 2025–26, several strategic actions need to be undertaken. Priority must be given to conducting targeted training and orientation programmes for early-career healthcare providers, equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary to operate within gender-sensitive and climate-resilient health systems. To align policy with emerging challenges and evolving needs, the existing Gender Equity Strategy of 2014 needs to be comprehensively revised and updated. Building on this, a forward-looking Gender Equity Action Plan covering the period 2025–2035 should be formulated to provide a clear roadmap for integrating gender equity across all levels of the health sector. In parallel, a National Strategy must be developed to systematically guide the health system's response to gender-based violence, ensuring that prevention, protection, and response mechanisms are embedded within public health services. Creating a safe and inclusive work environment for female healthcare professionals is essential; therefore, measures need to be adopted to eliminate sexual harassment and foster a supportive workplace culture. Finally, to address the shortage and uneven distribution of healthcare personnel in rural areas, an incentivized retention policy needs to be designed and implemented. This will help ensure the sustained availability of skilled healthcare workers in underserved communities and promote the continuous delivery of quality health services for all.

Ministry of Agriculture

13.1 Introduction

Agriculture plays an indispensable role in driving the overall growth of the national economy. With approximately 40.62 percent of the country's total labor force engaged in agriculture and related activities, the socio-economic development of Bangladesh is inextricably linked to the advancement of this sector. The primary objective of the Ministry of Agriculture is to establish a self-sufficient, sustainable, and modern agricultural system. This goal is pursued through enhancing agricultural productivity and modernizing the agricultural marketing framework by acquiring, innovating, and transferring appropriate technologies. These efforts are guided by the vision of eradicating poverty and ensuring food security in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the National Agricultural Policy.

Women are making significant contributions alongside men in building resilient and sustainable agricultural systems. In fact, nearly 50 percent of adult women from farming households are directly or indirectly involved in agricultural activities, particularly in the production of food grains. Recognizing this vital role, the Ministry of Agriculture has incorporated gender-responsive strategies in its policy frameworks. These include promoting women's empowerment, ensuring household food and nutritional security, supporting skill development for rural women, and encouraging their active participation in agri-business ventures. These initiatives not only strengthen the agricultural sector but also foster the economic empowerment of women, thereby contributing to inclusive and sustainable national development.

13.2 Ministry/Division's Mandate Described/Enshrined in Relevant Laws and Policy Documents

According to the allocation of business among different Ministries and Divisions, the Ministry of Agriculture is mandated to carry out a wide range of responsibilities, including agricultural extension, training, and awareness-building on food-based nutrition; production, quality control, certification, storage, and distribution of seeds; provision of assistance and rehabilitation in agriculture; as well as the collection, distribution, innovation, and management of agricultural inputs and machinery. These core functions are essential for ensuring sustainable agricultural development and food security in Bangladesh.

The National Agricultural Policy, 2018 explicitly recognizes the importance of women's participation in the agricultural sector. It encourages the inclusion of women in agricultural education, research, extension, and training activities. The policy emphasizes the need to ensure women's equal rights and access to agricultural inputs and resources. In particular, it highlights the importance of engaging rural poor women in agro-processing and agribusiness, thereby improving their economic conditions and contributing to poverty reduction.

To foster women's participation in agricultural production, the policy recommends establishing women's rights to access agricultural technologies and actively involving them in various agricultural extension activities such as training programmes, farmer's meetings, and workshops. Furthermore, the policy advocates for the provision of credit facilities to women farmers alongside male farmers in a wide array of agricultural undertakings. These include homestead gardening, post-harvest processing, seed production and preservation, nursery management, beekeeping, and food processing. The government is also committed to extending micro-credit to women for small-scale agricultural processing, storage, and preservation initiatives. Additionally, the policy aims to eliminate wage disparities between male and female agricultural workers.

Other policy documents further reinforce the need to build women’s capacities for small-scale agribusiness and promote their greater involvement in integrated agricultural activities, market linkages, and value addition at the household level. They also emphasize increasing women’s participation in technological innovation within agriculture and ensuring protection for women and children from health hazards during agricultural operations.

In alignment with national and international commitments, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Ministry of Agriculture is dedicated to ensuring year-round access to safe, nutritious, and sufficient food—particularly for the poor and those vulnerable to hunger. Specific targets include addressing the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating mothers by 2025, and eliminating all forms of malnutrition by 2030. The Ministry also aims to double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers—particularly women, indigenous communities, and livestock and fish farmers—by 2030, while simultaneously creating non-agricultural employment opportunities to support inclusive rural development.

13.3 Women Employees and Beneficiaries of the Ministry/Division

13.3.1 Quantitative Information of the Male and Female Employees

Office name	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Secretariat	254	201	53	20.9
Department of Agricultural Extension	20054	16544	3510	17.5
Seed Certification Agency	303	220	73	24.1
Cotton Development Board	521	455	66	12.7
Agricultural Information Service	213	173	40	18.8
Department of Agricultural Marketing	788	681	107	13.6
Soil Resource Development Institute	672	534	138	20.5
National Agricultural Training Academy	168	126	42	25.0
Autonomous institutions	8231	6610	1621	19.7
Total :	31204	25544	5650	18.1

13.3.2 Statistics of Beneficiaries

The Department of Agricultural Extension has provided training on modern agricultural technologies to a total of 128,019 farmers, of whom 40,966—representing 32 percent—are women. Under various projects implemented by the Department of Agricultural Marketing, 409,235 farmers have received training in areas such as post-harvest loss reduction, value chain and supply chain development, and entrepreneurship promotion. Among them, 139,140 participants, or 34 percent, are women. Furthermore, a total of 89,790 entrepreneurs have been developed through different projects and programmes, with women accounting for 30,219 of them—also 34 percent of the total.

13.4 Women’s Share in Ministry’s Total Allocation and Expenditure

(Taka in Crore)

Budget Description	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
Operating Budget	20891.1	20790.4	20820.5	20774.5	28685.9	27722.2	19885.3	29709.2	29108.0
Gender Relevant Allocation	8264.5	8222.2	8264.6	8215.3	11387.4	11058.6	7832.1	11782.5	11610.8
As % of Operating Budget	39.6	39.6	39.7	39.5	39.7	39.9	39.4	39.7	39.9

Budget Description	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
Development Budget	6332.9	6423.9	3875.5	4348.0	4594.4	4237.1	4338.8	4100.4	3429.1
Gender Relevant Allocation	2591.7	2583.3	1553.8	1690.2	1756.1	1641.4	1627.3	1515.9	1270.2
As % of Development Budget	40.9	40.2	40.1	38.9	38.2	38.7	37.5	37.0	37.0
Total Budget	27224.0	27214.3	24696.0	25122.5	33280.2	31959.3	24224.1	33809.6	32537.1
Gender Relevant Allocation	10856.3	10805.5	9818.4	9905.5	13143.4	12700.0	9459.3	13298.4	12881.0
As % of Total Budget	39.9	39.7	39.8	39.4	39.5	39.7	39.1	39.3	39.6

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

13.5 Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure by Thematic Areas

(Taka in Crore)

Thematic Areas	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
01-Women Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status	4795.8	4711.1	4626.3	4655.3	6352.2	6140.0	4417.2	6546.7	6361.1
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	44.2	43.6	47.1	47.0	48.3	48.3	46.7	49.2	49.4
% of Total Budget	17.6	17.3	18.7	18.5	19.1	19.2	18.2	19.4	19.6
02-Economic Participation and Equality	3362.4	3102.0	2871.5	3064.6	3767.5	3661.8	2731.2	3846.5	3753.7
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	31.0	28.7	29.2	30.9	28.7	28.8	28.9	28.9	29.1
% of Total Budget	12.4	11.4	11.6	12.2	11.3	11.5	11.3	11.4	11.5
03-Increasing women's effective access to public services	8.1	19.2	9.6	37.2	28.6	28.6	35.4	27.8	16.6
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.1
% of Total Budget	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
04-Education, Health and Wellbeing for Women Development	2690.0	2973.2	2311.0	2148.5	2995.1	2869.6	2275.6	2877.5	2749.5
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	24.8	27.5	23.5	21.7	22.8	22.6	24.1	21.6	21.3
% of Total Budget	9.9	10.9	9.4	8.6	9.0	9.0	9.4	8.5	8.5

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

13.6 Impact of Priority Spendings of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

Priority Expenditure Sectors/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (Direct and Indirect)
Production and Quality Assessment of High Grade Seeds	High-quality seeds are crucial for achieving increased crop yields. To meet farmers' demand for quality seed production and supply, approximately 30 percent of the workforce engaged in seed production. The family nutrition garden activities are now mostly carried out by the women. Their active involvement is playing a vital role in enhancing the overall quality and availability of seeds.
Extension activities for improved crop production technology among farmers (training, exhibition, field days, rallies, fairs and mass media).	Women now account for 50 percent of participation in activities such as developing agricultural varieties and technologies, delivering training on food quality and nutrition, and engaging in exhibitions, fairs, rallies, seminars, and workshops. This increased involvement has led to the creation of employment opportunities for women and has contributed to improved access to nutritious food for both women and children.
Optimum use of surface water	Women workers are being actively engaged in increasing cultivable land by expanding minor irrigation systems that utilize surface water, aimed at alleviating waterlogging issues.

13.7 Mentionable Success Stories of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

Under the project titled “Improving Nutrition and Reducing Poverty through Expansion of Mushroom Cultivation,” the Ministry of Agriculture has made remarkable progress in promoting women’s advancement in the agricultural sector. The Mushroom Nutrition Institute in Savar, Dhaka, along with 34 sub-centres (horticulture centres) across the country, has been functioning as a network of resource hubs to facilitate the expansion of mushroom cultivation. As part of this initiative, mushroom and spawn production demonstration plots have been established in 160 upazilas across all 64 districts, significantly enhancing the visibility and accessibility of mushroom cultivation nationwide.

A key achievement of this project lies in its deliberate focus on women’s participation. Women have been actively involved in every stage of the value chain—from seed (spawn) production and mushroom cultivation to processing and marketing. Given that mushroom cultivation is an indoor activity requiring relatively low capital investment, minimal manual labor, and manageable space, it has proven to be especially appealing and feasible for women, particularly in rural and peri-urban areas. The project is designed to create economic opportunities and reduce poverty among women, with a target of ensuring that 30 percent of the 24,800 total beneficiaries over the five-year project period are women.

So far, 65 women entrepreneurs have received intensive 10-day training on entrepreneurship development and spawn production techniques. Additionally, 3,276 women have completed a 2-day training on the nutritional value and production methods of mushrooms, while 387 women have received a 1-day orientation training. As a result, women entrepreneurs across various regions of the country are now successfully cultivating mushrooms and marketing a wide range of mushroom-based products, thus contributing to food security, nutrition, and inclusive agricultural growth. These initiatives have not only empowered women economically but also elevated their status within the community, showcasing the Ministry’s commitment to gender-responsive agricultural development.

13.8 Challenges of Women’s Development Goals

Despite the growing involvement of women in the agricultural sector, several challenges continue to hinder their full participation and development. One of the most significant barriers is limited access to essential agricultural inputs, training opportunities, and low-interest agricultural credit facilities, which are crucial for enhancing productivity and sustainability in farming. Women engaged in agriculture often face difficulties in marketing their products due to a lack of practical knowledge and familiarity with market systems. Moreover, the absence of a women-friendly environment in agricultural markets further restricts their ability to participate effectively in trade and commerce.

In addition, women encounter obstacles in accessing affordable agricultural machinery, technical assistance, and other necessary support services that are vital for improving production efficiency. These limitations not only reduce their competitiveness but also limit their ability to adopt modern farming practices. Furthermore, deep-rooted family and social barriers continue to discourage and, in some cases, prevent women from actively engaging in agricultural activities. Addressing these challenges through targeted policies and gender-responsive interventions is essential to empower women in agriculture and to ensure inclusive and sustainable development in the sector.

13.9 Recommendations/Way Forward

To foster inclusive and equitable growth in the agricultural sector, the Ministry of Agriculture is committed to advancing the role of women through a set of forward-looking strategies. First, comprehensive and multi-faceted training programmes will be introduced to equip women with the necessary knowledge and skills in various agricultural practices, thereby transforming them into an educated and capable workforce. To break the cycle of poverty among women, the Ministry will support the establishment of agricultural farms and agro-based industries with active female participation, facilitating the growth of women-led enterprises and entrepreneurship.

In recognition of the vital contributions women make to the agricultural economy, the Ministry will ensure that women receive awards alongside men for their achievements in both social and economic spheres. Additionally, efforts will be made to create a supportive and enabling environment where men and women can share responsibilities equally in both household and productive activities. Finally, to elevate the visibility and acknowledgment of women's proactive roles in agriculture, their contributions and success stories will be highlighted at various agricultural fairs, exhibitions, and events. These measures aim to ensure that women are not only participants but also leaders in the nation's journey toward sustainable agricultural development.

Local Government Division

14.1 Introduction

The Local Government Division is diligently working to enhance local governance, develop infrastructure, and elevate the standard of living. It focuses on strengthening local governance institutions and providing necessary support to them. Its priorities include improving the rural economy, developing climate-resilient civic amenities in both rural and urban areas, managing small-scale water resources, and ensuring safe water supply and sanitation facilities for all. Through the implementation of these priorities, the division seeks to achieve sustainable development. The development of quality transportation systems (roads, bridges, culverts etc.) is ensuring easy availability of agricultural inputs and sale of agricultural products. Prioritizing the development of growth-oriented infrastructure-such as growth-centres, rural marketplaces, women's shopping centres, cyclone and flood shelters-has expanded access to government services for rural poor people. Through the implementation of all these activities, every year about 5.65 crore man-days of employment are being created, of which about 35.36 percent are women.

14.2 Ministry/Division's Mandate Described/Enshrined in Relevant Laws and Policy Documents

According to Articles 11, 59, and 60 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the responsibility of the local governance of every administrative unit of the Republic is entrusted to bodies consisting of elected representatives. A total number of 5,479 local government institutions with 5 layers have been established. In addition, according to Article 19(3) of the Constitution, to ensure women's participation and equality of opportunity in all spheres of national life, one-third of representatives must be women elected by direct vote in all levels of local government institutions. Those elected women representatives are directly engaged in delivering public services to the community.

According to the Allocation of Business among different ministries and divisions, the Local Government Division (LGD) has no direct mandate for women development. However, several of its strategic objectives play a vital role in women's empowerment. They are: infrastructural development and maintenance, development of climate-resilient civic amenities in rural and urban areas, and maintenance of minor water resource infrastructural.

The National Women Development Policy, 2011 assures equal participation of women in socio-economic development, eradication of feminization of poverty, and establishing equal rights of men and women in politics, administration, and other workplaces, ensuring women's participation in socio-economic development. This division has been assigned to coordinate policy formulation and its implementation by various ministries, departments, and agencies at the local level. Besides, initiatives have been taken to empower women by increasing the number of women beneficiaries every year and expanding the coverage of social security programmes to provide nutritional services to pregnant women and 1–5-year-old children. Targets have also been set for the expansion of primary health, nutrition and family planning services.

14.3 Women Employees and Beneficiaries of the Ministry/Division

14.3.1 Quantitative Information of the Male and Female Employees

Office name	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Secretariat	195	167	28	14.4
Department of Local Government Engineering	9427	8345	942	10.0
Department of Public Health Engineering	5671	4661	1010	17.8

Office name	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Office of the Registrar General, Birth and Death Registration	29	23	6	20.7
Dhaka Mosquito Control Office	201	185	16	8.0
Dhaka WASA	2419	2282	137	5.7
Chattogram WASA	510	471	39	7.6
Khulna WASA	185	183	2	1.1
Rajshahi WASA	272	264	8	2.9
Dhaka South City Corporation	1816	1561	255	14.0
Dhaka North City Corporation	950	865	85	8.9
Chattogram City Corporation	8571	5920	2651	30.9
Rajshahi City Corporation	3059	2212	827	27.0
Khulna City Corporation	640	562	78	12.2
Sylhet City Corporation	460	437	23	5.0
Barisal City Corporation	10598	5311	5287	49.9
Narayanganj City Corporation	1849	1130	719	38.9
Gazipur City Corporation	235	170	65	27.7
Comilla City Corporation	861	732	129	15.0
Mymensingh city Corporation	230	215	15	6.5
Rangpur City Corporation	1447	1026	421	29.1
Total :	49625	36722	12743	25.7

14.3.2 Statistics of Beneficiaries

Programme	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Secretariat	228	196	32	14.0
Department of Local Government Engineering	80000	29080	50920	63.4
Department of Public Health Engineering	1665000	691730	873270	63.4
Office of the Registrar General, Birth and Death Registration	39	26	13	33.3
Dhaka Mosquito Control Office	320	198	122	38.1
Dhaka WASA	138	97	41	29.7
Chattogram WASA	1551	893	658	42.4
Khulna WASA	367	316	151	41.1
Rajshahi WASA	439	359	80	18.2
Dhaka South City Corporation	7458924	3416187	4042737	54.2
Dhaka North City Corporation	12963832	6105061	6858771	52.9
Chattogram City Corporation	7500000	3525000	3975000	53.0
Rajshahi City Corporation	79365	34335	45030	56.7
Khulna City Corporation	719465	364894	354571	49.1
Sylhet City Corporation	990504	409591	580913	58.6
Barisal City Corporation	15637	12384	3253	20.8
Narayanganj City Corporation	2383	1830	553	23.7

Programme	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Gazipur City Corporation	754	567	187	24.8
Comilla City Corporation	63369	6609	56760	90.0
Mymensingh City Corporation	99139	34400	64699	65.3
Rangpur City Corporation	1862	1525	437	23.5
Total:	31649116	14638976	16910140	53.4

14.4 Women's Share in Ministry's Total Allocation and Expenditure

(Taka in Crore)

Budget Description	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
Operating Budget	6331.9	6396.7	6191.9	6201.0	6142.3	5310.8	5861.4	5632.4	5077.0
Gender Relevant Allocation	2926.5	3002.1	2868.9	2921.7	2727.3	2452.4	2766.0	2624.7	2352.0
As % of Operating Budget	46.2	46.9	46.3	47.1	44.4	46.2	47.2	46.6	46.3
Development Budget	36101.1	38808.9	36165.7	40502.9	42700.8	36572.1	35845.9	39566.9	33537.5
Gender Relevant Allocation	14002.2	14795.5	14081.5	15644.7	16795.5	14199.5	13574.5	15228.2	12916.9
As % of Development Budget	38.8	38.1	38.9	38.6	39.3	38.8	37.9	38.5	38.5
Total Budget	42433.0	45205.6	42357.7	46703.9	48843.1	41882.9	41707.3	45199.3	38614.5
Gender Relevant Allocation	16928.7	17797.7	16950.4	18566.4	19522.8	16651.8	16340.5	17852.9	15268.8
As % of Total Budget	39.9	39.4	40.0	39.8	40.0	39.8	39.2	39.5	39.5

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

14.5 Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure by Thematic Areas

(Taka in Crore)

Thematic Areas	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
01-Women Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status	826.5	1101.2	763.8	797.3	865.5	652.7	696.9	907.4	728.1
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	4.9	6.2	4.5	4.3	4.4	3.9	4.3	5.1	4.8
% of Total Budget	1.9	2.4	1.8	1.7	1.8	1.6	1.7	2.0	1.9
02-Economic Participation and Equality	8628.5	8756.7	8328.5	7808.2	8337.7	7353.2	6076.0	6361.4	5303.5
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	51.0	49.2	49.1	42.1	42.7	44.2	37.2	35.6	34.7
% of Total Budget	20.3	19.4	19.7	16.7	17.1	17.6	14.6	14.1	13.7
03-Increasing women's effective access to public services	5170.3	6050.6	6015.3	7383.7	7738.0	6732.6	6864.7	8019.1	6715.1
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	30.5	34.0	35.5	39.8	39.6	40.4	42.0	44.9	44.0
% of Total Budget	12.2	13.4	14.2	15.8	15.8	16.1	16.5	17.7	17.4
04-Education, Health and Wellbeing for Women Development	2303.9	1889.2	1843.0	2577.3	2581.6	1913.4	2702.9	2565.0	2522.2
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	13.6	10.6	10.9	13.9	13.2	11.5	16.5	14.4	16.5
% of Total Budget	5.4	4.2	4.4	5.5	5.3	4.6	6.5	5.7	6.5

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

14.6 Impact of Priority Spendings of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

Priority Expenditure Sectors/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (Direct and Indirect)
Strengthening local government institutions and providing them with necessary assistance	Women representatives are directly elected by the voter in local government institutions. Through training programmes, their skills and awareness are being enhanced. As a result, these elected women are increasingly contributing to establishing women's rights, raising awareness among ordinary women in society, and adopting women-friendly development policies.
Safe water supply and sanitation facilities for all	The Local Government Division prioritizes the provision of safe water and sanitation facilities. This initiative has significantly reduced the time women previously spent collecting water from distant sources and enabling them to engage more in economic activities. Additionally, the establishment of separate toilets for female students has motivated more girls to attend school, leading to a rise in female participation in education.
Development of rural economy and the development and management of small water resources	In Bangladesh, the involvement of women in infrastructure development and road maintenance has resulted in the generation of about 2.00crore man-days of employment for female workers each year. The establishment of designated market spaces for women has enabled 4,834 women entrepreneurs to create income opportunities, thereby benefiting approximately 4,834 families. Moreover, the provision of microcredit along with training has ensured the engagement of about 86,000 women in income-generating activities.
Expansion of civic amenities for citizens	Birth registration ensures women's legal rights and helps in formulating age-based development plans, including prevention of child marriage.

14.7 Women Advancement related KPIs of the Ministry/Division and Achievements

SI No	KPI	Unit	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
1	Employment generation	lakh person days	19.75	19.75	19.85
2	Construction of market section	number	45	45	47

14.8 Mentionable Success Stories of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

By constructing separate market sections for women in rural haat-bazaars and growth centres, a supportive investment environment has been established for female traders. The addition of 11 new market sections in FY 2024–25 has notably increased income prospects for women entrepreneurs. The direct involvement of women in the implementation of development activities has been ensured by the inclusion of one-third of women members in the project implementation committee undertaken for the construction and maintenance of rural infrastructure. As a result of making specific provisions for the employment of women workers in the construction and maintenance of rural infrastructure, about two crore man-days of employment have been created annually.

Many women have attained self-sufficiency by engaging in various projects of LGED's rural, urban, and small-scale water resources development sectors. From 2010 to 2024, LGED honored 147 of these women for their exceptional achievements.

This year, 11 best-performing women in three sectors were awarded this honor. Under the 'Urban Primary Health Care Service Delivery Project', primary health services are being provided through 38 urban maternity hospitals, 145 urban health centres, and 276 satellite clinics. All these centres are playing a significant role in providing maternal and child health services, emergency obstetric care, and reproductive health services especially in the slum areas of the city. Under the Rural Road Repair and Maintenance Programme, a total of 18,431 women workers are maintaining rural roads throughout the year in all districts of the country. As a result, 143.92 lakh person-days of employment will be created.

14.9 Challenges of Women's Development Goals

Despite various initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality, several challenges continue to hinder the achievement of women's development goals within the framework of local governance. One of the primary issues is the absence of clearly defined roles and jurisdiction for women representatives across all tiers of local government institutions. This lack of clarity often restricts their active and effective participation in decision-making processes.

Additionally, many women representatives face limitations due to inadequate skills, training, and awareness, which hinder their capacity to perform their roles effectively. The lack of systematic efforts to collect sex-disaggregated data on women beneficiaries further constrains the ability to design and implement gender-responsive policies and programmes at the local level.

Women's participation in key community decision-making platforms remains limited, particularly in water and sanitation committees at the union level and in slum areas. Their exclusion from such committees restricts their voice in issues directly affecting their well-being and that of their families. Moreover, the unavailability of separate and hygienic public toilet facilities for women continues to pose significant challenges, especially in rural and low-income urban areas.

Cultural norms and traditional household responsibilities also serve as major barriers to women's engagement in field-level activities. These socio-cultural constraints often limit women's mobility and their ability to take part in community development efforts, thereby undermining the broader objectives of inclusive local governance. Addressing these challenges is crucial to ensuring that local government institutions serve as effective vehicles for advancing gender equality and empowering women at the grassroots level.

14.10 Recommendations/Way Forward

To strengthen gender responsiveness and promote inclusive development at the local level, a number of strategic initiatives need to be prioritized under the Local Government Division for the Gender Budget of FY 2025–26. First, women's participation in the planning and implementation of infrastructure programmes—such as the construction, reconstruction, and maintenance of roads, bridges, culverts, and tree plantation activities at the upazila, union, and village levels—needs to be increased. This will not only enhance women's engagement in local development but also create meaningful employment opportunities for them.

Moreover, capacity-building programmes for female representatives in local government institutions need to be enhanced to improve their leadership skills, functional knowledge, and overall awareness, enabling them to contribute more effectively to governance and decision-making processes. In the area of water and sanitation, it is important to ensure the active involvement of both men and women in union- and slum-level committees. Establishing safe and hygienic public toilets specifically for women is also essential to address their sanitation needs, particularly in underserved urban and peri-urban areas.

To foster economic empowerment, targeted efforts are needed to include rural poor women in income-generating activities by providing them with specialized training, tools, and resources. Lastly, ensuring the availability of accessible and disability-friendly sanitation facilities for girls with physical disabilities is crucial for promoting inclusive and equitable service delivery at the local level. These measures collectively aim to enhance gender equality, improve service access, and strengthen women's participation in local governance and development.

Ministry of Industries

15.1 Introduction

The Ministry of Industries plays a pivotal role in driving the socio-economic development of Bangladesh by fostering industrial growth, generating employment opportunities, and enhancing the overall quality of life for the population. As part of its mandate, the Ministry has been actively engaged in formulating and implementing policies and strategies to facilitate the establishment, diversification, and expansion of industries across the country. The industrial sector holds significant importance in the nation's economic and social advancement, serving as one of the key contributors to the national economy.

Over the years, the industrial sector's contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has shown a steady upward trend, reflecting its growing importance in Bangladesh's development landscape. According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, the sector accounted for 36.01 percent of the GDP in FY 2020–21. This figure increased to 37.95 percent in FY 2023–24, underscoring the sector's expanding role in sustaining economic growth and employment. The Ministry of Industries remains committed to accelerating this momentum by supporting inclusive, gender-responsive industrial development that ensures equal participation and benefits for both men and women.

15.2 Ministry/Division's Mandate Described/Enshrined in Relevant Laws and Policy Documents

Although the Allocation of Business for the Ministry of Industries does not explicitly include directives or mandates focused on women's development, the Ministry nonetheless contributes indirectly to this agenda through its broad-based industrial and policy initiatives. Unlike some other ministries that have clearly defined responsibilities or targets specific to women's empowerment, the Ministry of Industries integrates gender considerations within the framework of its overall development activities.

In recent years, the Ministry has undertaken several projects and programmes that are supportive of women's development, particularly in the areas of small and medium enterprise (SME) promotion, skill development, and cottage industry expansion. These initiatives have helped to improve women's access to economic resources, enhance entrepreneurial capabilities, and increase participation in industrial value chains.

A key mandate of the Ministry is to formulate and implement progressive industrial policies that are responsive to emerging global challenges, including climate change, with a view to promoting environmentally sustainable industrialization. The Ministry also plays a critical role in boosting domestic and foreign investment through international capital investment agreements, supporting the development of skilled labor through targeted training for industrialists and managers, and enhancing productivity across sectors.

In addition, the Ministry oversees important regulatory and institutional functions such as intellectual property rights protection, including patents, industrial design, and trademarks; modernization of state-managed industries such as fertilizer, steel and engineering, sugar, and salt production; alignment of domestic product and service standards with international benchmarks; and the accreditation of quality assurance mechanisms. Policy support is also extended to specialized sectors such as shipbuilding and ship reprocessing, while strategic steps are taken to improve the financial viability of state-owned enterprises.

Through these diverse activities, the Ministry of Industries creates enabling conditions for inclusive industrial growth, in which women's participation, though not always directly targeted, is increasingly being recognized and supported as an essential component of national economic development.

15.3 Women Employees and Beneficiaries of the Ministry/Division

15.3.1 Quantitative Information of the Male and Female Employees

Office name	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Ministry of Industries	192	151	41	21.4
National Productivity Organization	39	29	10	25.6
Department of Patent, Designs, and Trade Marks	78	64	14	17.9
Office of the Chief Inspector of Boiler	98	92	6	6.1
Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation	6082	5507	575	9.5
Bangladesh Steel and Engineering Corporation	1171	1128	43	3.7
Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation	2421	2171	250	10.3
Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution	523	466	57	10.9
Bangladesh Sugar and Food Industries Corporation	7079	6760	319	4.5
Bangladesh Industrial Technical Assistance Centre	490	455	35	7.1
Bangladesh Institute of Management	99	80	19	19.2
Bangladesh Accreditation Board	13	12	1	7.7
SME Foundation	49	36	13	26.5
Total:	18334	16951	1383	7.5

15.3.2 Statistics of Beneficiaries

As per "plot allocation guideline 2023 of BSCIC 10 percent of plots are reserved for female entrepreneurs. A female entrepreneur is included also in the district level plot allocation and management committee.

15.4 Women's Share in Ministry's Total Allocation and Expenditure

(Taka in Crore)

Budget Description	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
Operating Budget	337.2	359.3	329.8	370.7	335.5	319.9	376.4	331.9	314.6
Gender Relevant Allocation	94.5	107.9	97.0	111.0	97.3	90.5	111.0	95.1	88.3
As % of Operating Budget	28.0	30.0	29.4	30.0	29.0	28.3	29.5	28.7	28.1
Development Budget	1553.8	2150.3	1169.1	2653.0	2210.6	2190.1	1144.8	1890.6	1715.5
Gender Relevant Allocation	653.1	884.3	529.7	1040.4	904.2	897.3	438.3	752.6	690.6
As % of Development Budget	42.0	41.1	45.3	39.2	40.9	41.0	38.3	39.8	40.3
Total Budget	1891.0	2509.6	1498.9	3023.6	2546.0	2510.1	1521.2	2222.5	2030.1
Gender Relevant Allocation	747.6	992.2	626.7	1151.4	1001.5	987.8	549.3	847.7	778.9
As % of Total Budget	39.5	39.5	41.8	38.1	39.3	39.4	36.1	38.1	38.4

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

15.5 Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure by Thematic Areas

(Taka in Crore)

Thematic Areas	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
01-Women Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status	33.3	41.4	36.8	44.4	35.2	30.0	39.6	34.6	30.4
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	4.5	4.2	5.9	3.9	3.5	3.0	7.2	4.1	3.9
% of Total Budget	1.8	1.7	2.5	1.5	1.4	1.2	2.6	1.6	1.5
02-Economic Participation and Equality	576.3	713.8	483.3	359.8	397.9	395.6	335.5	363.4	290.3
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	77.1	71.9	77.1	31.3	39.7	40.0	61.1	42.9	37.3
% of Total Budget	30.5	28.4	32.3	11.9	15.6	15.8	22.1	16.4	14.3
03-Increasing women's effective access to public services	58.8	132.6	60.9	697.3	507.9	503.2	129.9	356.5	379.2
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	7.9	13.4	9.7	60.6	50.7	50.9	23.6	42.1	48.7
% of Total Budget	3.1	5.3	4.1	23.1	20.0	20.1	8.5	16.0	18.7
04-Education, Health and Wellbeing for Women Development	79.2	104.5	45.7	49.9	60.5	59.0	44.3	93.3	78.9
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	10.6	10.5	7.3	4.3	6.0	6.0	8.1	11.0	10.1
% of Total Budget	4.2	4.2	3.1	1.7	2.4	2.4	2.9	4.2	3.9

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

15.6 Impact of Priority Spendings of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

Priority Expenditure Sectors/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (Direct and Indirect)
Operationalize the closed factories of the public sector and establishment of industries according to demand and potential.	Public sector factories that were previously closed are now being revitalized through initiatives such as Balancing, Modernization, Renovation, and Expansion (BMRE). At the same time, this sector has been given strategic importance, as the establishment of various industries—such as shipbuilding, plastic and printing, and bee farming—is expected to enhance both employment opportunities and overall productivity. Among these, most industries—excluding shipbuilding—are considered more conducive to female employment. Consequently, improving the work environment in these industries will play a vital role in enhancing workplace safety and promoting greater participation of women in industrial employment.
Strengthening and expanding BCIC's Industrial City Economic Zone programme	The acceleration of industrial development has been facilitated through the establishment of industrial cities and the construction of necessary infrastructure and facilities in economically disadvantaged regions. Additionally, the creation of a pharmaceutical industrial park is expected to ensure a steady supply of raw materials, thereby paving the way for self-sufficiency in the pharmaceutical sector and generating foreign exchange through increased pharmaceutical exports. This initiative also contributes to the creation of employment opportunities for both women and men.
Achieving self-sufficiency in fertilizer production for agricultural security	New fertilizer factories are being established with the aim of achieving self-sufficiency in fertilizer production. These facilities are also generating ample employment opportunities for both male and female workers, contributing to inclusive workforce participation.

Priority Expenditure Sectors/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (Direct and Indirect)
Ensuring pollution free industrialization	The relocation of the Tannery Industrial City to Savar has contributed to creating a safer and more suitable working environment while significantly reducing environmental pollution in Dhaka. This move has enhanced workplace safety for women, lowered occupational hazards, and facilitated greater participation of women as both entrepreneurs and workers in industrial production. Consequently, it has played a vital role in advancing women's development and promoting their economic empowerment.
Providing training and ancillary support to industrial entrepreneurs	Women entrepreneurs are receiving training through BSCIC Training Institutes (BTI) and Design Centres, which has led to the prioritization of this sector for fostering new entrepreneurs and enhancing productivity. By actively involving women in diverse skill development programmes, the creation of a skilled workforce and competent women entrepreneurs becomes achievable. Additionally, entrepreneurship development fairs are being organized to support the promotion and marketing of products produced by women entrepreneurs.
Providing training and ancillary support to industries	As part of the Ministry of Industries' ongoing commitment to promoting gender equality and women's economic empowerment, significant progress has been made in recent years—reflected in the achievements highlighted for inclusion in the Gender Budget of Bangladesh for FY 2025–26. Notably, the number of new women entrepreneurs in the country has increased substantially, owing to the availability of targeted training programmes, accessible loan facilities, and advisory services. These initiatives have led to the emergence of small and medium-sized women entrepreneurs in both urban and rural areas, helping to bridge the gender gap in the business sector. Through the establishment and management of their own enterprises, many women have achieved financial independence and greater empowerment. Specialized training has equipped them with critical business competencies, including digital marketing, product development, and financial management. This has enhanced not only their operational capabilities but also their confidence in managing competitive ventures. As a result, women's participation in technology-based businesses has also increased, reflecting a growing trend of female engagement in non-traditional and innovation-driven sectors.
Fairs and exhibitions to support women entrepreneurs	Participation in fairs and exhibitions has provided women entrepreneurs with valuable exposure, allowing them to access wider markets and improve the quality and branding of their products. A culture of networking and mutual cooperation has developed among women-led businesses, fostering knowledge exchange and collective growth. Additionally, women's involvement in various business associations and chambers has risen, further solidifying their role in the national economy. The growth of women-led enterprises has contributed significantly to local economic dynamism, creating ripple effects in job creation and community development.

Priority Expenditure Sectors/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (Direct and Indirect)
	Furthermore, under the expansion of activities by the Bangladesh Industrial Technical Assistance Centre (BITAC), targeted training and employment initiatives are being implemented for women through the Self-Employment Creation and Poverty Alleviation (SEPA) Phase-2 Project. In a landmark initiative, BITAC has also established three women's hostels, offering accommodation facilities for up to 850 women. This has created a safe and enabling environment for women trainees and workers, contributing to the formation of a skilled and empowered female workforce. These accomplishments collectively underscore the Ministry's commitment to inclusive industrial development and align with national goals of gender-responsive economic policy.

15.7 Mentionable Success Stories of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

The Ministry of Industries has made commendable progress in empowering women through a range of targeted initiatives and capacity-building programmes during FY 2024–25, with a continued focus for FY 2025–26. Under the BSCIC Naksha Kendra initiative, developmental training was provided to 267 women entrepreneurs across 13 trades. Additionally, 547 women entrepreneurs from the hill districts were prioritized for training across 57 specialized courses, promoting inclusive participation from geographically disadvantaged regions.

The BSCIC Training Institute (BTI) has also played a vital role, delivering management development training to 319 women entrepreneurs. Beyond the institute, BSCIC's district offices across all 64 districts provided similar training to 3,080 women, ensuring broad outreach. Furthermore, 827 women entrepreneurs received skill development training through 15 BSCIC-run centres, equipping them with practical expertise to thrive in various industries.

To facilitate women's participation in industrial ventures, 10 percent of plots in newly developed BSCIC industrial cities have been reserved for women entrepreneurs. In a more specialized intervention, 77 women were trained in beekeeping, with loans extended to 9 of them, generating employment for 75 individuals. Similarly, 20 women from the small ethnic Rakhaine community were trained in weaving and mushroom cultivation, while 14 women received specialized training in traditional Jamdani weaving.

Promoting market linkages, BSCIC organized 25 fairs up to April 2024 out of a targeted 30 for FY 2024–25, where 663 women entrepreneurs showcased their products. As part of BSCIC's Own Fund Loan Programme (BINIT), loans were disbursed to 116 women entrepreneurs by March 2025, leading to the creation of 1,511 employment opportunities for women.

To further support women's entrepreneurship, the government allocated Tk. 100 crore as a special grant under the "Fiscal Incentive Package Loan Programme," which has already supported 353 women entrepreneurs and created employment for 2,060 women.

Looking ahead, under Phase-2 of the "Self-Employment Creation and Poverty Alleviation (SEPA)" project, the Bangladesh Industrial Technical Assistance Centre (BITAC) aims to provide technical training to 2,160 women in various trades in FY 2025–26, of whom approximately 1,365 are expected to be employed in industrial establishments. In addition, around 800 students from engineering universities, polytechnic institutes, and vocational schools will receive attachment training during this period. BITAC will also continue to offer regular short- and long-term training programmes for women.

The SME Foundation has launched several notable initiatives, including the SheProsper: Elevating Women Entrepreneurs in Bangladesh programme, which features buyer-seller matchmaking, financial literacy training, and the motivational campaign Eso Udokta Hoi aimed at female students. Moreover, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between the SME Foundation and the International Trade Centre (ITC) to develop entrepreneurial skills among women. The SME Foundation, in collaboration with BRAC Bank, has also initiated the 'Amrai Tara' capacity-building programme, which offers training in business management, marketing strategies, and financial literacy for women entrepreneurs.

These achievements collectively underscore the Ministry's unwavering commitment to advancing women's participation in industrial development, enhancing their skills, facilitating access to finance and markets, and fostering inclusive economic growth.

15.8 Challenges of Women's Development Goals

Despite the growing participation of women in industrial entrepreneurship, several critical challenges continue to hinder the full realization of women's development goals within the industrial sector. One of the most significant obstacles is the difficulty women entrepreneurs face in accessing sufficient loans which limits their ability to start or expand businesses. Compounding this issue is the lack of marketing facilities for small and medium industrial products, alongside the absence of a women-friendly environment in traditional marketplaces, which restricts their mobility and confidence in engaging with broader markets.

Furthermore, women entrepreneurs often lack access to essential technical support and industrial services necessary for sustaining and scaling their enterprises. Limited capital and the unavailability of financing on favorable terms pose further barriers, as do the complexities involved in the lending procedures of banks and financial institutions. Collateral requirements continue to serve as a structural impediment, disproportionately affecting women who often lack asset ownership.

In addition, women-led enterprises face significant technological and digital capability gaps, making it difficult to benefit from emerging platforms such as e-commerce and online marketing. This is exacerbated by intense market competition, which, without adequate institutional support, makes it harder for women to expand their businesses. Moreover, limitations in training opportunities, skills development programmes, and the absence of comprehensive mentorship and follow-up support further hinder the long-term success and sustainability of women-owned industrial ventures.

Addressing these challenges is imperative to unlocking the full potential of women entrepreneurs, reducing gender disparities in the industrial sector, and promoting inclusive economic growth.

15.9 Recommendations/Way Forward

To strengthen the role of women in industrial development and promote gender-inclusive economic growth, a range of strategic actions are proposed under the Ministry of Industries for the Gender Budget of Bangladesh for FY 2025–26. First, it is recommended to introduce a special loan programme through government banks offering low-interest credit at a 4 percent simple interest rate exclusively for cottage, micro, small, and medium women entrepreneurs. To facilitate easier access to such financial services, dedicated Women Entrepreneurs Cells or Corners should be established in every government bank, providing targeted support for women in their lending and business expansion efforts.

In addition, the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) should establish CMSE (Cottage, Micro, and Small Enterprises) product display and sales centres at all airport terminals across the country. These will promote and market goods produced by women entrepreneurs, enabling them to reach broader markets and enhance visibility.

Special attention must also be given to the provision of safe and secure housing facilities for single women, female-headed households, working and professional women, and women undergoing training. In workplaces where a significant number of women are employed, it is essential to ensure supportive infrastructure, including transportation, accommodation, restrooms, separate washrooms, and daycare centres.

To enhance skills and promote self-employment, all public technical training institutes should provide tailored training programmes for women. Special emphasis should be placed on training poor women workers to create alternative economic and social opportunities, particularly through practical, hands-on skill development. Furthermore, women entrepreneurs in hilly and remote districts should receive priority-based trade-specific training under initiatives led by the BSCIC Design Centre.

Skill development training should be expanded and institutionalized through the BSCIC Training Institute (BTI), 64 Industrial Support Centres, and 15 dedicated skill development training centres. These centres should offer accessible, high-quality programmes aimed at equipping women with the competencies needed to thrive in various sectors.

To promote sustainable entrepreneurship, women entrepreneurs should be provided with loans on easy terms and receive comprehensive training in entrepreneurship development. Their participation in both national and international trade fairs should be significantly increased to enhance market exposure and networking opportunities. In addition, consulting and mentorship services should be expanded to provide women with ongoing professional guidance.

A separate Gender Action Plan dedicated to women entrepreneurs needs to be formulated to align policy support with on-the-ground requirements. This should include the establishment of a Women's SME Help Desk to offer tailored assistance and advice. Innovative financing mechanisms such as micro-venture capital and angel investor connections should be developed to diversify funding sources. Lastly, the introduction of special credit guarantee schemes for women entrepreneurs will help mitigate risk for lenders and increase access to formal credit, thus fostering a more inclusive and resilient entrepreneurial ecosystem for women in Bangladesh.

Information and Communication Technology Division

16.1 Introduction

The Government of Bangladesh has prioritized Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as a key enabler of development across multiple sectors, with a particular focus on advancing women's empowerment, better educational outcomes, improving agricultural productivity, supporting entrepreneurship, and strengthening civic engagement. Aligned with the national vision of transforming Bangladesh into a technologically advanced, knowledge-based society, the Information and Communication Technology Division has taken proactive steps to integrate women more effectively into the digital economy. One of the flagship initiatives in this regard is the "Her Power: Empowering Women through Technology" project, implemented by the Directorate of ICT. This project is designed to foster inclusive growth by promoting women's active participation in the ICT ecosystem, equipping them with essential digital skills to enhance their employability, and encouraging women-led entrepreneurship. The programme also seeks to build a sustainable foundation for long-term empowerment by enabling women to harness digital tools in ways that improve their socio-economic well-being. Through targeted training, access to ICT infrastructure, and mentorship support, the "Her Power" project is helping to create safe and effective pathways for women to pursue self-employment and entrepreneurial ventures in the digital space. This initiative reflects the government's commitment to ensuring that the benefits of digital transformation are equitably distributed, thereby contributing to a more inclusive and gender-responsive development agenda. All other projects and initiatives of the ICT Division always appropriate focus on the needs of women.

16.2 Ministry/Division's Mandate Described/Enshrined in Relevant Laws and Policy Documents

The Information and Communication Technology Division has developed a comprehensive legal and policy framework to strengthen e-governance and digital service delivery in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh's key ICT laws and policies reflect a gradual progression from negligible to emerging gender emphasis. The Bangladesh Computer Council Act, 1990 and the ICT Act, 2006 show no direct reference to gender issues, although it has indirectly addressed women's cybersecurity through cybercrime provisions. The Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority Act, 2010 opens employment opportunities in the technical sector, however, lacks specific gender-focused measures. A more significant shift was the IT Rules, 2010, which acknowledge inclusivity, including the participation of women in ICT. The Cyber Security Strategy, 2014 marks a notable shift by explicitly recognizing gender-based cyber threats and calling for protective measures. Overall, gender considerations have become increasingly visible over time, through comprehensive and actionable gender integration in ICT policy. The National ICT Policy, 2008 of Bangladesh shows a significant step forward in integrating gender considerations into the country's ICT development agenda. It explicitly acknowledges the need for gender inclusiveness and outlines strategies to ensure equitable access to ICT for women and marginalized groups.

16.3 Women Employees and Beneficiaries of the Ministry/Division

16.3.1 Quantitative Information of the Male and Female Employees

Office name	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Information and Communication Technology Division	122	92	30	24.6
Directorate of Information and Communication Technology	628	534	94	15.0
Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority	71	66	5	7.0

Office name	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Bangladesh Computer Council	142	126	16	11.3
Office of the Controller of Electronic Signature Certificate Issuing Authorities (CCA).	29	20	9	31.0
Total :	992	838	154	15.5

16.3.2 Statistics of Beneficiaries

- Approximately 80 percent of beneficiaries supported by the Directorate of ICT are women;
- The Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority has employed 53,654 individuals in ICT-related fields, with 33 percent being women;
- 5,282 women entrepreneurs have been employed at Union Digital Centres; and
- The 333 National Helpline has responded to over 660,087 support calls from women and children.

16.4 Women's Share in Ministry's Total Allocation and Expenditure

(Taka in Crore)

Budget Description	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
Operating Budget	404.7	423.6	368.3	352.5	316.9	286.9	385.6	335.5	287.4
Gender Relevant Allocation	115.7	120.4	103.0	94.2	83.8	72.9	106.3	89.6	71.7
As % of Operating Budget	28.6	28.4	28.0	26.7	26.4	25.4	27.6	26.7	25.0
Development Budget	1739.3	2448.7	1635.8	2015.9	2065.7	2004.8	1529.9	1507.2	1439.8
Gender Relevant Allocation	674.4	1031.3	735.4	873.6	936.5	931.2	601.7	576.5	557.3
As % of Development Budget	38.8	42.1	45.0	43.3	45.3	46.5	39.3	38.3	38.7
Total Budget	2144.0	2872.3	2004.1	2368.4	2382.7	2291.7	1915.6	1842.7	1727.2
Gender Relevant Allocation	790.1	1151.8	838.4	967.8	1020.2	1004.1	708.0	666.2	629.0
As % of Total Budget	36.9	40.1	41.8	40.9	42.8	43.8	37.0	36.2	36.4

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

16.5 Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure by Thematic Areas

(Taka in Crore)

Thematic Areas	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
01-Women Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status	175.9	232.3	149.6	127.7	119.9	114.2	126.1	143.5	122.4
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	22.3	20.2	17.8	13.2	11.8	11.4	17.8	21.5	19.5
% of Total Budget	8.2	8.1	7.5	5.4	5.0	5.0	6.6	7.8	7.1
02-Economic Participation and Equality	64.4	178.5	150.0	104.7	270.1	264.1	39.9	86.5	83.4
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	8.2	15.5	17.9	10.8	26.5	26.3	5.6	13.0	13.3
% of Total Budget	3.0	6.2	7.5	4.4	11.3	11.5	2.1	4.7	4.8
03-Increasing women's effective access to public services	146.8	50.4	167.6	30.1	61.8	69.4	39.9	33.0	32.7
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	18.6	4.4	20.0	3.1	6.1	6.9	5.6	5.0	5.2
% of Total Budget	6.8	1.8	8.4	1.3	2.6	3.0	2.1	1.8	1.9
04-Education, Health and Wellbeing for Women Development	403.0	690.6	371.2	705.4	568.5	556.4	502.2	403.2	390.5
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	51.0	60.0	44.3	72.9	55.7	55.4	70.9	60.5	62.1
% of Total Budget	18.8	24.0	18.5	29.8	23.9	24.3	26.2	21.9	22.6

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

16.6 Impact of Priority Spendings of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

Priority Expenditure Sectors/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (Direct and Indirect)
Development of ICT Infrastructure	Ministry, division and government agencies have been given priority to develop infrastructure in the Information and Communication Technology sector to provide faster service to the people by using more ICTs. Initiation of the “Cyber Security Ordinance, 2025”, aimed at protecting women and children from cybercrime. Launch of the 333 cyber assistance platform, enabling women to directly seek help. It helps create job opportunities and raise awareness through various training on ICT.
Creating employment opportunities for women.	Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority has created employment opportunities for a total of 53,654 People including professionals and graduates in ICT of which 33% are women. The department is playing a priority role in women's development through two other projects.

16.7 Women Advancement related KPIs of the Ministry/Division and Achievements

SI No	KPI	Unit	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
1.	Increased use of e-services	Number of beneficiaries (crore)	2.85	3.75	4.50
2.	Number of IT Skill/Freelancer Trainee	(Thousands)	1500	2000	2500
3.	Expansion of Broadband Connectivity Number of Internet Users	(million)	31.5	32.1	33.00

16.8 Mentionable Success Stories of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

The Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology, through its Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Division, has undertaken several strategic initiatives to advance women's empowerment in alignment with the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). Key national strategies and policy frameworks have been formulated to integrate emerging technologies—including Blockchain, Artificial Intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), and Cybersecurity—into national development. These include:

- National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence – Bangladesh
- National Blockchain Strategy – Bangladesh
- National Strategy for Robotics
- National Information and Communication Technology Policy
- Guidelines on Video Conference Operations
- Government Email Policy
- Guidelines for the Declaration of Private Hi-Tech Parks

In parallel, a range of national-level initiatives have been implemented to foster innovation and inclusivity in the ICT sector. Events such as the International Robotics Olympiad, National Youth Festival, Startup Summit, and Japan IT Week have been organized to identify and support emerging talents, including women entrepreneurs and innovators. Notably, at the 26th International Robot Olympiad, Bangladesh earned global recognition by securing 10 medals, including 2 gold medals, underscoring the growing participation and excellence of youth, particularly women, in advanced technologies.

To raise awareness and ensure the safety of girls in the digital space, the “Digital Safety Awareness for Girls” programme trained 89,085 female students from 1,325 educational institutions between FY 2016–17 and FY 2021–22. This initiative has significantly contributed to enhancing digital literacy and online safety awareness among young women across the country.

Furthermore, the Bangladesh Computer Council (BCC) has implemented targeted skill development programmes for women. Notable among these is the “Office Applications & Unicode Bangla under Women in Digital (WID)” training programme, aimed at building foundational ICT skills among women. Additionally, the “Women IT Frontier Initiative (WIFI)”, in operation since 2017, has trained 711 women in digital entrepreneurship, empowering them to actively participate in the digital economy and become self-reliant.

These initiatives highlight the Ministry’s and Division’s continued commitment to creating inclusive digital opportunities and strengthening women’s leadership in the ICT sector.

16.9 Challenges of Women’s Development Goals

Despite commendable advancements in promoting gender equality and empowering women through digital initiatives, several persistent challenges continue to hinder the full realization of women’s development goals, particularly within the context of the broader digital landscape. One of the foremost challenges lies in the creation of an enabling environment that systematically nurtures and harnesses women’s intellectual and innovative capacities. Without such a foundation, women remain underrepresented in sectors critical to national development, including health technology and ICT-enabled services. Furthermore, the participation of both rural and urban women in outsourcing and freelancing opportunities—especially those facilitated through ICT platforms—remains limited, necessitating targeted efforts to enhance their inclusion and skill development.

The persistence of child marriage also undermines efforts toward women’s educational and professional advancement. Stronger enforcement by regional and local administrations is essential to eradicate this harmful practice and create conditions for young women to pursue higher education and careers in emerging fields. In addition, unequal access to educational resources, including ICT tools and devices, exacerbates the digital divide, disproportionately affecting girls and women, particularly in underserved communities. This inequality limits their ability to engage meaningfully in the evolving digital economy.

Technical barriers such as inadequate broadband speed and weak internet infrastructure continue to restrict women’s effective participation in digital health solutions, telemedicine services, and the broader Fourth Industrial Revolution. Without addressing these systemic issues, the goal of inclusive technological growth will remain out of reach. Equally pressing is the growing threat of online harassment, cyberbullying, and the proliferation of harmful content targeting women in digital spaces. These issues not only endanger women’s safety but also discourage active participation in digital platforms, further entrenching gender disparities.

To accelerate progress in women’s development and ensure their equitable participation in the digital and health ecosystems, it is critical to address these multifaceted challenges through integrated, gender-responsive policy interventions and enhanced inter-ministerial coordination.

16.10 Recommendations/Way Forward

To overcome the existing challenges and accelerate women’s empowerment through digital inclusion, a set of forward-looking and practical measures need to be implemented, particularly in the context of the ICT Division. First, it is essential to prioritize and scale up ICT Division-led projects

that are specifically designed to benefit rural women, as these initiatives have greater potential for inclusion than many broader sectoral programmes. Ensuring dedicated spaces for women in ICT training through reserved quotas will encourage more widespread participation and help bridge existing gender gaps in digital literacy and employment. Targeted incentives and ICT-focused educational initiatives also need to be introduced to encourage women, particularly young women and girls, to pursue careers and entrepreneurship opportunities within the ICT sector.

Increased budgetary allocations are required to support job creation and business development for women in ICT, enabling them to contribute meaningfully to the economy. To extend access in underserved regions, the government needs to facilitate the free distribution of ICT equipment and tools to disadvantaged groups, with a particular focus on rural and marginalized communities. Identifying women with strong potential in ICT and offering them structured mentorship and skills development will further strengthen the pipeline of female digital talent.

Moreover, implementing specialized training programmes in innovation, digital entrepreneurship, and leadership development will empower women in remote areas, allowing them to participate fully and confidently in the evolving digital landscape. These interventions will ensure more equitable access to ICT resources and open up pathways for women to emerge as leaders, innovators, and entrepreneurs, thereby advancing the government's broader goals of inclusive development and gender-responsive budgeting.

Ministry of Labour and Employment

17.1 Introduction

Employment generation is a fundamental driver for poverty alleviation and socio-economic development. In Bangladesh, a densely populated country, creating adequate employment opportunities for the expanding labor force remains critical. Every year, numerous skilled and unskilled individuals enter the labor market, necessitating comprehensive strategies to absorb this workforce effectively. To foster sustainable economic growth and realize higher levels of development, it is imperative to not only generate sufficient employment but also enhance worker productivity. Achieving this involves offering targeted training programmes designed to convert unskilled labor into skilled human resources. Furthermore, ensuring the overall welfare of workers, extending robust social security measures, eradicating hazardous child labor, and maintaining harmonious labor relations are essential components in realizing inclusive growth and equity in Bangladesh. The Ministry of Labour and Employment thus plays a pivotal role in advancing gender-responsive employment policies and practices, fostering an environment that promotes equal opportunities and rights for both women and men in the labor market for FY 2025-26.

17.2 Ministry/Division's Mandate Described/Enshrined in Relevant Laws and Policy Documents

According to Article 15 of the Constitution of Bangladesh, every citizen is guaranteed the right to employment, and Article 40 further reinforces the right of every individual to engage in any lawful profession or occupation. In alignment with these constitutional mandates, the Ministry of Labour and Employment has initiated diverse programmes aimed at addressing the fundamental needs of the working population, accelerating poverty alleviation, developing skilled human resources through targeted training, creating equitable employment opportunities, and eliminating hazardous child labour. The Ministry is also committed to ensuring fair wages for all workers, including women. Moreover, the Domestic Workers Protection and Welfare Policy 2015 explicitly recognizes domestic workers as formal workers, advocating for their rights and protections. Additionally, the Bangladesh Labour Act 2006, amended in 2018, in conjunction with the Bangladesh Labour Rules 2015, provides specific provisions and protections for women workers, ensuring their welfare, safety, and equitable participation in the workforce.

These provisions include ensuring that all women workers receive confirmation of appointment letters as stipulated in Section 5 of the Labour Act. Additionally, a minimum of 10 percent female membership is mandated in the executive committees of trade unions, guaranteeing women's representation in decision-making positions (Section 176 (e)). The Labour Act also provides maternity benefits, granting female workers a total of 16 weeks of maternity leave, encompassing periods before and after childbirth (Sections 45-50 and 100-119). Furthermore, job security for expectant and new mothers is ensured, prohibiting the termination of a female worker from six months prior to childbirth until eight weeks postpartum (Section 50). Lastly, the law safeguards women from working during night hours, between 10 PM and 6 AM, unless explicit permission is given by the worker herself (Section 109). These comprehensive policies underscore the Ministry's dedication to creating an equitable, safe, and supportive working environment for women, ultimately fostering gender equality in Bangladesh's workforce.

17.3 Women Employees and Beneficiaries of the Ministry/Division

17.3.1 Quantitative Information of the Male and Female Employees

Office name	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Secretariat	80	62	18	22.5
Department of Labour	422	345	77	18.2
Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments	305	263	42	13.8
Labour Appellate Tribunals and Courts	85	77	8	9.4
Minimum Wages Board	13	13	0	0.0
Total:	905	760	145	16.0

17.3.2 Statistics of Beneficiaries

Programme	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
The Project titled 'Establishment of Research and Training Institute on Occupational Health and Safety'	30	30	0	0.0
'Good Working Condition in Tanneries in Bangladesh (GOTAN)' project	366	350	16	4.4
'Labour Information Management System' (LIMS) project	225524	116821	108703	48.2
Providing free primary health care and family planning counseling and services to workers	122178	50895	71283	58.3
Providing recreational services for workers	88409	64113	24296	27.5
Providing training to workers and employers' representatives in Labour law, industrial relations and Labour administration	11995	4079	7916	66.0
Total:	448502	236288	212214	47.3

17.4 Women's Share in Ministry's Total Allocation and Expenditure

(Taka in Crore)

Budget Description	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
Operating Budget	219.3	214.4	178.9	223.1	164.9	133.3	198.6	187.2	114.6
Gender Relevant Allocation	69.0	67.7	55.7	71.9	50.3	40.4	64.3	60.7	34.7
As % of Operating Budget	31.5	31.6	31.1	32.2	30.5	30.3	32.4	32.4	30.3
Development Budget	218.7	248.4	167.2	123.8	208.5	110.6	158.0	282.5	214.8
Gender Relevant Allocation	90.1	112.1	79.4	45.6	94.3	46.2	72.8	139.3	103.4
As % of Development Budget	41.2	45.1	47.5	36.9	45.2	41.8	46.1	49.3	48.1
Total Budget	438.0	462.8	346.1	346.9	373.4	243.8	356.6	469.7	329.4
Gender Relevant Allocation	159.1	179.8	135.1	117.5	144.6	86.6	137.1	200.0	138.1
As % of Total Budget	36.3	38.9	39.0	33.9	38.7	35.5	38.4	42.6	41.9

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

17.5 Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure by Thematic Areas

(Taka in Crore)

Thematic Areas	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
01-Women Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status	56.2	56.0	43.8	42.8	33.4	25.3	38.5	36.5	22.1
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	35.3	31.2	32.4	36.4	23.1	29.3	28.1	18.3	16.0
% of Total Budget	12.8	12.1	12.7	12.3	9.0	10.4	10.8	7.8	6.7
02-Economic Participation and Equality	55.2	65.2	49.6	25.1	38.0	16.0	52.0	74.7	41.9
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	34.7	36.2	36.7	21.3	26.3	18.5	37.9	37.3	30.3
% of Total Budget	12.6	14.1	14.3	7.2	10.2	6.6	14.6	15.9	12.7
03-Increasing women's effective access to public services	33.0	40.5	27.2	30.0	25.7	15.4	20.1	13.0	10.2
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	20.7	22.5	20.1	25.5	17.8	17.7	14.6	6.5	7.4
% of Total Budget	7.5	8.8	7.8	8.6	6.9	6.3	5.6	2.8	3.1
04-Education, Health and Wellbeing for Women Development	14.7	18.1	14.5	19.6	47.4	29.9	26.5	75.8	64.0
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	9.2	10.1	10.8	16.7	32.8	34.5	19.3	37.9	46.3
% of Total Budget	3.4	3.9	4.2	5.7	12.7	12.2	7.4	16.1	19.4

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

17.6 Impact of Priority Spendings of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

Priority Expenditure Sectors/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (Direct and Indirect)
Protection and welfare of workers	The Bangladesh Labor Act, 2006 incorporates several provisions to safeguard women workers, including support centres, gender-segregated sanitation facilities, and workplace safety protocols. During FY2023-24, maternal welfare benefits worth Tk. 33.37 crore were distributed to 8,855 female employees. For domestic workers, the Protection Policy 2015 was specifically designed to ensure their rights and safety. Notably, women dominate Bangladesh's garment industry workforce, accounting for 3.2 million of the sector's 4 million employees (BGMEA data). The government has implemented focused initiatives to create safer work environments and combat gender-based discrimination and harassment across all employment sectors.
Ensuring decent work environment	To improve workplace conditions, the Industrial Safety Unit (ISU) at DIFE is supervising the renovation of 1,549 export-oriented garment factories as part of national efforts. Under the Corrective Action Plan (CAP), 173 out of 666 factories have completed upgrades, 235 are currently undergoing renovations, and 258 remain closed due to safety risks. Over the past three financial years, 4,969 factories have achieved compliance, with an additional 963 meeting standards as of February 2025. Furthermore, 8,297 safety committees have been established to enhance workplace safety.

17.7 Women Advancement related KPIs of the Ministry/Division and Achievements

SI No	KPI	Unit	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
1.	Confirmation of maternity benefits	Number	16805	5405	8173
2.	Number of safety committees formed		780	435	159
3.	Setting up children's rooms		318	275	274

17.8 Mentionable Success Stories of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

The Ministry of Labour and Employment has made significant progress in advancing women's empowerment and welfare in Bangladesh. Notably, the Ministry has ensured safe and quality working environments in line with the Bangladesh Labour Act, 2006 (Amended in 2018), and international standards set by the International Labour Organization (ILO). Under the Labour Act, a commendable milestone of ensuring 10 percent female representation in trade unions has been achieved, enhancing women's voices and participation in labor governance. Additionally, substantial progress has been made toward eliminating hazardous child labor, with 8 out of 48 industrial sectors now declared child labor-free. The Ministry has also revised minimum wages across 44 private sectors, notably increasing wages in the garment sector from Tk. 8,000 to Tk. 12,500, significantly benefiting women workers who constitute the majority in this industry. Furthermore, maternity benefits encompassing transport, medical care, nutritional support, and daycare facilities have been introduced, providing comprehensive support for working mothers. Financial assistance, including support for accidents, death, education, and medical care, is being effectively provided to women workers in both formal and informal export sectors through initiatives by the Bangladesh Sramik Kalyan Foundation and the Central Fund. Additionally, the Ministry has successfully implemented the Domestic Worker Protection and Welfare Policy 2015, safeguarding the rights, ensuring fair wages, and promoting social security for domestic workers, predominantly women. These notable achievements underscore the Ministry's strong commitment to enhancing women's advancement and well-being in the labor market.

17.9 Challenges of Women's Development Goals

Challenges in achieving women's development goals within the labour sector remain significant. Female workers frequently experience inadequate nutritional intake, adversely impacting their health and overall productivity. Additionally, many women face unfavorable working environments, which restrain their active and meaningful participation across various industrial sectors. A critical challenge is the absence of dedicated washroom facilities for women in industrial establishments, negatively affecting their health, comfort, and well-being. The lack of breastfeeding corners for lactating mothers and daycare centres for their children further compounds these challenges, limiting women's ability to fully engage in employment activities. Furthermore, insufficient attention is given to occupational health safety measures and reproductive health care, highlighting the urgent need for targeted interventions and improved workplace standards to ensure the holistic welfare of female employees.

17.10 Recommendations/Way Forward

To advance women's development goals effectively, the Ministry of Labour and Employment should prioritize several strategic interventions. It is recommended to support women's advancement by providing scholarships specifically tailored to technical education. Strengthening the capacity of Labour Welfare Centres will significantly contribute to improving women's health and nutritional outcomes. Creating a supportive and inclusive environment that encourages the active participation of women across all industrial sectors nationwide is essential. Initiatives must be introduced to eliminate wage disparities between women and men, particularly in the informal sector, ensuring fair and equitable compensation. Ensuring the availability and presence of qualified medical professionals to deliver comprehensive healthcare services to female workers is also critical. Furthermore, it is important to deliver technical and market-oriented training at the upazila level to expand women's employment prospects. Establishing dedicated committees to safeguard women in both public and private workplaces will play a crucial role in addressing and preventing incidents of sexual harassment. Additionally, industrial workplaces should implement separate and appropriate washroom facilities for female employees. Lastly, providing designated breastfeeding areas and establishing daycare centres within industrial premises will significantly support lactating mothers, promoting their overall productivity and well-being.

Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock

18.1 Introduction

The fisheries and livestock sector plays a vital role in meeting Bangladesh's nutritional needs, particularly in providing animal protein, while also contributing significantly to socio-economic development, poverty alleviation, and foreign exchange earnings. Effective management of inland open water bodies, closed water systems, and coastal fisheries, supported by strategic planning and implementation, has enabled Bangladesh to achieve surplus fish production since FY2016–17. Currently, the fisheries and livestock sub-sectors contribute approximately 2.53 percent and 1.80 percent, respectively, to the country's total Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Notably, around 90 percent of the nation's animal protein intake is derived from these two sub-sectors.

As a labor-intensive and fast income-generating sector, fisheries and livestock play a transformative role in poverty reduction, particularly by creating employment opportunities for poor and marginalized women. According to the State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2024 report by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, Bangladesh ranks 2nd globally in inland open-water fish production, 5th in closed-water aquaculture, and 8th in coastal crustacean production. The country also holds the 1st position in global Hilsa production among 11 producing countries and ranks 4th worldwide (3rd in Asia) in Tilapia production.

Bangladesh has already achieved self-sufficiency in the production of fish, meat, and eggs. The Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock has adopted inclusive policies and legal frameworks that actively promote women's participation in the sector. By prioritizing women in the selection of beneficiaries for fisheries and poultry-related interventions, the Ministry is fostering economic empowerment among women. Currently, approximately 20 million women—equivalent to 25 percent of the total female population—are engaged in fish farming and livestock rearing, making this sector a cornerstone of gender-responsive rural development in Bangladesh.

18.2 Ministry/Division's Mandate Described/Enshrined in Relevant Laws and Policy Documents

Article 18(1) of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh identifies the improvement of public health and the nutritional status of the population as one of the core responsibilities of the State. In addition, it highlights the fulfillment of basic human needs such as access to food, the right to work, and the eradication of unemployment. In alignment with these constitutional obligations, the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock has been persistently working to ensure the adequate supply of animal protein and essential nutrients by increasing the production and productivity of fish, meat, milk, and eggs.

According to the Allocation of Business, the Ministry is entrusted with enhancing the production of fish, meat, milk, and eggs to achieve self-sufficiency in animal protein. Its key responsibilities include the management of fisheries and animal nutrition, the promotion of artificial breeding, and the operation of dairy, livestock, and poultry farms. The Ministry is also responsible for the export, quality control, and conservation of fishery and livestock products. It ensures the preservation of genetic quality and productivity in fisheries and livestock, undertakes breed development, implements disease prevention and control measures, and promotes effective and equitable governance in these sectors. Furthermore, the Ministry plays a pivotal role in human resource development through extensive research and training programmes designed to build institutional capacity and foster innovation.

To ensure sustainable and environmentally responsible development, the National Fisheries Policy 1998 was adopted with the aim of increasing fishery resource production through optimal use of existing resources. This policy underscores the importance of generating employment opportunities for unemployed youth and actively promoting the participation of women in the fisheries sector. In line with the National Fisheries Policy 1998 and the National Fisheries Strategy 2006, women's participation and priorities are increasingly integrated into beneficiary selection processes across various policies, including the Jalmohal Management Policy 2009, Microfinance Policy 2011, Shrimp Policy 2014, Marine Fisheries Regulations 2023, Fish Quarantine Rules 2024, and Fish Feed Rules 2024. Similarly, women's inclusion is prioritized in fisheries training programmes and other related activities to promote equitable development.

Strategic Goals and Action Plans have also been developed to align the Ministry's programmes with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly focusing on women's participation and leadership. Traditionally, rural women have played a significant role in fisheries, livestock, and poultry rearing—contributing to household nutrition, income generation, and rural economic growth. Recognizing their contribution, the Ministry ensures that development interventions in these sectors are gender-responsive and inclusive.

Section 36.3 of the National Women Development Policy 2011 guarantees equal opportunities for women in the agriculture, fisheries, livestock, and forestry sectors. The accompanying National Action Plan 2013 outlines specific strategies to operationalize this vision, including the provision of subsidies, incentives, and free tools and equipment for women involved in fisheries and animal husbandry. In keeping with this policy framework, the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock is committed to transforming rural women into productive and skilled human resources. It has adopted a comprehensive and integrated action plan to provide essential support services for women's advancement.

It has also set clear targets to:

- Ensure women's participation in budget formulation;
- Promote their active involvement in productive activities within the fisheries and livestock sectors;
- And offer equipment support and capacity-building through training programmes;

These efforts reflect the Ministry's dedication to inclusive growth and gender equality in the rural and agricultural economy.

18.3 Women Employees and Beneficiaries of the Ministry/Division

18.3.1 Quantitative Information of the Male and Female Employees

Table 1: Information of Secretariat/Department/Organization

Office name	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Secretariat	127	94	33	26.0
Department of Fisheries	3587	2914	673	18.8
Directorate of Livestock	5538	4912	626	11.3
Marine Fisheries Academy	51	49	2	3.9
Fisheries and Livestock Information Department	60	51	9	15.0
Autonomous Institutions	871	745	126	14.5
Total :	10234	8765	1469	14.4

18.3.2 Statistics of Beneficiaries

Table 2: Department of Fisheries

Programme	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Hilsa fisheries development and management project	72981	64341	8640	11.8
Sustainable Coastal and Marine Fisheries Project in Bangladesh	47971	9101	38870	81.0
Fisheries Development Project in Rajshahi Division	5237	4737	500	9.5
Fisheries Development Project in Hill Tracts Area	2493	2037	456	18.3
Community-Based Climate Resilient Fisheries and Aquaculture Development Project in Bangladesh	4965	2372	2593	52.2
Conservation and Development of Indigenous Fish Species and Snail Project	96672	56208	40464	41.9
Climate-smart Agriculture and Water Management Project	13785	11855	1930	14.0
Community-based Fisheries Management Project in Nimgachi Area	660	545	115	17.4
Halda River Natural Fish Breeding Area Development and Management Project (Phase 2)	265	250	15	5.7
Fisheries Livelihood Enhancement Project in Coastal Area of the Bay of Bengal	203	62	141	69.5
Total	245232	151508	93724	38.2

Table 3: Department of Livestock

Institution	Total	Male	Female	Percentage of Female
Livestock and Dairy Development Project	179880	76076	103804	57.7
Improvement of Socio-Economic and Livelihood Development of Tribal/Minor Races People Through Integrated Livestock Project	22000	9238	12762	58.0
Integrated livestock Development in the Unprivileged 86 Areas and River washed Chars Project	12500	3750	8750	70.0
Integrated livestock Development project in Haor Area	13403	4692	8711	65.0
Total	227783	93756	134027	58.8

Table 4: Bangladesh Fisheries Development Corporation

Institution	Total	Male	Female	Percentage of Female
Construction of Multi-channel Slipway	4040	4000	40	1.0
Establishment of Fish Landing Centre in Haor Area	5880	5500	380	6.5
Establishment of Fish Landing Centre with Ancillary Facilities in 3 Coastal Districts at 4 Selected Areas.	8720	8300	420	4.8
Total	18640	17800	840	4.5

18.4 Women's Share in Ministry's Total Allocation and Expenditure

(Taka in Crore)

Budget Description	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
Operating Budget	1903.0	1894.3	1850.2	1812.7	1761.5	1616.8	1726.6	1668.2	1515.5
Gender Relevant Allocation	584.9	578.6	564.2	549.8	537.2	498.5	522.0	511.3	473.1
As % of Operating Budget	30.7	30.5	30.5	30.3	30.5	30.8	30.2	30.7	31.2
Development Budget	1489.4	2393.9	2008.2	2427.2	2143.3	1987.8	2081.5	1965.4	1569.5
Gender Relevant Allocation	637.7	992.8	843.7	1012.3	913.0	847.8	870.2	830.8	660.7
As % of Development Budget	42.8	41.5	42.0	41.7	42.6	42.7	41.8	42.3	42.1
Total Budget	3392.4	4288.2	3858.5	4239.9	3904.8	3604.6	3808.0	3633.6	3085.0
Gender Relevant Allocation	1222.5	1571.4	1407.9	1562.1	1450.2	1346.2	1392.2	1342.1	1133.8
As % of Total Budget	36.0	36.6	36.5	36.8	37.1	37.4	36.6	36.9	36.8

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

18.5 Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure by Thematic Areas

(Taka in Crore)

Thematic Areas	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
01-Women Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status	679.4	943.2	769.2	839.1	821.3	755.1	709.5	705.1	623.5
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	55.6	60.0	54.6	53.7	56.6	56.1	51.0	52.5	55.0
% of Total Budget	20.0	22.0	19.9	19.8	21.0	21.0	18.6	19.4	20.2
02-Economic Participation and Equality	303.5	198.5	291.4	304.5	308.7	291.5	244.2	245.5	214.3
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	24.8	12.6	20.7	19.5	21.3	21.7	17.5	18.3	18.9
% of Total Budget	9.0	4.6	7.6	7.2	7.9	8.1	6.4	6.8	7.0
03-Increasing women's effective access to public services	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
% of Total Budget	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
04-Education, Health and Wellbeing for Women Development	239.5	429.6	347.2	418.3	320.2	299.5	438.4	391.4	295.9
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	19.6	27.3	24.7	26.8	22.1	22.3	31.5	29.2	26.1
% of Total Budget	7.1	10.0	9.0	9.9	8.2	8.3	11.5	10.8	9.6

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

18.6 Impact of Priority Spendings of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

Priority Expenditure Sectors/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (Direct and Indirect)
Formation of women groups consisting of widows/divorcees and poor women at union levels and provide short-term training on fish farming, livestock and poultry rearing, and disease prevention and support them with low-interest credit and materials to establish farms;	Short-term training programmes on fish farming, livestock and poultry rearing, and disease prevention are being offered under various projects of the Ministry. These initiatives also ensure access to low-interest credit and essential materials for farm establishment by organizing groups of widows, divorcees, and economically disadvantaged women at the union level. In FY 2024–25, a total of 11,735 women received training under the revenue budget, while 57,429 women were trained through development projects. Additionally, following the provisions of the “Microfinance Programmes in the Fisheries Sector-2011” guidelines, 7,053 women were benefited from micro-loans to support their livelihood activities.

Priority Expenditure Sectors/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (Direct and Indirect)
Distribution of fingerlings and fish spawns, chicks and ducklings, vaccinations, and other materials produced in the public farms at a low price to female farmers (family/group);	Fingerlings, fish spawns, chicks, ducklings, vaccines, and other essential inputs produced on government-run farms are being provided at subsidized rates to women farmers, both individually and in groups. As a result of these initiatives, approximately 598,000 beneficiaries have received support through fry release programmes.
Expansion of SMEs for rural women	SMEs for rural women are being gradually expanded. So far loans have been provided to 7053 women for fish farming related activities.
Distribution of alternative employment materials to female beneficiaries through various development projects implemented by the Department of Fisheries.	The Department of Fisheries is enhancing and expediting the distribution of alternative livelihood support materials to female beneficiaries through its various development projects. To date, approximately 451 women have received assistance aimed at facilitating alternative income-generating opportunities.

18.7 Women Advancement related KPIs of the Ministry/Division and Achievements

SI No	KPI	Unit	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
1.	Employment of women among the total population engaged in fisheries management	People (lakh)	16.56	16.57	16.57
2.	Participation of women in training for prevention and control of livestock poultry diseases		5.60	5.80	5.90

18.8 Mentionable Success Stories of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

The Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock has made remarkable progress in promoting women's empowerment by prioritizing their participation in income-generating activities, particularly in the fisheries and livestock sectors. One of the most significant achievements has been the increased involvement of women in community-based fisheries management. Women are now actively engaged in fish farming, fisheries resource management, and employment in fish processing factories. These opportunities have been facilitated through cooperatives that operate on leased private land, canals, ponds, and lakes. As a result of these inclusive initiatives, more than 14 million women are currently participating in various fisheries-related activities across the country.

Women's empowerment has been further strengthened through their spontaneous and active participation in training, meetings, seminars, workshops, and committees organized under various government programmes and development projects. These platforms have not only built their capacity but also enhanced their role in economic activities. Their growing involvement has led to a noticeable improvement in social standing, reflecting meaningful progress toward gender equality. Notably, women account for approximately 60–90% of the farmers nominated for improved farm management under different livestock development projects implemented by the Department of Livestock Services.

The Marine Fisheries Academy has also made a historic breakthrough by including female cadets in maritime training. Since the academic year 2010–11, a total of 77 female cadets have successfully graduated from the Academy, and currently, 32 female cadets are undergoing training. This milestone marks a significant step toward breaking gender barriers in a traditionally male-dominated field.

In the area of scientific research, women's representation is steadily growing. At the Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute, 30 out of 108 scientists are women. The Institute is conducting targeted research in fish breeding, fry production, and improved aquaculture management,

specifically under its women development initiatives. In FY 2024–25, the Institute has trained 687 farmers, entrepreneurs, and fishers in freshwater pearl cultivation, crab farming, mussel cultivation, and seaweed production—of whom 60 are women entrepreneurs.

Similarly, the Bangladesh Livestock Research Institute employs 117 scientists, including 38 women. In FY 2024–25, the Institute has trained 164 women in areas such as livestock and poultry production, disease prevention, vaccination, and nutritional enhancement. These women are now contributing significantly—both directly and indirectly—to the development of the livestock sector. Their engagement is expected to increase livestock productivity, improve livelihoods and nutrition, and promote women’s economic empowerment and social recognition.

Overall, the Ministry’s concerted efforts have led to increased female participation across the fisheries and livestock value chains, significantly contributing to poverty reduction, enhanced nutritional outcomes, and the overall socio-economic development of rural women in Bangladesh.

18.9 Challenges of Women’s Development Goals

Despite commendable progress in gender-responsive development, several challenges continue to hinder the advancement of women within the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock. One of the major obstacles is the presence of social barriers that limit women’s active participation in co-training and skill development programmes. The contributions of women in fisheries, livestock, and poultry farming often go unrecognized due to a lack of proper appreciation and institutional acknowledgment of their work. Furthermore, the selection of female beneficiaries frequently lacks a structured and proactive approach, leading to their underrepresentation in development initiatives.

Limited opportunities and a general lack of awareness among women about ongoing development programmes further restrict their engagement. The absence of specific budget allocations targeted at women within sectoral projects exacerbates this exclusion. Existing development policies often fail to sufficiently address the needs of women, and even where such policies are in place, implementation suffers from a lack of gender sensitivity and awareness at the operational level.

Moreover, extremely poor, abandoned, widowed, and unemployed women do not receive adequate incentives or support to engage in income-generating activities related to fisheries, livestock, and poultry farming. Deep-rooted social prejudices and patriarchal norms continue to marginalize women, limiting their access to resources, markets, and decision-making processes. Budget allocations for involving women in research and innovation remain insufficient, thereby excluding them from contributing to and benefiting from scientific advancements in the sector. Lastly, the limited dissemination and expansion of women-friendly technologies pose a significant barrier to their full participation and productivity in fisheries and livestock development.

Addressing these challenges through targeted policies, increased investments, and gender-sensitive implementation strategies is critical to ensuring inclusive and equitable growth in the fisheries and livestock sector.

18.10 Recommendations/Way Forward

To accelerate the advancement of women in the fisheries and livestock sectors, the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock must adopt a more targeted and intensive approach toward gender-responsive development. In alignment with national priorities and the goals of the Gender Budget for FY 2025–26, the Ministry is committed to implementing a range of strategic actions to empower women and ensure their meaningful participation across all levels of activity.

Key focus areas will include increasing women's involvement in mixed fisheries and livestock production at the smallholder level, thereby promoting inclusive and sustainable rural livelihoods. Special attention will be given to fostering women entrepreneurs in the livestock sector and involving them directly in the dissemination and adoption of modern livestock technologies at the grassroots level. To support these efforts, skill enhancement through targeted training programmes in fisheries and livestock management will be prioritized.

The Ministry also aims to broaden women's participation in unconventional and high-value fisheries activities such as freshwater pearl, crab, and clam farming, which hold significant economic potential. To facilitate women's entrepreneurship, easier access to bank credit will be ensured for those engaged in livestock rearing and fish farming. In all capacity-building and development initiatives, gender parity will be maintained by ensuring equal participation of women and men in training programmes.

Furthermore, the Ministry intends to integrate women's perspectives into every stage of planning and budgeting by including them in comprehensive action plans. Essential inputs—such as fish fry, fish feed, and pond preparation materials in the fisheries sector, along with animal feed, vaccines, and deworming drugs in the livestock sector—will be distributed free of cost to support women's economic activities.

To promote gender-equitable innovation, the Ministry will prioritize the invention and import of technologies that are favorable to women's interests while restricting the use of those that may disadvantage them. Lastly, to strengthen women's voices in policy and programme implementation, their participation in key positions within decision-making committees will be actively ensured, thereby institutionalizing gender inclusion in governance processes across the sector.

Rural Development and Cooperative Division

19.1 Introduction

A substantial segment of Bangladesh's population consists of rural women, whose development is vital for reducing income inequality between urban and rural areas and achieving inclusive economic growth. Recognizing this, the Rural Development and Cooperatives Division (RD CD) is playing a proactive role in advancing national development by promoting the economic and social empowerment of women, addressing gender disparities, and creating employment opportunities that are specifically suited to women's needs and capacities. Ensuring equal participation of both men and women is essential in the fight against poverty. In this context, the RD CD has prioritized initiatives aimed at empowering women through education, enhancing access to financial resources, facilitating small-scale credit, and supporting employment generation across diverse business sectors. These efforts are yielding tangible results, as women's participation in the country's economic development continues to grow each year—contributing meaningfully to the broader goal of sustainable and inclusive development.

19.2 Ministry/Division's Mandate Described/Enshrined in Relevant Laws and Policy Documents

The Rural Development and Cooperatives Division (RD CD) plays a vital role in advancing the development and empowerment of women in Bangladesh. Its mandate is firmly rooted in several national laws and policy frameworks that reflect the government's commitment to gender equality and inclusive rural development.

Section 5.12 of the National Rural Development Policy 2001 underscores the importance of implementing social and institutional initiatives aimed at empowering rural women. It calls for joint awareness-building among men and women regarding their legal rights and entitlements, thereby fostering a more informed and equitable rural society.

The Co-operative Societies Act 2001 and the Co-operative Societies Rules 2004, both amended in 2002 and 2013, have introduced critical reforms to enhance transparency, accountability, and efficiency within the cooperative sector. These reforms aim to accelerate the cooperative movement and ensure that women's participation is significantly increased. Specifically, Sections 4.7, 7.13, 9.5, and 9.10 of the National Cooperative Rules 2012 highlight the importance of empowering women through employment opportunities and awareness-raising measures. They also call for targeted initiatives under cooperative development projects to improve the socio-economic conditions of disadvantaged communities, including ethnic minorities and marginalized groups.

Furthermore, the National Action Plan 2013, formulated in accordance with the Women's Development Policy 2011, outlines a comprehensive set of responsibilities for the RD CD. These include integrating poor and rural women into social safety net programmes, providing skill development training, and engaging them in income-generating activities to ensure their inclusion in the economic mainstream. The plan also emphasizes the necessity of ensuring women's access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation facilities. Additionally, it advocates for women's participation in leadership and decision-making roles, with a particular focus on increasing their representation in higher-level positions within rural institutions and governance structures.

Through these legal and policy instruments, the Rural Development and Cooperatives Division continues to demonstrate its strong commitment to advancing gender equality and fostering inclusive rural development in Bangladesh.

19.3 Women Employees and Beneficiaries of the Ministry/Division

19.3.1 Quantitative Information of the Male and Female Employees

Office name	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Secretariat	100	76	24	24.0
Autonomous Bodies & Other Institutions	7420	5335	2085	28.1
Department of Co-operatives	226	140	86	38.1
Divisional Cooperative Offices	225	168	57	25.3
District Offices	1341	1022	319	23.8
Upazila Offices	1966	1570	396	20.1
Metro Thana Cooperative Offices	39	23	16	41.0
Cooperative Training and Educational Institutions	140	109	31	22.1
Total :	11457	8443	3014	26.3

19.3.2 Statistics of Beneficiaries

Programme	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
BRDB	234605	93842	140763	60.0
BARD, Cumilla	3219	1186	2033	63.2
Department of Cooperative	10052	5851	4201	41.8
SFDF	119884	22778	97106	81.0
RDA, Bogura	12592	8903	3689	29.3
RDA, Gopalganj	740	335	385	52.0
Milk Vita	805000	716450	88550	11.0
PDBF	1274810	49985	1224825	96.1
Total :	2460902	899330	1561552	63.5

19.4 Women's Share in Ministry's Total Allocation and Expenditure

(Taka in Crore)

Budget Description	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
Operating Budget	658.4	698.9	619.2	670.8	656.0	622.4	680.4	620.7	585.8
Gender Relevant Allocation	220.4	233.7	209.9	227.5	222.7	212.6	230.6	210.3	199.7
As % of Operating Budget	33.5	33.5	33.9	33.9	33.9	34.2	33.9	33.9	34.1
Development Budget	441.6	647.6	489.6	762.5	581.9	561.2	964.4	847.2	621.9
Gender Relevant Allocation	171.3	295.0	225.8	363.2	274.6	263.8	398.1	360.7	266.1
As % of Development Budget	38.8	45.6	46.1	47.6	47.2	47.0	41.3	42.6	42.8
Total Budget	1100.0	1346.4	1108.7	1433.3	1237.9	1183.6	1644.9	1467.9	1207.7
Gender Relevant Allocation	391.7	528.8	435.7	590.7	497.3	476.4	628.7	571.0	465.8
As % of Total Budget	35.6	39.3	39.3	41.2	40.2	40.3	38.2	38.9	38.6

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

19.5 Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure by Thematic Areas

(Taka in Crore)

Thematic Areas	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
01-Women Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status	215.9	314.5	268.2	325.0	304.0	292.3	345.6	351.2	285.0
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	55.1	59.5	61.6	55.0	61.1	61.4	55.0	61.5	61.2
% of Total Budget	19.6	23.4	24.2	22.7	24.6	24.7	21.0	23.9	23.6
02-Economic Participation and Equality	144.0	203.7	152.8	257.9	185.6	176.8	275.1	213.0	174.3
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	36.8	38.5	35.1	43.7	37.3	37.1	43.8	37.3	37.4
% of Total Budget	13.1	15.1	13.8	18.0	15.0	14.9	16.7	14.5	14.4
03-Increasing women's effective access to public services	21.0	0.0	5.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	5.3	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
% of Total Budget	1.9	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
04-Education, Health and Wellbeing for Women Development	10.9	10.5	9.4	7.8	7.7	7.3	8.0	6.8	6.5
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	2.8	2.0	2.2	1.3	1.6	1.5	1.3	1.2	1.4
% of Total Budget	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

19.6 Impact of Priority Spendings of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

Priority Expenditure Sectors/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (Direct and Indirect)
Women development and social status enhancement through income-generating activities	Approximately 70% of the beneficiaries of various projects implemented by the Rural Development and Cooperatives Division (RD CD) are women. Through a range of initiatives and development programmes, the Division offers skill-based training to underprivileged women, empowering them to pursue both employment and self-employment opportunities. These efforts are not only enhancing women's economic independence but also contributing significantly to the improvement of their social status. As a result, women are increasingly participating in decision-making processes within their families, communities, and workplaces, thereby fostering inclusive and sustainable development.
Providing various trade-based training, membership of projects, and organizing seminars and workshops on poverty alleviation	The Rural Development and Cooperatives Division actively organizes seminars and workshops focused on poverty alleviation, complemented by trade-based, income-generating training programmes specifically designed for women in both rural and urban areas. These initiatives are not only raising awareness among women but also creating pathways for sustainable employment, enhancing their social recognition, and significantly contributing to their overall empowerment. By equipping women with practical skills and knowledge, the Division is fostering greater economic inclusion and promoting gender equality in the development process.
Alleviating women's poverty through employment generation, awareness building, and resource development through research and applied research	Through research and practical field-based initiatives, the involvement of rural women in development activities has significantly increased. This enhanced participation has contributed to the alleviation of poverty among poor women in rural areas, thereby improving their socio-economic conditions. As a result, their social status has risen, empowering them to play a more active and respected role within their communities.

19.7 Women Advancement related KPIs of the Ministry/Division and Achievements

SI No	KPI	Unit	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
1.	Participation of rural women in income-generating activities	Person (in thousands)	525.13	157.293	202.359
2.	Motivating women members of the cooperatives and providing them training on income-generating activities		187.95	22.972	26.351

19.8 Mentionable Success Stories of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

The Ministry/Division has achieved significant progress in advancing women's empowerment through targeted initiatives aimed at improving livelihoods, reducing poverty, and expanding economic opportunities. One remarkable example is the implementation of the Integrated Rural Employment Scheme for Poor Women by the Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB), which has directly contributed to enhancing the quality of life for approximately 104,906 underprivileged women over the past five years. This initiative has played a vital role in reducing rural poverty and promoting socio-economic inclusion.

In FY 2023-24, the Department of Cooperatives, under its Development Action Plan, set ambitious goals to generate employment through productive activities. These include creating jobs for 2,150 individuals in the milk and meat production sectors, and an additional 1,574 individuals through the project titled Establishment of Cooperative Model Villages: Mass-Oriented Cooperative Ideas. Notably, this project includes the active participation of 960 people from the Jessore and Meherpur districts. In addition, a wide range of vocational training programmes is being implemented to increase income-generating opportunities in rural communities, with a strong emphasis on women's participation.

Furthermore, the Palli Daridro Bimuchan Foundation (PDBF), operating under the Rural Development and Cooperatives Department, has emerged as a key driver of women's economic empowerment. Women constitute approximately 96 percent of PDBF's beneficiaries. In FY 2023–24 alone, the foundation provided income-enhancing training to 2,750 women and motivational training to 3,850 female beneficiaries. Moreover, a substantial sum of Tk 918.71 crore was disbursed under various loan schemes to support women's entrepreneurship and self-employment. These initiatives collectively underscore the Ministry/Division's unwavering commitment to promoting inclusive development and empowering women across rural Bangladesh.

19.9 Challenges of Women's Development Goals

The achievement of women's development goals continues to face several critical challenges that must be addressed with urgency and strategic planning. One of the primary obstacles is the absence of a comprehensive and integrated action plan focused on the socio-economic and political empowerment of women, particularly in rural areas where disparities are most pronounced. Additionally, the allocation of financial and institutional resources for women's development remains insufficient, limiting the scale and impact of gender-focused initiatives. Another significant barrier is the lack of adequate skills among personnel responsible for implementing women-centric programmes and projects, which hampers effective execution and sustainability. Furthermore, the persistent lack of robust social security systems poses a serious risk to women's safety, economic resilience, and overall well-being. Addressing these challenges is essential to ensuring inclusive and equitable progress for women across all sectors of society.

19.10 Recommendations/Way Forward

To promote inclusive and sustainable development, a comprehensive set of recommendations has been proposed to enhance the economic and social empowerment of women, particularly in rural areas. First, it is essential to provide diverse income-generating training programmes and employment opportunities tailored to the needs of rural women, enabling them to become self-reliant and financially independent. Alongside this, marketing support should be extended to ensure that women receive fair prices for their products, thereby improving their economic returns and encouraging entrepreneurship.

Equally important is the need to cultivate a culture of savings among women by offering targeted financial literacy training and introducing savings incentives—such as matching contributions at double the rate of their monthly savings—to encourage long-term financial security. Establishing women’s faculties in rural development academies and creating a gender-sensitive, supportive working environment for female trainees will further enhance their access to professional development and lifelong learning opportunities.

Efforts must also focus on increasing women’s participation in productive and income-generating activities by removing barriers and facilitating access to resources. Moreover, dedicated women-centric projects should be undertaken to address economic empowerment, improve access to quality healthcare, and strengthen family nutrition and overall well-being. These measures will collectively contribute to building a more equitable, healthy, and prosperous society.

Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment

20.1 Introduction

Overseas employment plays a pivotal role in the socio-economic development of Bangladesh. The Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment contributes significantly to national development by expanding new labor markets, enhancing the skill base of the labor force through modern training, and alleviating unemployment via overseas employment opportunities. The ministry is dedicated to ensuring the overall welfare of expatriate Bangladeshis, safeguarding their rights, and enhancing the inflow of remittances. To achieve these goals, the ministry implements a range of strategic initiatives through its affiliated institutions, including the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET), the Wage Earners' Welfare Board (WEWB), Bangladesh Overseas Employment and Services Limited (BOESL), and the Expatriates' Welfare Bank. These bodies work collectively to promote safe migration practices, raise public awareness, and provide robust support systems for migrant workers. As a result of these initiatives, approximately 16.6 million Bangladeshi workers have secured employment in 176 countries worldwide. The expatriate workforce has become an integral part of the national economy, contributing to the country's ability to finance imports, strengthen foreign exchange reserves, and maintain economic stability. In FY 2023–24, Bangladesh received USD 23,912.38 million in remittances, and by April 2025, remittance inflows for FY 2024–25 had already reached USD 24,537 million, underscoring the critical importance of this sector.

20.2 Ministry/Division's Mandate Described/Enshrined in Relevant Laws and Policy Documents

According to the Allocation of Business, five core activities (1, 2, 6, 6A, and 9) of the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE) directly relate to the advancement of women's development. The Ministry is mandated to ensure the overall welfare and rights of expatriate workers—both men and women—while contributing to the socio-economic development of Bangladesh through foreign employment. MoEWOE has established a robust legal and policy framework to promote safe, orderly, and regular migration. This framework includes the Foreign Employment and Migrants Act, 2013, the Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy, 2016, and the Overseas Employment and Migrant Rules, 2017. Collectively, these instruments uphold the rights and dignity of all citizens to access decent employment abroad, emphasizing transparency, accountability, and protection throughout the migration process.

To safeguard the interests of female migrant workers, the Ministry has institutionalized a comprehensive support mechanism through its Labour Welfare Wings stationed at Bangladeshi missions abroad. Officers from these wings conduct regular visits to deportation centres and relevant institutions to monitor the conditions of migrant workers. Recognizing the unique challenges faced by women, MoEWOE has established four dedicated safe homes in Riyadh, Jeddah, Jordan, and Lebanon. These facilities provide essential shelter, protection, and assistance to female migrant workers in distress. In cases of abuse, accidents, illness, or other emergencies, the Ministry promptly undertakes the repatriation of affected women workers to Bangladesh and ensures the provision of necessary legal and medical aid. Furthermore, each mission facilitates the monthly documentation and sharing of the experiences and concerns of women migrant workers, which are then reported to the Ministry for appropriate policy response and programmatic action.

20.3 Women Employees and Beneficiaries of the Ministry/Division

20.3.1 Quantitative Information of the Male and Female Employees

Office name	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Secretariat	115	91	24	20.9
Bureau of Manpower, Employment, and Training	160	142	18	11.3
Divisional Employment and Manpower Offices	10	8	2	20.0
District Employment and manpower offices	276	242	34	12.3
Technical Training Centres	2078	1610	468	22.5
Institutes of Marine Technologies	152	137	15	9.9
Apprenticeship Offices	17	15	2	11.8
Wage Earners Welfare Board	207	184	23	11.1
Bangladesh Overseas Employment and Services Limited (BOESL)	63	57	6	9.5
Total :	3078	2486	592	19.2

20.3.2 Statistics of Beneficiaries

Programme	Total	Male	Female	Female Percentage
Training of departments under BMET	334387	305550	28837	8.6
Issue of emigration clearance for overseas employment through BMET	818372	768901	49471	6.0
Bangladesh Overseas Employment and Services Limited	13232	3503	9729	73.5
Wage Earners Welfare Board- Financial Grands	3542	3458	84	2.4
Wage Earners Welfare Board-Death Compensation	862	834	28	3.2
Wage Earners Welfare Board-Scholarships for talented children of expatriate workers	3454	1493	1961	56.8
Total :	1173849	1083739	90110	7.7

20.4 Women's Share in Ministry's Total Allocation and Expenditure

(Taka in Crore)

Budget Description	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
Operating Budget	451.3	456.5	420.2	392.4	365.0	311.6	357.6	331.7	291.6
Gender Relevant Allocation	137.9	140.2	128.5	121.6	111.9	93.3	112.8	101.9	88.7
As % of Operating Budget	30.6	30.7	30.6	31.0	30.7	29.9	31.6	30.7	30.4
Development Budget	403.7	760.8	720.2	626.0	342.4	213.8	632.7	267.5	197.4
Gender Relevant Allocation	166.1	321.3	313.3	259.0	149.6	92.3	249.7	109.3	79.3
As % of Development Budget	41.1	42.2	43.5	41.4	43.7	43.2	39.5	40.9	40.2
Total Budget	855.0	1217.2	1140.4	1018.4	707.4	525.4	990.3	599.2	489.0
Gender Relevant Allocation	303.9	461.5	441.8	380.6	261.6	185.6	362.5	211.3	168.0
As % of Total Budget	35.6	37.9	38.7	37.4	37.0	35.3	36.6	35.3	34.4

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

20.5 Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure by Thematic Areas

(Taka in Crore)

Thematic Areas	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
01-Women Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status	35.4	32.0	32.0	32.2	27.1	18.5	33.1	25.1	19.4
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	11.6	6.9	7.2	8.5	10.4	10.0	9.1	11.9	11.6
% of Total Budget	4.1	2.6	2.8	3.2	3.8	3.5	3.3	4.2	4.0
02-Economic Participation and Equality	76.4	157.4	154.7	140.9	92.4	65.3	130.1	58.5	46.5
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	25.1	34.1	35.0	37.0	35.3	35.2	35.9	27.7	27.7
% of Total Budget	8.9	12.9	13.6	13.8	13.1	12.4	13.1	9.8	9.5
03-Increasing women's effective access to public services	6.3	63.9	62.0	54.8	28.4	24.3	51.6	2.6	1.9
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	2.1	13.9	14.0	14.4	10.9	13.1	14.2	1.2	1.1
% of Total Budget	0.7	5.3	5.4	5.4	4.0	4.6	5.2	0.4	0.4
04-Education, Health and Wellbeing for Women Development	186.0	208.2	193.2	152.7	113.6	77.5	147.7	125.1	100.2
% of Total Gender Relevant Allocation	61.2	45.1	43.7	40.1	43.4	41.8	40.7	59.2	59.7
% of Total Budget	21.7	17.1	16.9	15.0	16.1	14.8	14.9	20.9	20.5

Source: GFT Model, Finance Division

20.6 Impact of Priority Spendings of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

Priority Expenditure Sectors/Programmes	Impact on Women Development (Direct and Indirect)
Human resource development	The Ministry administers a total of 104 Technical Training Centres (TTCs) and 7 Institutes of Marine Technology (IMTs), with 6 TTCs exclusively designated for women's training. These institutions collectively provide instruction in 55 diverse trades and occupational areas, including Dress Making; Pattern and Marker Making with Cutting; Boutique and Block Printing; Mid-Level Garment Supervision; Sweater and Linking Machine Operation; Fruit and Food Processing; Catering; Housekeeping; and Caregiving, among others. Women are receiving skill-based training in these fields, enabling them to become qualified members of the workforce. As a result, the demand for Bangladeshi female domestic workers has increased notably in countries such as Saudi Arabia, Hong Kong, Jordan, and Lebanon, contributing to a significant rise in female labor migration to these destinations.
Welfare of Bangladeshi expatriates	Migrant workers are supported through a range of services, including legal aid, recovery of compensation from foreign employers for deceased workers, educational scholarships for their children, access to healthcare services, workplace monitoring, arrangements for the repatriation and burial of deceased workers, and financial assistance to their families. These services are equally available to female workers. Collectively, these initiatives contribute significantly to the country's socio-economic progress, particularly by fostering women's empowerment.

20.7 Women Advancement related KPIs of the Ministry/Division and Achievements

SI No	KPI	Unit	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
1	Participation of women in total foreign employment	%	11%	8%	13%
2	Training of women workers for skill development	Ratio of female and male workers	19.31	19.31	19.51

20.8 Mentionable Success Stories of the Ministry/Division in Women Advancement

From 2009 to April 2025, a total of 11,034,435 Bangladeshi workers have been employed overseas, among whom 1,164,734 are women, representing 10.57 percent of the total migrant workforce. This reflects a significant milestone in women's participation in overseas employment. To enhance employability both at home and abroad, the government has established 104 Technical Training Centres (TTCs) and 6 Institutes of Marine Technology (IMTs), where skill development training is being offered across various trades to both male and female workers. At the district level, female domestic workers are being identified through a selection committee comprising representatives from TTCs and District Employment and Manpower Offices (DEMOs), and residential training is being conducted in 42 TTCs. A "Women Workers Grievance Management Cell" has been set up at the Bureau of Manpower, Employment, and Training (BMET) to address the specific concerns of female migrant workers. To date, 2,650 women have successfully completed driving training and obtained licenses, accounting for 5.46 percent of all trainees. Decentralized mechanisms have been introduced through the establishment of help desks at district offices to facilitate complaint resolution. Additionally, service quality for both male and female workers at the grassroots level have been enhanced through the District/Upazila Migration Coordination Committees (DMCC/UNCC) and the Vigilance Task Force Committee (VTF). To encourage participation in training programmes at IMTs and TTCs, an allowance of Tk 150 per day per trainee is being provided. For FY 2024–25, the Finance Division has allocated a budget of Tk 50 crore to support this allowance initiative, underscoring the government's commitment to inclusive skill development and women's empowerment in the overseas employment sector.

20.9 Challenges of Women's Development Goals

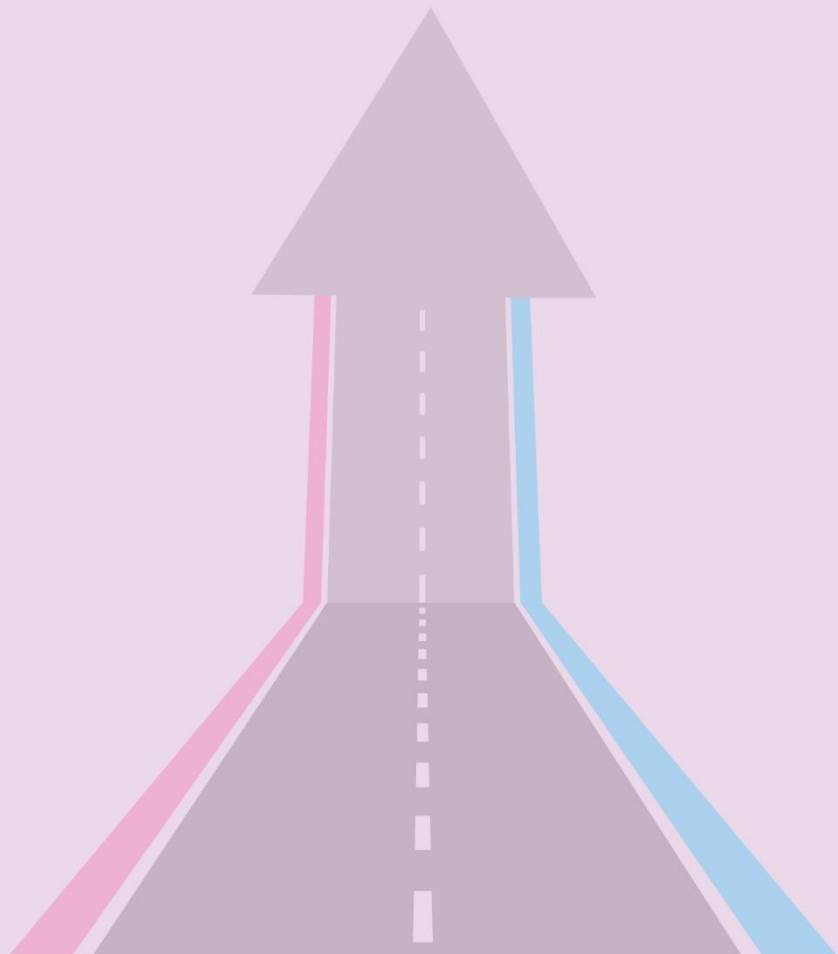
Despite notable progress in facilitating overseas employment opportunities, several challenges persist in advancing the development goals for women in the expatriate sector. One of the most significant obstacles is the insufficient number of women-focused technical training centres across various regions of the country. This limits access to essential skill development programmes for aspiring female migrant workers, thereby reducing their competitiveness in the global labor market. Furthermore, women face limited access to affordable foreign employment opportunities due to the absence of low-cost migration pathways. High migration costs remain a critical barrier for many women from low-income backgrounds who are otherwise willing to work abroad. Another pressing challenge is the lack of a robust and comprehensive database on expatriate women. This data gap hampers the government's ability to track, support, and design evidence-based policies that effectively respond to the unique needs and vulnerabilities of female migrant workers. Additionally, many women still face difficulties accessing formal bank loans, which restricts their ability to finance migration, invest in pre-departure training, or reintegrate economically upon return. Addressing these challenges is essential to ensure that women can participate more equitably and securely in overseas employment and contribute meaningfully to the country's economic development.

20.10 Recommendations/Way Forward

To accelerate the development and empowerment of women in the overseas employment sector, several forward-looking strategies must be implemented. First, there is an urgent need to establish a greater number of dedicated Technical Training Centres (TTCs) for women across various regions of the country. Currently, only six women-specific TTCs operate at the divisional level. Although general TTCs offer training for women, participation remains limited due to socio-economic

barriers and lack of awareness. Increasing the number and outreach of women-focused TTCs will enhance access to skills development for female workers. In addition, the BMET and the BOESL have facilitated low-cost or zero-cost migration for women to labor markets in countries such as Jordan, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia. Expanding the number of host countries and increasing the volume of women migrants will further contribute to women's economic empowerment. Ensuring the welfare of expatriate women also requires the establishment of a live and regularly updated database to monitor their conditions abroad effectively. Moreover, the Probashi Kallyan Bank provides dedicated financial instruments, such as "Women Migration Loans" for aspiring migrant workers and "Women Rehabilitation Loans" for returnees. Substantially increasing the size of these loans and the number of women beneficiaries will significantly advance national women's development goals in the context of labor migration and reintegration.

Chapter VI: Conclusion and Way Forward



Chapter VI: Conclusion and Way Forward

- 6.1** Over recent decades, Bangladesh has made significant advancement towards gender equality through comprehensive policies and gender-responsive planning. Gender budget reporting has now assumed an institutional shape from a humble beginning in FY2009-10 involving only 4 ministries. In this financial year we are covering all 62 ministries/divisions which speaks voluminously about the government's intention of mainstreaming gender equality in national planning. In FY2025-26 approximately one-third of the national budget was dedicated to initiatives promoting women's advancement. This commitment aligns closely with Bangladesh's National Women's Development Policy (2011) and the Sustainable Development Goals, yielding concrete improvements in education, health, economic participation, and political representation of women.
- 6.2** Significant strides have been made in education, with Bangladesh reaching near gender parity in primary and secondary school enrollments. This success results from sustained investments in free schooling programmes and stipend incentives targeted for girls. Maternal and child health has improved substantially. For instance, maternal mortality has decreased significantly from 434 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2000 to approximately 123 by 2020, due to enhanced prenatal care and community-based healthcare services.
- 6.3** Women's participation in economic activities has witnessed a surge, primarily driven by employment in the ready-made garment (RMG) industry, where women constitute approximately 80 percent of the 4 million workers. In addition, microfinance initiatives have empowered over 20 million women entrepreneurs which infused dynamism in the economy.²³ Progressive employment policies, such as six-month paid maternity leave in the public and in many private sector organizations, underscore the government's commitment to women-friendly workplaces. Moreover, women's representation in governance and politics has notably improved, with reserved parliamentary seats which constitutes 21 percent women participation in national legislature. Bangladesh's global ranking of 7th in the Women in Politics index, further intensifies the fulfillment of the government's policies.
- 6.4** Despite these notable successes, Bangladesh continues to face significant gender disparities. Women's labor force participation rate remains stagnant at around 43 percent, approximately half of men's, with over 96 percent of employed women working informally without adequate job security or social protection.²⁴ Furthermore, deep-rooted patriarchal norms significantly constrain women's economic and social opportunities. Besides, high rates of early marriage persist, with approximately 50 percent of young women (Aged between 20 and 24 years) married before age 18²⁵, severely impacting girls' education and increasing health risks from early childbearing. Gender-based violence remains pervasive, with a national survey in 2024 highlighting that 70 percent of ever-partnered women experienced intimate partner violence. Furthermore, intersectional vulnerabilities exacerbate these challenges, particularly among rural, climate-vulnerable, and marginalized groups, who face greater hurdles in accessing education, healthcare, and legal remedies.
- 6.5** The underlying causes of persistent gender gap include socio-economic and cultural barriers, notably child marriage, early motherhood, lack of security, gender-based violence, stereotypes about girls' competencies in STEM subjects, and the recent impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. These factors significantly contribute to the dropout rate in education and limits access to tertiary

²³ Microcredit Regulatory Authority (MRA)

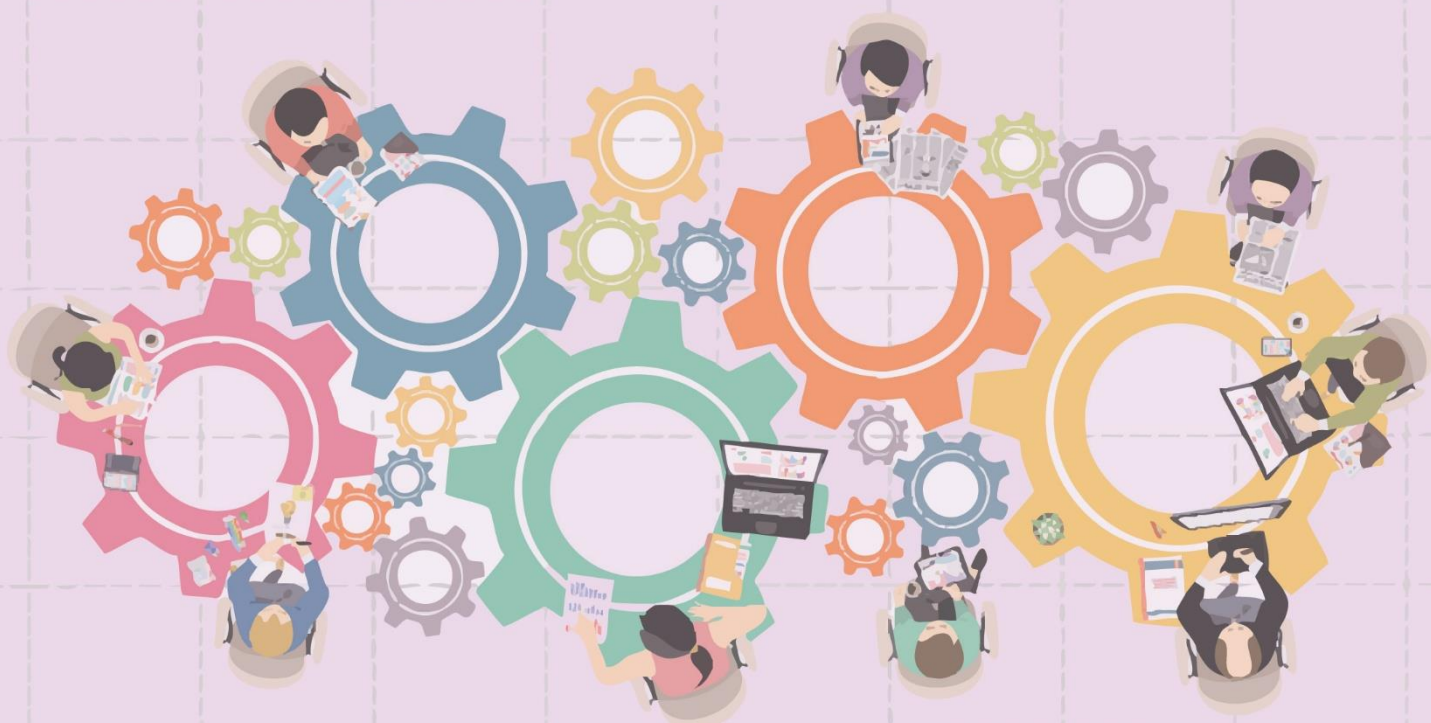
²⁴ World Bank's Gender Data Portal

²⁵ Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (2022)

education. Similarly, women's health outcomes are substantially influenced by broader social determinants, including poverty, limited autonomy in healthcare decisions, inadequate employment opportunities, and patriarchal societal norms.

- 6.6** In addition, digital safety has emerged as a significant challenge for women amid Bangladesh's increasing digitalization. Women face disproportionate vulnerability to cyber threats such as online harassment, cyberbullying, privacy violations, and digital violence, impacting their mental well-being and limiting their online participation. Ensuring digital safety is crucial for achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls in the digital age. Comprehensive legal reforms, enhanced enforcement, specialized institutional mechanisms, targeted awareness campaigns, and sustained gender-responsive budgeting commitments are essential to effectively address these threats. Therefore, the Finance Division, in collaboration with relevant ministries and divisions, needs to prioritize digital safety measures within upcoming gender budgets, for guaranteeing a safer and more inclusive digital environment for women.
- 6.7** Addressing these challenges requires strategic policy interventions aligned with the SDGs 2030, other policy documents, and reform commission reports. To support this agenda, a gender matrix has been developed based on consultations with key stakeholders and by drawing on practices adopted by other countries (refer to Appendix-3). While the matrix outlines a set of priority actions that need to be implemented in Bangladesh, it is important to recognize that alternative strategies may also be considered depending on the context and available resources.
- 6.8** To ensure systematic and participatory implementation, multiple committees need to be established. These committees will comprise representatives from the lead ministry or division, relevant associate ministries or divisions, academia, civil society, and other stakeholders. Each committee will be required to meet at least four times a year to assess the progress of indicators where performance is lagging and to provide actionable recommendations for improvement.
- 6.9** The lead ministry or division, in collaboration with associate entities, needs to undertake specific activities, formulate programmes, and implement projects based on the guidance received from these committees. Resource allocation for these initiatives needs to be aligned with the Medium-Term Budget Framework (MTBF). Within this framework, each ministry or division's performance will be assessed through the indicators specified in the respective Ministry Budget Framework (MBF).
- 6.10** To ensure accountability and track results, a robust monitoring and evaluation framework needs to be developed and operationalized. This framework will provide evidence of the extent to which planned actions are being executed and the degree to which they are contributing to narrowing the gender gap in health and education outcomes. It will also help identify areas requiring further attention and refinement in policy implementation. However, recognizing gaps in oversight, the Women's Affairs Reform Commission (2025) has recommended creation of an independent Women's Rights Commission to monitor and enforce women's rights - a proposal that reflects perceived shortcomings in the current institutional setup. Overall, these measures need to be coordinated and context-specific which should be sustained through political commitment and institutional ownership for a meaningful progress towards gender equality in Bangladesh's development trajectory.

APPENDICES



Appendix 1: Procedure of Identifying Gender Finance

A) Development Budget

Step 1: Gender relevance aligned with the 04 (four) thematic areas

Gender relevance has been aligned with the following four thematic areas by reviewing the objectives and activities of the projects and programmes of each Ministry/Division. It is to be noted that all projects may have not gender-sensitive allocations. As a result, another thematic area called 'not relevant' was adopted along with the 04 thematic areas (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1: Thematic Area

Thematic Code	Thematic Area
01	Women Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status
02	Economic Participation and Equality
03	Increasing Women's Effective Access to Public Services
04	Education, Health and Wellbeing for Women Development
05	Not Gender Relevant

Step 2: Linking themes with programme/criteria

As mentioned earlier, after a detailed discussion with different stakeholders, a total of 22 criteria have been established across the four thematic areas to check the gender sensitivity or relevancy of the projects and schemes for the advancement of women. Based on these standards, it will be possible to determine the extent to which Ministries/Divisions are playing a role in women's development.

Table 1.2: Programmes/criteria under thematic areas

Code	Programmes under thematic areas
01	Women Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status
0101	Implementation of specific gender policies, strategies, or activities related to women's empowerment and enhancing social status
0102	Empowerment through participation in decision-making and political structure
0103	Women's participation in national and international forums
0104	Increase social status of women
0105	Reduce vulnerabilities, poverty, and risk of women by social safety-net
0106	Capacity building of women in climate change mitigation and adaptation
02	Economic Participation and Equality
0201	Implementation of specific gender policies-strategies or activities related to women's participation in production, labour market, and income-generating activities
0202	Ensuring decent work environment and safety
0203	Women's participation in labour market and income-generating activities
0204	Increase women's entrepreneurship
0205	Construction of infrastructure in remote areas for women

Code	Programmes under thematic areas
03	Increasing women's effective access to public services
0301	Implementation of specific gender policies, strategies or activities related to increasing women's effective access to public services
0302	Access to public properties and services
0303	Ensure safety and movement of women
0304	Access to law and justice for women
0305	Ensure cyber security, reduce violence and oppression against women
04	Education, Health and Wellbeing for Women Development
0401	Implementation of specific gender policies, strategies or education, health, and well-being related activities for women development
0402	Women education and skill development
0403	Training on frontier technology and its uses for women
0404	Women access to reproductive, and other health services and improved nutrition
0405	Participation of women in research and innovation activities
05	Not gender relevant
0501	Not gender relevant

Step 3: Criteria for Gender Sensitivity Verification of Ministry/Division's Activities

The Finance Division has developed the 'Gender Finance Tracking (GFT) Model' to determine the portion of the budget allocations that support gender-related initiatives. This model is fully integrated with the iBAS++ system. As previously mentioned, 22 criteria are used to assess how gender-sensitive or relevant projects and programmes undertaken by each ministry/division regarding women's development. These criteria enable us to evaluate the extent to which a ministry or division contributes to advancing women's development. Detail interpretations of the 22 criteria are presented in Table 1.3 below:

Table 1.3: Interpretation of the 22 Gender Sensitivity Criteria for Ministry/Division's Programmes

Thematic Area 1: Women Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status				
Code	Program area	Initiatives/Steps	Explanation	Activities
0101	Implementation of specific gender policies, strategies, or activities related to women's empowerment and enhancing their social status	Have any necessary measures been taken to implement gender-specific policies or activities related to women's empowerment and social status? If so, how have these measures been implemented?	Empowerment of women should be ensured through the implementation of gender-specific policies, strategies, and activities so that women can enjoy the desired independence and a dignified status at every stage of life.	• Formulation of relevant recruitment policies • Creating opportunities to apply for jobs • Ensuring the right to employment, etc.

Code	Program area	Initiatives/Steps	Explanation	Activities
0102	Empowerment of women through participation in decision-making and political structures	Have steps been taken to promote women's empowerment by increasing their participation in decision-making in the family, society, workplace, and political structures? If so, how has it been implemented?	Women's empowerment will be further accelerated if their participation in decision-making is ensured within the social and family environment including the political structures. This increased capability will elevate their status both in the social and family.	• Emphasizing women's political empowerment both at the national parliament and local governments • Ensuring Women's right to express their opinions • Increasing the number of Women's organizations • Providing training for female public representatives • Organizing awareness campaigns to enhance women's involvement in the electoral process, among other initiatives • Providing training for women political leaders serving as team leaders in civic organizations, among other activities etc.
0103	Women's participation in national and international forums	What steps or activities have been taken to mainstream gender issues in national and international forums and how have actions been implemented?	Ensuring the representation of women in national and international forums by promoting gender equality at all levels. So that they can raise their voice on issues relating to women's development and empowerment in every social and political sphere.	• Taking necessary steps to promote and implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) • Women's participation in the National Trauma Counselling Centre • Inclusion of women representatives in international peacekeeping missions etc.
0104	Increasing social status of women	What initiatives have been undertaken to enhance the social status of women? How and in what ways are they expected to contribute to the	Inclusion of women in the mainstream of development through administrative, social and political empowerment significantly increases	• Creating employment opportunities • Access to higher education

Code	Program area	Initiatives/Steps	Explanation	Activities
		advancement of women's roles and standing in society?	the social status of women. Women's participation in economic activities not only facilitates their participation in decision-making but also strengthens their independence. Economic empowerment improves women's position in their families.	• Facilitating women's participation in elections • Establishing of women's associations • Forming of women's clubs • Mainstreaming gender in the implementation of national development activities etc.
0105.	Reduce women's vulnerabilities, poverty and risks through social safety-net programmes	What steps have been taken to increase women's resilience for reducing vulnerability and risk in the context of natural disasters? Additionally, what measures can further strengthen women's social security to better protect them from such risks?	Through social safety net programmes, special benefits are provided to the vulnerable community regardless of gender. These programmes represent only a part of the overall social security system. The government is committed to developing social safety net programmes that are responsive to the needs of specific groups.	• Widow allowance • Mother and child benefit programme • Food assistance and provision of capacity development of the poor women under the VWB programme etc.
0106	Capacity building for women in climate change mitigation and adaptation	Have necessary steps or activities been taken to enhance women's capacity to adapt to climate change-related disasters? If so, how will these measures also contribute to the mitigation of such disasters?	Climate change affects women more severely than men in coastal areas. Due to prevailing socio-economic conditions, women often have fewer opportunities than men. As a result, disasters caused by climate change places women at greater risk. Thus, women become more vulnerable because of increased poverty and they are forced to change their lifestyles and occupations.	• Offer training on climate change disaster mitigation and resilience strategies to improve women's quality of life • Facilitate the registration of voluntary women's organizations • Undertaking special activities for women with disability and who are marginalized etc.

Code	Program area	Initiatives/Steps	Explanation	Activities
Thematic Area-2: Economic Participation and Equality				
0201	Implementation of specific gender policies, strategies or activities related to women's participation in production, the labor market and income-generating activities	Have necessary measures been taken to implement gender-specific policies or activities aimed at enhancing women's participation in production, the labor market, and income-generating activities? If so, how have these measures been implemented?	Equal participation of women and men in development and income-generation activities should be ensured through the implementation of gender-specific policies and activities.	• Enacting Laws • Formulation of strategic documents • Provision of soft loans • Formulation of relevant training policy etc.
0202	Ensuring a decent work environment and safety	Whether necessary steps have been taken to ensure a decent working environment and safety for women in the workplace or if so, in which way it has been taken?	A decent working environment is important for women. Therefore, ensuring a healthy and safe working environment will be more helpful for integrating women into the mainstream of development.	• Ensure a hygienic and clean living space • Fresh water supply • Provision of toilets • Installation of CCTV cameras to ensure round-the-clock security etc.
0203	Women's participation in the labor market and income-generating activities	Have the necessary measures been taken to increase women's participation and access to the labor market and income-generating activities, and if so, how these are going to be implemented?	To ensure equal participation of women and men in development and income-raising activities, both of them must participate at an equal rate in the labor market. The participation of men as well as women in the development of Bangladesh is increasing compared to previous decades. This participation is going on not only in traditional sectors such as agriculture or domestic work, or only in the garment industry but in many new emerging economic activities.	• Driving training • Sewing training • Fisheries, poultry, cow and goat rearing • Agricultural training • Establishment of women's corner in local markets and basic industrial cities • Cooking training • Cultivation of vegetables, fruits, and betel leaves • Beauty Parlor training • Ansar- VDP training, etc.
0204	Increasing women entrepreneurship	Are necessary measures/steps taken to increase women's entrepreneurship? If so, how or by what process?	Women entrepreneurs have given a new identity to our native culture. The representation of our traditional products	• Various activities taken by Jayita Foundation • Providing bank loans at low interest

Code	Program area	Initiatives/Steps	Explanation	Activities
			has increased through their efforts. A single woman entrepreneur can create employment opportunities for hundreds of women and men.	• Providing loans for SME operations • Providing training and creating residential facilities etc. to empower women entrepreneurs and increase their efficiency, etc.
0205	Construction of infrastructure in remote areas for women	Whether necessary steps or activities have been taken to build infrastructure for women in remote areas and if so, how these initiatives have been taken?	The government has emphasized building women-friendly rural markets and infrastructure to create a business environment and employment opportunities at the rural level in remote areas.	• Construction of roads in remote areas • Increasing other facilities including the establishment of separate corners for women traders in local markets, etc.
Thematic Area-3: Increasing women's effective access to public services				
0301	Implementation of specific gender policies, strategies, or activities aimed at increasing women's effective access to public services.	Have the necessary measures or steps been taken to implement gender-specific policies or activities aimed at increasing women's access to government jobs? If so, what kind of process has been taken?	The Constitution has specific provisions aimed at ensuring equality between men and women in obtaining government jobs. Moreover, efforts are being made at the government level to implement gender-specific policies or activities aimed at increasing women's access to government jobs.	• Enacting laws • Formulation of strategic documents • Formulation of relevant training policy, etc.
0302	Access to public properties and services	Have women's access to public properties (such as abandoned land allocation, reservoirs and social forestry) and services (such as education, health, electricity, clean water, etc.) been expanded?	The right of women to receive public property is a constitutional right. On the other hand, the contribution of the service sector is crucial for increasing the national growth rate. Therefore, the government is making continuous efforts to ensure easy access to services regardless of gender	• Provision of housing for distressed and poor single mothers in urban areas • Creating opportunities to gain wealth • Entertainment arrangements • Providing psychosocial counseling to women and children • One-stop crisis cell and centre, etc.

Code	Program area	Initiatives/Steps	Explanation	Activities
0303	Ensure the safety and movement of women	Whether necessary steps have been taken to ensure the free movement of women in public spaces and the security of women in family and society or if so, what are the ways that have been followed?	Overall, the government is working tirelessly for the development of women and their economic, social and political empowerment. The government is adopting and implementing multi-pronged plans to ensure women's safety, free entry into the workplace and women's participation in policy-making, including the expansion of women's education and the establishment of women's rights in the country.	• Reservation of seats for women's in buses and trains • Introduction of independent women buses • Construction of separate waiting rooms for women at bus terminals and railway stations etc.
0304	Access to law and justice for women	Have measures/steps been taken to create or expand opportunities in favor of women in obtaining legal aid and justice?	The women of Bangladesh are building a society of equality with men. Therefore, the government has taken initiatives to establish human rights by ensuring that poor women and backward communities will have legal and judicial services, especially in rural areas.	• Legal action against eve-teasing • Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2017 • Dowry Prevention Act-2018 • Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) Rules, 2018 • Ensuring safe housing arrangements for women, children and juvenile custodians during court proceedings, etc.
0305	Ensure cyber security and reduce violence and oppression against women	Are steps taken to reduce violence and harassment against women by ensuring cyber security in favor of women?	Nowadays cyber-crime is causing a menace to the whole society and the main victims of this crime are women. Hence, the government is very proactive in reducing violence and oppression against women by ensuring cyber security.	• Introduction of cyber-crime tracking system • Establishment of separate intelligence units, etc.

Code	Program area	Initiatives/Steps	Explanation	Activities
Thematic Area-4: Education, Health, and Well-being for Women Development				
0401	Implementation of specific gender policies strategies on education, health and wellbeing-related activities for women's development	What are the necessary measures that have been taken to implement specific gender policies or programmes related to education, health and welfare aimed at the development of women? If so, by what process?	Education, health and welfare for women should be ensured through the implementation of gender- specific policy- strategies and activities. So that women can reach the position of greater dignity in every sphere of their life.	• Enactment of Laws • Formulation of strategic documents • Formulation of relevant training policy, etc.
0402	Women's education and skill development	Do the women have access to education and training? Whether this opportunity for women and girls been created or expanded?	Education is a universal right. Women will get an enlightened life through education. Adequate training will turn the women into skilled workers. Therefore, the government is committed to ensuring women's educational attainment and skill development.	• Establishment of adequate educational institutions • Setting up training centres • Recruitment of skilled teachers • Supply of free books; • Payment of stipend, etc.
0403	Training on frontier technology and its uses for women	Are measures or steps taken for training women in modern information technology and its use?	To cope with the challenges of the fourth industrial revolution, the information technology sector of Bangladesh has emphasized various infrastructural developments including the development of skilled human resources. For this purpose, training is being provided in the information technology sector regardless of men and women.	• Training in basic Information and Communication Technology • Computer training • Conducting seminars/ workshops on various apps development • Organization awareness seminars/workshops on the digital security of female students • Broadband connectivity expansion, etc.
0404	Women's access to reproductive, and other health services and improved nutrition	Are specific and effective measures taken to protect women's reproductive and general health? Also, will the measures taken to improve the nutrition of women,	It is the fundamental right of pregnant women to have access to antenatal reproductive health care, all delivery services for safe motherhood, and post-natal care. The	• Health promotion education programmes; • Provision of primary health, reproductive, health and nutrition services

Code	Program area	Initiatives/Steps	Explanation	Activities
		especially for pregnant and lactating mothers?	fetus needs proper nutrition in the womb. As the fetus ages, its nutritional requirements also increase. Therefore, government efforts are continuing to provide pregnant mothers with a balanced diet and additional food full of nutritional quality.	• Safe water and sanitation system, etc.
0405	Participation of women in research and innovation activities	Whether necessary steps or activities have been taken for women's participation in research and innovation activities or if so, how these steps have been taken?	Women are participating in the process of researching various social issues taking appropriate actions and bringing about changes in the existing conditions to eliminate discrimination against women.	• Establishing gender-sensitive research institutes • Keeping provision for research scholarships • Scope for having research-oriented jobs, etc.
Thematic Area-5: Not Relevant to Gender				
0501	Not Gender Relevant	Not Gender Relevant	Programmes or development projects that are not gender sensitive and have no linkage to women's development.	• No scope for undertaking any gender-related activities, etc.

Step 4: Gender Relevance Category and Range

The total percentage of a project/programme's allocation spent on women's development is determined based on the above-mentioned 22 criteria. The relevance of the gender perspective of a project/programme is assessed on a scale ranging from 0 to 100, where 0 denotes no relevance and 100 represents the highest level of relevance. The degree of impact of the project/programme on women's development is presented in Table 1.4:

Table 1.4: Degree of influence for project/programmes of the Ministry/Division on Women Development

SL	Category of relevance	Percentage (%) of allocation will be used on women development	Degree of relevancy based on 22 women development criteria
1.	Not Gender Relevant	'0'	Projects/programmes that do not have any direct impact on the overall welfare of women.
2.	Somewhat Relevant	'1-33'	Projects/programmes that have minimal/minimal direct impact on the overall welfare of women
3.	Moderately Relevant	'34-66'	Projects/programmes that have a direct and moderate impact on the overall welfare of women
4.	Strongly Relevant	'67-99'	Projects/programmes that have a direct, significant, and sustainable impact on the overall well-being of women
5.	Fully Relevant	'100'	Projects/programmes that have a full and positive impact on women development.

Step 5: Estimating Gender Finance for Multiple Indicators for Project/Programmes

For multiple interventions under a gender relevance criterion, the gender relevance weight for the interventions is calculated by subtracting the standard deviation of the relevance weights from the maximum relevance weight of the interventions (Table 1.6). Formulas to calculate gender relevance weight are:

- i) Maximum relevance weight from the selected interventions under gender relevance criteria:

$$\text{MAX}(x_1, x_2, x_3, \dots, x_n)$$

- ii) Standard Deviation of the relevance weight:

$$S. D = \sqrt{\frac{\sum (x - \bar{x})^2}{n-1}}$$

- iii) Gender relevance weight of a 'Gender Relevance Criteria':

$$\text{Overall Gender responsive weight} = \text{MAX}(x_1, x_2, x_3, \dots, x_n) - \sqrt{\frac{\sum (x - \bar{x})^2}{n-1}}$$

Step 6: Relevance of Projects and Programmes

The projects/programmes are usually complex and may match more than one gender finance relevance criteria. To determine the gender relevancy of a project/programme up to 3 (three) gender relevance criteria have been considered including the 'not- gender finance' one, if deemed fit in descending order. The project/programme relevance is then calculated following the statistical formula as presented in Step 5 by deducting the sample standard deviation from the maximum relevance weight percentage. If a project or programme addresses only one relevance criterion, gender-relevant finance should be calculated as a percentage (of gender relevance) of the annual project allocation for the project/programme.

Step 7: Estimating Gender finance for multiple relevance criteria for projects/programmes

The overall project or programme relevance weight, determined in Step 6, is now distributed among the multiple relevance criteria using the statistical formula known as Weighted Reciprocal Rank (WRR). This approach enables to distribution of the allocation of gender-related financing across the multiple relevant criteria.

Weighted Reciprocal Rank for multiple relevant criteria

$$WRRi = \frac{1}{Ri} / \sum_{i=1}^n 1/Ri$$

Table 1.5: Weighted Reciprocal Rank (WRR)

Relevance	Rank(R)	Reciprocal Rank ($\frac{1}{R}$)	Individual Weight ($WRRi = \frac{1}{Ri} / \sum_{i=1}^n 1/Ri$)		
			3 (Three) Relevance	2 (Two) Relevance	1 (One) Relevance
Relevance-1	1	1.00	0.55	0.67	1
Relevance-2	2	0.50	0.27	0.33	-
Relevance-3	3	0.33	0.18	-	-

Therefore, for projects and programmes with three relevance, the percentages are 55 percent, 27 percent and 18 percent for Relevance-1, Relevance-2. For projects and programmes with two relevance, the percentages are 67 and 33 for Relevance-1 and Relevance-2 respectively. For the projects and programmes with one relevance Criteria, 100 percent of the allocation and

expenditure is gender relevant. This is to note that part of the allocation may be not gender-relevant and the remaining may address up to two more relevant criteria, totaling a maximum of three criteria for a project or activity.

B) Operating Budget:

In addition to assessing development budget allocations, the gender relevance of the government's operating budget is also systematically tracked. To evaluate the gender relevance of the operational budget, the allocation of business for each ministry or division, along with relevant policy documents, is taken into consideration. An expert team from the Finance Division, in collaboration with the respective line ministries, assesses the gender relevance of each sub-activity within the operational budget and assigns a corresponding percentage of gender relevance. In this context, factors such as women's employment and the number of female beneficiaries are also reviewed.

Table 1.6: Weighted gender relevance for projects and programmes and sub activity of operational budget

Code	Weightage/Programme	Gender Relevance (%)
01	Women Empowerment and Enhancing Social Status	
0101	Implementation of specific gender policies-strategies or activities related to women empowerment and enhancing social status	100
0102	Empowerment of women through participation in decision making and political structure	60
0103	Women's participation in national and international forums	50
0104	Increasing social status of women	45
0105	Reduce vulnerabilities, poverty and risks of women by social safety-net	35
0106	Capacity building of women in climate change mitigation and adaptation	30
02	Economic Participation and Equality	
0201	Implementation of specific gender policies-strategies or activities related to women's participation in production, labour market and income generating activities	100
0202	Ensure decent work environment and safety	60
0203	Women's participation in labour market and income generating activities	45
0204	Increasing women entrepreneurship	60
0205	Construction of infrastructure in remote areas for women	30
03	Increasing Women's Effective Access to Public Services	
0301	Implementation of specific gender policies-strategies or activities aimed at increasing women's effective access to public services	100
0302	Access to public properties and services	35
0303	Ensure safety and movement of women	45
0304	Access to law and justice for women	40
0305	Ensure cyber security and reduce violence and oppression against women	33

Code	Weightage/Programme	Gender Relevance (%)
04	Education, Health and Wellbeing for Women Development	
0401	Implementation of specific gender policies-strategies on education, health and wellbeing related activities for women development	100
0402	Women education and skill development	60
0403	Training on frontier technology and its uses for women	55
0404	Women access to reproductive, other health services and improved nutrition	45
0405	Participation of women in research and innovation activities	35
05	Not Gender Relevant	
0501	Not Gender Relevant	0

Appendix 2: Gender Relevant Allocation and Expenditure

(All Ministry/Divisions)

(Taka in crore)

Budget Description	Annual Budget/Expenditure								
	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
101 - President's Office									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	34.0	33.5	31.3	32.1	29.5	23.9	31.3	27.9	21.3
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	6.4	6.2	5.9	5.8	5.5	5.0	5.6	5.2	4.2
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	18.8	18.5	18.8	18.1	18.7	20.9	17.9	18.6	19.8
102 - National Parliament									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	232.0	347.1	154.0	337.6	324.7	257.6	341.3	307.1	249.4
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	57.4	73.5	36.6	71.0	67.9	53.9	71.9	63.3	51.3
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	24.7	21.2	23.7	21.0	20.9	20.9	21.1	20.6	20.6
103 - Chief Advisor's Office									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	3556.0	4600.4	3058.2	4452.1	4287.7	2867.1	5774.9	4744.9	3460.4
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	984.9	1298.0	832.0	1200.8	1194.5	769.0	1840.4	1451.6	1045.3
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	27.7	28.2	27.2	27.0	27.9	26.8	31.9	30.6	30.2
104 - Cabinet Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	116.0	122.1	110.8	110.9	93.6	69.2	136.9	108.3	86.6
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	29.5	30.1	29.0	23.8	21.0	15.7	27.2	31.2	25.9
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	25.4	24.6	26.1	21.4	22.4	22.7	19.8	28.8	29.9
105 - Supreme Court of Bangladesh									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	250.0	247.7	252.3	236.7	236.5	229.6	230.2	208.6	186.2
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	39.7	39.3	40.1	37.6	37.6	36.5	36.6	33.2	29.6
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	15.9	15.9	15.9	15.9	15.9	15.9	15.9	15.9	15.9
106 - Election Commission Secretariat									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	2956.0	1229.8	1141.9	2406.5	4768.7	4190.0	1538.9	1423.1	877.4
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	843.3	340.8	323.4	679.1	1432.8	1229.5	515.4	497.6	286.8
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	28.5	27.7	28.3	28.2	30.0	29.3	33.5	35.0	32.7

Budget Description	Annual Budget/Expenditure								
	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
107 - Ministry of Public Administration									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	5019.0	5376.6	4265.9	4566.9	5159.5	4050.2	4074.4	3555.6	2483.8
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	1010.9	1085.2	858.3	986.4	972.7	720.7	900.0	718.1	522.2
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	20.1	20.2	20.1	21.6	18.9	17.8	22.1	20.2	21.0
108 - Bangladesh Public Service Commission									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	149.0	166.0	171.5	131.2	141.7	106.0	123.2	114.4	97.9
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	40.5	46.7	49.5	35.0	39.1	27.9	34.4	31.6	25.5
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	27.1	28.1	28.9	26.7	27.6	26.3	27.9	27.6	26.1
109 - Finance Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	261380.7	248203.3	247495.9	231209.8	200881.1	168887.1	190716.6	185073.0	156398.3
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	75082.4	73626.5	70481.7	70467.0	55385.0	41555.8	54394.8	51823.0	42039.8
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	28.6	29.7	28.2	30.5	27.6	24.6	28.5	28.0	26.9
110 - Office of the Comptroller & Auditor General of Bangladesh									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	284.0	289.7	257.7	298.0	306.3	245.8	290.6	255.7	188.4
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	47.8	48.8	43.3	50.3	51.7	41.5	49.1	43.2	31.5
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	16.8	16.9	16.8	16.9	16.9	16.9	16.9	16.9	16.7
111 - Internal Resources Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	3126.0	3217.5	2215.6	3495.5	2788.8	1591.6	3477.7	2770.9	1590.8
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	735.2	694.0	378.2	491.4	436.0	241.4	489.5	341.3	198.3
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	23.5	21.6	17.1	14.1	15.6	15.2	14.1	12.3	12.5
112 - Financial Institutions Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	3521.0	3417.8	4153.5	2948.9	3444.4	2903.5	2851.8	3355.9	2817.2
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	900.9	1001.1	1084.6	840.5	971.4	742.8	905.2	978.0	768.6
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	25.6	29.3	26.1	28.5	28.2	25.6	31.7	29.1	27.3
113 - Economic Relations Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	22584.0	21308.0	22834.3	13141.1	16563.7	16331.9	8093.1	10061.0	9765.9
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	7398.0	6911.3	7413.8	4193.5	5333.4	5395.7	2485.5	3192.5	3200.2
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	32.8	32.4	32.5	31.9	32.2	33.0	30.7	31.7	32.8

Budget Description	Annual Budget/Expenditure								
	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
114 - Planning Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	10905.7	6492.3	26692.1	4882.9	17532.2	119.2	1363.6	3611.6	145.9
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	3257.0	1929.6	7994.4	1440.5	5245.4	23.0	386.7	1065.6	31.7
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	29.9	29.7	30.0	29.5	29.9	19.3	28.4	29.5	21.7
115 - Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	183.0	194.7	188.4	183.9	251.8	209.0	274.3	190.9	185.1
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	20.8	24.4	24.6	19.9	26.8	22.2	29.2	20.3	19.6
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	11.3	12.5	13.0	10.8	10.7	10.6	10.6	10.6	10.6
116 - Statistics and Informatics Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	467.0	662.1	702.7	415.5	568.2	481.8	409.9	381.9	284.4
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	167.4	212.7	306.5	111.2	230.4	209.2	114.0	119.9	87.6
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	35.8	32.1	43.6	26.8	40.6	43.4	27.8	31.4	30.8
117 - Ministry of Commerce									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	607.6	931.7	470.5	593.7	411.8	350.6	544.9	402.0	341.0
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	161.6	283.8	119.3	163.8	101.2	88.4	152.2	103.3	88.4
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	26.6	30.5	25.3	27.6	24.6	25.2	27.9	25.7	25.9
118 - Ministry of Foreign Affairs									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	1704.0	1726.0	1574.6	1657.4	1588.3	1157.9	1650.7	1600.8	997.7
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	213.7	214.9	190.6	209.1	204.0	160.2	215.0	214.9	137.1
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	12.5	12.5	12.1	12.6	12.8	13.8	13.0	13.4	13.7
119 - Ministry of Defence									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	40851.2	42314.9	39415.6	42095.3	38174.2	34765.1	40360.3	36649.9	31974.8
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	2709.0	2932.9	2869.1	3113.9	2834.6	2615.6	3108.4	2904.8	2507.5
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	6.6	6.9	7.3	7.4	7.4	7.5	7.7	7.9	7.8
120 - Armed Forces Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	47.0	46.0	42.7	45.3	36.5	34.2	44.8	37.4	34.3
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	3.4	3.3	3.1	3.2	2.6	2.4	3.2	2.7	2.5
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1

Budget Description	Annual Budget/Expenditure								
	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
121 - Law and Justice Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	2075.0	2022.4	1982.7	1942.9	1717.4	1343.6	1923.8	1753.1	1322.3
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	506.7	470.8	472.5	457.9	432.8	341.4	481.3	456.2	343.9
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	24.4	23.3	23.8	23.6	25.2	25.4	25.0	26.0	26.0
122 - Public Security Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	27001.5	26876.7	25633.6	25694.8	25123.2	23560.3	24594.0	22575.3	21273.4
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	5324.0	5525.2	5302.0	5300.1	5201.6	4755.8	5033.2	4521.1	4162.3
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	19.7	20.6	20.7	20.6	20.7	20.2	20.5	20.0	19.6
123 - Legislative and Parliamentary Affairs Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	46.8	44.6	51.6	42.8	42.6	36.1	39.7	34.6	30.6
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	16.0	14.5	16.6	13.3	13.1	10.9	11.9	10.6	9.2
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	34.2	32.5	32.2	31.0	30.8	30.1	30.0	30.6	30.0
124 - Ministry of Primary and Mass Education									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	35403.0	38819.3	35123.2	34722.2	30481.9	26231.2	31758.5	27701.0	23815.2
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	21760.3	24901.0	24348.8	23365.6	21632.2	18553.7	21866.6	19592.4	16946.9
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	61.5	64.1	69.3	67.3	71.0	70.7	68.9	70.7	71.2
125 - Secondary and Higher Education Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	47564.0	44108.3	39233.4	42839.0	34131.5	32261.0	39961.4	33651.3	30495.7
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	22441.0	21484.0	17624.6	20588.8	16201.4	15225.4	19917.0	16193.5	14569.3
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	47.2	48.7	45.0	48.1	47.5	47.2	49.8	48.1	47.8
126 - Ministry of Science and Technology									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	12869.0	13572.8	12798.8	13607.5	12032.7	11208.1	16613.8	12821.1	11622.4
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	4419.1	4721.4	4205.9	4455.4	4179.4	3862.1	5740.6	4694.8	4271.8
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	34.3	34.8	32.9	32.7	34.7	34.5	34.6	36.6	36.8
127 - Health Services Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	31022.0	30125.2	21116.5	29429.6	23532.0	18655.8	29281.7	23051.7	17669.3
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	12583.5	13546.5	10454.0	14240.0	11499.0	9270.4	14170.7	11231.1	8697.1
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	40.6	45.0	49.5	48.4	48.9	49.7	48.4	48.7	49.2

Budget Description	Annual Budget/Expenditure								
	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
128 - Information & Communication Technology Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	2144.0	2872.3	2004.1	2368.4	2382.7	2291.7	1915.6	1842.7	1727.2
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	790.1	1151.8	838.4	967.8	1020.2	1004.1	708.0	666.2	629.0
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	36.9	40.1	41.8	40.9	42.8	43.8	37.0	36.2	36.4
129 - Ministry of Social Welfare									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	13991.2	12869.4	12176.7	12216.8	11552.2	11044.9	10197.9	10021.8	9463.4
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	5942.2	6751.6	6461.6	6363.1	6122.2	5910.0	5378.6	5312.0	5081.0
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	42.5	52.5	53.1	52.1	53.0	53.5	52.7	53.0	53.7
130 - Ministry of Women and Children Affairs									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	5077.9	5222.2	5039.6	4755.0	4715.5	4902.0	4290.5	4402.5	4227.9
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	4820.6	4697.6	4683.0	4353.7	4381.2	4402.1	4012.8	4100.4	3831.6
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	94.9	90.0	93.0	91.6	92.9	89.8	93.5	93.1	90.6
131 - Ministry of Labour and Employment									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	438.0	462.8	346.1	346.9	373.4	243.8	356.6	469.7	329.4
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	159.1	179.8	135.1	117.5	144.6	86.6	137.1	200.0	138.1
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	36.3	38.9	39.0	33.9	38.7	35.5	38.4	42.6	41.9
132 - Ministry of Housing and Public Works									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	5110.4	6929.0	5382.4	7428.2	7025.3	6542.5	6820.7	8697.2	7752.6
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	1633.8	2330.6	1825.0	2424.5	2410.8	2280.6	2205.4	2959.7	2626.5
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	32.0	33.6	33.9	32.6	34.3	34.9	32.3	34.0	33.9
133 - Ministry of Information and Broadcasting									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	1110.0	1107.9	1198.2	1050.5	1068.0	933.7	1098.6	1375.5	1147.9
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	327.3	335.7	364.8	315.0	326.8	279.2	360.3	456.1	372.2
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	29.5	30.3	30.4	30.0	30.6	29.9	32.8	33.2	32.4
134 - Ministry of Cultural Affairs									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	824.0	778.9	741.9	698.8	764.2	729.7	636.9	661.7	586.4
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	249.7	248.0	241.8	230.0	277.2	265.4	208.2	233.8	204.5
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	30.3	31.8	32.6	32.9	36.3	36.4	32.7	35.3	34.9

Budget Description	Annual Budget/Expenditure								
	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
135 - Ministry of Religious Affairs									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	2183.0	2602.0	1942.5	2509.2	2571.0	2541.7	2353.1	4060.8	3735.1
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	278.9	475.6	374.0	552.7	570.3	562.9	461.9	814.9	717.0
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	12.8	18.3	19.3	22.0	22.2	22.1	19.6	20.1	19.2
136 - Ministry of Youth and Sports									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	2423.0	2211.8	1580.6	1303.3	1516.8	1245.6	1275.4	1628.1	1287.7
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	1031.5	928.2	604.3	472.7	540.8	454.8	471.2	648.1	507.1
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	42.6	42.0	38.2	36.3	35.7	36.5	36.9	39.8	39.4
137 - Local Government Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	42433.0	45205.6	42357.7	46703.9	48843.1	41882.9	41707.3	45199.3	38614.5
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	16929.2	17797.7	16950.5	18566.4	19522.8	16651.8	16340.5	17852.9	15268.8
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	39.9	39.4	40.0	39.8	40.0	39.8	39.2	39.5	39.5
138 - Rural Development and Cooperative Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	1100.0	1346.4	1108.7	1433.3	1237.9	1183.6	1644.9	1467.9	1207.6
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	391.7	528.8	435.7	590.7	497.3	476.4	628.7	571.0	465.8
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	35.6	39.3	39.3	41.2	40.2	40.3	38.2	38.9	38.6
139 - Ministry of Industries									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	1891.0	2509.6	1498.9	3023.6	2546.0	2510.1	1521.2	2222.5	2030.1
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	747.6	992.2	626.7	1151.4	1001.5	987.8	549.3	847.7	778.9
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	39.5	39.5	41.8	38.1	39.3	39.4	36.1	38.1	38.4
140 - Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	855.0	1217.2	1140.4	1018.4	707.4	525.4	990.3	599.2	489.0
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	303.9	461.5	441.8	380.6	261.6	185.6	362.5	211.3	168.0
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	35.5	37.9	38.7	37.4	37.0	35.3	36.6	35.3	34.4
141 - Ministry of Textiles and Jute									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	480.0	574.1	497.6	605.8	600.7	448.6	628.4	603.1	479.5
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	115.3	135.7	127.1	149.6	153.8	104.2	172.3	171.4	133.0
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	24.0	23.6	25.6	24.7	25.6	23.2	27.4	28.4	27.7

Budget Description	Annual Budget/Expenditure								
	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
142 - Energy and Mineral Resources Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	2178.0	1086.6	1053.1	994.2	1143.1	1159.5	1869.7	1902.2	1577.5
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	985.7	347.1	259.8	292.5	308.0	292.1	502.1	460.4	312.2
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	45.3	31.9	24.7	29.4	26.9	25.2	26.9	24.2	19.8
143 - Ministry of Agriculture									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	27224.0	27214.3	24696.0	25122.5	33280.2	31959.3	24224.1	33809.6	32537.1
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	10856.3	10805.5	9818.4	9905.5	13143.4	12700.0	9459.3	13298.4	12881.0
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	39.9	39.7	39.8	39.4	39.5	39.7	39.0	39.3	39.6
144 - Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	3392.4	4288.2	3858.5	4239.9	3904.8	3604.6	3808.0	3633.6	3085.0
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	1222.5	1571.4	1407.9	1562.1	1450.2	1346.2	1392.2	1342.1	1133.8
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	36.0	36.6	36.5	36.8	37.1	37.3	36.6	36.9	36.8
145 - Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	2144.0	2130.5	1322.5	1638.1	2067.6	1849.8	1501.3	1356.2	879.5
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	597.7	575.1	390.7	487.3	622.3	552.9	403.7	402.5	240.5
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	27.9	27.0	29.5	29.7	30.1	29.9	26.9	29.7	27.3
146 - Ministry of Land									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	2303.6	2504.8	2006.6	2458.8	2147.9	1599.9	2380.5	1946.3	1263.8
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	574.9	665.6	476.5	645.2	539.9	367.5	663.5	512.0	263.9
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	25.0	26.6	23.7	26.2	25.1	23.0	27.9	26.3	20.9
147 - Ministry of Water Resources									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	11204.0	11193.6	12684.1	10244.2	14604.3	14112.6	10196.1	13555.3	10888.8
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	3016.0	3013.4	3562.2	2532.0	3838.9	3702.2	2527.3	3613.8	2858.7
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	26.9	26.9	28.1	24.7	26.3	26.2	24.8	26.7	26.3
148 - Ministry of Food									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	9004.4	6756.5	8870.5	6518.3	5237.3	5127.6	6212.7	6926.7	6027.3
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	1589.8	1508.7	1828.6	2140.6	2281.2	2262.3	2127.2	2007.4	1794.6
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	17.7	22.3	20.6	32.8	43.6	44.1	34.2	29.0	29.8

Budget Description	Annual Budget/Expenditure								
	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
149 - Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	10362.2	11003.0	10112.3	10117.8	10588.7	9852.4	10228.9	10764.0	10909.8
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	4087.9	4276.3	4034.4	3973.2	4147.9	3867.9	3958.5	4303.3	4485.2
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	39.5	38.9	39.9	39.3	39.2	39.3	38.7	40.0	41.1
150 - Road Transport and Highways Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	38496.0	38143.3	24058.2	39709.9	33364.9	24198.6	36647.6	35248.0	31187.6
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	12165.8	12933.4	7545.4	11867.0	9748.4	7641.4	10624.7	10694.7	9511.5
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	31.6	33.9	31.4	29.9	29.2	31.6	29.0	30.3	30.5
151 - Ministry of Railways									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	11944.0	18072.1	14554.3	19010.2	17067.9	14256.2	18851.7	16476.8	14692.8
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	3477.2	6067.8	4583.4	6537.2	5779.9	4810.7	6434.5	5538.4	4967.5
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	29.1	33.6	31.5	34.4	33.9	33.7	34.1	33.6	33.8
152 - Ministry of Shipping									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	10279.0	11270.4	8784.8	10801.0	7844.5	5824.7	7223.9	5474.0	4684.2
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	3232.5	3812.2	2934.4	3902.0	2675.2	1885.1	2455.9	1775.2	1461.4
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	31.4	33.8	33.4	36.1	34.1	32.4	34.0	32.4	31.2
153 - Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	2455.0	5695.1	4877.7	6596.7	6350.0	4786.2	7003.7	5628.3	5157.3
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	789.0	1909.3	1767.8	2420.8	2331.4	1762.2	2592.5	2105.9	1931.7
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	32.1	33.5	36.2	36.7	36.7	36.8	37.0	37.4	37.5
154 - Posts and Telecommunications Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	2148.0	2420.0	2358.7	2434.0	2686.4	2599.1	2486.5	3043.9	2615.9
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	517.9	828.9	831.6	812.5	999.0	975.6	835.3	1073.2	912.8
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	24.1	34.3	35.3	33.4	37.2	37.5	33.6	35.3	34.9
155 - Ministry of Chattogram Hill Tracts Affairs									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	1361.9	1399.6	1303.6	1204.7	1172.1	1313.8	1337.9	1400.8	1301.9
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	484.6	474.2	443.4	439.5	422.7	462.1	499.4	534.7	496.9
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	35.6	33.9	34.0	36.5	36.1	35.2	37.3	38.2	38.2

Budget Description	Annual Budget/Expenditure								
	2025-26	2024-25		2023-24			2022-23		
	Budget	Budget	Revised	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual
156 - Power Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	20342.0	29229.9	21651.2	33825.1	27175.2	27080.2	24195.9	25309.3	25006.9
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	6532.4	8243.0	5553.1	8194.2	6780.9	6556.9	6284.2	6579.4	6645.8
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	32.1	28.2	25.6	24.2	25.0	24.2	26.0	26.0	26.6
157 - Ministry of Liberation War Affairs									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	7330.0	7474.3	7122.8	7243.5	7228.4	6975.5	6984.2	8061.3	7845.7
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	2239.2	2246.5	2127.5	2130.2	2167.2	2088.0	2084.5	2518.3	2456.4
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	30.5	30.1	29.9	29.4	30.0	29.9	29.8	31.2	31.3
158 - Anti-Corruption Commission									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	191.0	191.3	164.0	184.7	153.7	129.0	178.4	144.1	120.3
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	44.5	33.9	38.6	32.6	28.4	23.8	32.3	26.2	21.9
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	23.3	17.7	23.5	17.6	18.5	18.4	18.1	18.2	18.2
159 - Bridges Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	6022.0	7318.1	5854.2	9073.2	7928.7	7488.6	9296.7	7072.5	6946.9
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	2025.3	2605.9	2235.7	3034.3	1747.5	1661.8	2017.8	1622.6	1609.8
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	33.6	35.6	38.2	33.4	22.0	22.2	21.7	22.9	23.2
160 - Technical and Madrasah Education Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	12678.0	11783.4	9953.3	10602.0	9983.7	8089.4	9727.8	9151.6	7765.5
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	5324.0	4906.5	4271.6	4408.5	4211.1	3330.1	3985.5	3737.4	3107.8
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	42.0	41.6	42.9	41.6	42.2	41.2	41.0	40.8	40.0
161 - Security Services Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	4038.4	4136.9	3696.6	4163.4	3683.0	3399.0	4187.0	3185.3	2860.5
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	1061.5	1080.5	949.5	1152.9	1001.7	912.2	1185.2	846.5	736.9
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	26.3	26.1	25.7	27.7	27.2	26.8	28.3	26.6	25.8
162 - Medical Education and Family Welfare Division									
Ministry/Division Budget (TK.)	10886.0	11282.4	6808.6	8620.9	6251.3	4785.4	7582.2	6697.2	4858.2
Gender Relevant Allocation (TK.)	5461.0	5478.6	3323.8	4028.5	3074.8	2415.1	3721.5	3166.5	2309.1
Gender Relevant Allocation (%)	50.2	48.6	48.8	46.7	49.2	50.5	49.1	47.3	47.5

Appendix 3: Gender Gap Matrix

Indicators/ Sub- indicators	Existing Situation	Lead Ministry/ Division	Associate Ministries/ Divisions	SDG 2030	Probable actions
Enrolment rate in tertiary (%)	Female: 22.78 (WEF_GGGR_ 2024)	SHED	UGC, TMED, LGD, MoWCA, MoHPW	-	• Extend the scope of female stipend programme • Facilitate flexible learning options by embracing e-learning platforms • Ensuring safe living arrangements by establishing more girls' hostels • Engaging all family members to female targeted education, in particular, TVET programme • Promote positive social norms around gender and gender roles • Enhance female targeted incentives for vocational training • Introduce gender sensitive teaching methodologies.
Graduates in STEM (%)	Female:20.6 (WB 2018)	SHED	UGC, TMED, ICTD, BCC, MoST	-	• Facilitate research and innovation in higher education • Promote a culture of innovation and creative problem-solving • Facilitate flexible learning options by embracing e-learning platform • Enhance mentorship and educational opportunities in STEM-related fields • Mainstream the gender perspective in educational content (teacher training, curriculum, pedagogical methods and teaching material) • Ensure gender sensitive classroom environment with creativity and interaction • Promote gender equality in international student exchange • Promote retention of women in STEM education • Promote awareness of and overcome non-conscious and cultural gender biases widely expressed as gender stereotypes in society • Promote visibility of women with STEM qualifications, and in STEM careers, especially in leadership positions in governments, business enterprises, universities and research organizations • Mainstream gender perspectives in science communication and informal and non-formal STEM education activities, including in science centres and museums • Promote gender balance among STEM teacher recruitments and placements • Promote gender equality in international training, higher education and research • Promote gender-responsive and gender-sensitive research dissemination and science communication

Indicators/ Sub- indicators	Existing Situation	Lead Ministry/ Division	Associate Ministries/ Divisions	SDG 2030	Probable actions
Adult literacy rate (%)	Female: 73.0 (BES 2022)	SHED	TMED, MoWCA, MoIB, MoRA	–	• Make a provision for financial incentives for poor female students • Facilitate flexible learning options • Strengthen efforts against child marriage by creating awareness in society, taking more campaign programmes and appointing more educated and trained female teachers • Identify illiterate families and arranging to counsel those family members • Expand support schemes such as subsidizing transportation costs or establishing safe or well-founded transportation system especially for remote areas • Strengthen efforts to prevent all forms of sexual harassment • Ensure safety and security in public educational institutions and public places.
Secondary School Dropout rate (%)	Female: 40.78 (BES 2022)	SHED	TMED, MoWCA, MoIB, MoRA, MoSW	–	• Increase support to gender sensitive quality education • Build and upgrade gender sensitive facilities through providing safe, non-violent, inclusive learning environments • Promote widespread campaigning against eve-teasing and ensure safety for girl child and adolescents girl • Enhance need based financial and non-financial support to poor girl's families • Introduce special education loan scheme and scholarship programmes for suburban and rural meritorious female students • Strengthen efforts against child marriage by taking different initiatives • Expansion of existing social safety net programmes to help marginalized families.
Health and Well- being					
Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) (per 100,000 live births)	153 (SVRS 2022)	MoHFW	LGD, MoIB, MoSW, MoWCA	70	• Prevention of unintended pregnancies and access to contraception • Ensure safe abortion services to the full extent of the law and quality post-abortion care • Access to high-quality care in pregnancy and post-natal care • Ensure all births are attended by skilled health professionals • Increase the number of health care providers • Reduce the rate of child marriage • Expand the provision of health services through telemedicine and mobile apps.

Indicators/ Sub- indicators	Existing Situation	Lead Ministry/ Division	Associate Ministries/ Divisions	SDG 2030	Probable actions
Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (%)	59 (MICS 2019)	MoHFW, MoWCA, MoSW	LGD, MoIB	-	• Develop data base on traditional birth attendance and provide training on regular basis to facilities safe delivery • Provide support to family to plan the delivery in advance • Provide financial support to marginalized women who are unable to access qualified professionals during childbirth • Ensure adequate transportation facilities • Awareness raising about the importance of having skilled health personnel during childbirth • Determine the required number of skilled birth attendance in a village and ensure their availability • Ensure security for skilled birth attendants • Skill development training for health facility staff.
Prevalence of stunting among children under 5 years of age (%)	Female:28.0 (MICS 2019)	MoHFW, MoWCA	MoA, MoDMR, MoFL, MoInd, MoSW, MoWCA, MoIB, MoPME, MoF	-	• Pre- and post-natal child care for up to 4 years in order to ensure a healthy future generation; • Implement the Children Act, 2013 for child nutrition and Bangladesh National Food and Nutrition Security Policy, 2020 • Continue the operational plan for National Nutrition Services (NNS) under the Health Sector Programme • Nutrition education, nutritional support and complementary feeding • Ensure that breastfeeding is exclusively done during the first 6 months of life • Provide supplementary food to poor, underprivileged girl children through health cards at school or in the community • Ensure personal and family hygiene, proper sanitation, and clean and sufficient drinking water • Encourage community gardens to meet the family's nutritional needs • Provide basic health, nutrition, immunization etc. services for every child in community clinics and city centres • Conduct various campaign programmes to increase awareness about nutrition to prevent child malnutrition.
Early marriage rate	32.90 (WEF_ GGGR-2024)	MoHFW, MoWCA	MoPA, DGFP, DWA, MSW, LGD, ICTD, BMET	0.00	• Adopt special programmes to implement the Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2017 and formulate Child Marriage Restraint Rules, 2018 • Give necessary instructions to marriage registrar in order to marriage registration must be took place in the residential areas of bride and groom and Kazi Association as well as marriage registrar of other religions should not conduct any marriage of under ages • Provide child marriage prevention related training to kazi/priest, marriage registrars of other religion, match-makers

Indicators/ Sub- indicators	Existing Situation	Lead Ministry/ Division	Associate Ministries/ Divisions	SDG 2030	Probable actions
					- Start the online marriage registration process and include union parishad/ward counselor all over the country to make it popular - Prepare and strengthen network among marriage registrars (kazi) to convey information about child marriage elimination and prevention in their respective areas
Economic participation and Equality					
Labor Force Participation rate (%)	41.5 (BBS 2023)	MoLE	MoA, MoFL, MoWCA, MoTJ, MoC, MoI, FID, MoSW, MoCHTA, MoPA, MoSHE, TMED, MoYS, MoW, RDCD, LGD, MoDMR, ICTD, PTD and MoEWOE	50	- Both the National Agricultural Policy, 2018 and the National Woman Development Policy, 2011 should include the definition of 'female farmers' alongside 'female agricultural laborers' to enhance their access to government agricultural services (such as seeds, fertilizers, etc.), incentives, agricultural loans, training, and other support - Supporting the establishment of agriculture-based farms and industries to enhance women's participation in economic activities and to promote the emergence of women entrepreneurs - Building the National Centre on Gender Based Violence as a Centre of Excellence for overall coordination, monitoring and supervision to prevent violence against women and children, empowerment of women and child protection - Set up a database for One-Stop Crisis Centre and One-Stop Crisis Cell and create favorable working environment in all sectors - Expanding the coverage of the widow allowance programme - Ensuring more participation of rural poor women in income generating activities and providing training - Encouraging more women to participate in vocational training - Providing various technical and market-oriented training for self-employment of minority women - Take efforts to increase the participation of women to 50% in technical educational institutions - Increasing the number of funds reserved for women entrepreneurs in refinancing projects to provide loans on easy terms and low-interest rates to the organizations run by women entrepreneurs - Providing training through Women Chambers to enhance the skills of women entrepreneurs - In order to attract women traders to participate in domestic export fairs, up to 20% of the total shops can be reserved them and full fee can be waived for allotment of shops - Women chambers of commerce can be set up in each district for women entrepreneurs and projects can be taken/special funds can be allocated for their professional skill development - Giving priority to young women in loans for trained youths and increasing financial supports for their self-employment

Indicators/ Sub- indicators	Existing Situation	Lead Ministry/ Division	Associate Ministries/ Divisions	SDG 2030	Probable actions
					• Successful women entrepreneurs/businessmen can be included in the field of sending commercial representatives abroad to provide encouragement • Provision of venture capital to create women entrepreneurs.
Estimated earned income in thousand \$	\$1.16 (WEF 2024)	MoLE	MoI, MoYS, MoC, RDCD, FID, NAB, and MoEWOE	-	• Taking effective steps to eradicate wage discrimination in formal and informal sector between male and female workers • To arrange skilled physician for women workers • Women chambers of commerce can be set up in each district for women entrepreneurs and projects can be taken/special funds can be allocated for their professional skill development • To provide technical and market oriented training for women's employment at the upazila level • Ensuring the employment, protection, salaries-allowances and other benefits of women migrant workers working abroad in accordance with the law of the employing country.
Legislators, Senior Officials and Managers (%)	7.33 (WEF 2024)	MoPA	MoWCA, MoLE, MoSW, MoC, MoLJ, MoS, MoEWOE	-	• To recruit manpower in Civil Service • To ensure adequate sanitation facilities in government buildings up to the upazila level, setting up day-care centres adjacent to offices for working mothers to create a better working environment for women • To form the Committee for Prevention of Discrimination against Women to ensure safe, fearless and confident participation of women in state activities • To organize of training on mental health, workshops and seminars and provision of necessary budget to change discriminatory attitudes towards women colleagues • To provide training and developing organizational quality to increase the efficiency of women employees • Besides, adequate number of seats reserved for women and special beneficiaries in every bus of the Bangladesh Employees Welfare Board • Giving women equal opportunities and participation in wealth, employment, markets and business • Ensuring the participation of women lawyers in commissions or committees formed for the purpose of law making and reform and appointing gender experts in all related commissions.
Professional and Technical workers (%)	20.24 (WEF 2024)	TMED	MEFWD, HSD, SHED, MoST, PTD, ICTD, MoYS, MoS, MoWCA	-	• Since girl students are not interested in traditional technical trades, new medium- and long-term courses like food processing, tailoring, and beauty technician and in some special cases agro farming are opened • Introducing reward/incentive systems for ensuring and sustaining quality health services in remote areas

Indicators/ Sub- indicators	Existing Situation	Lead Ministry/ Division	Associate Ministries/ Divisions	SDG 2030	Probable actions
					• According to the National Science and Technology Policy, 2011 implementation Action Plan providing incentives to women in research and development (R&D) professions and ensuring participation and empowerment of women in science and technology education research • To extend the scope of prenatal, antenatal, emergency obstetric care and postnatal care through midwifery and Community Skilled Birth Attendants (CSBA) services • ICT training to promote ICT use-education and specific incentives to attract women into the ICT industry • Prioritizing and encouraging women entrepreneurs to work with Post e-centres and other similar e-centres • To recruit skilled manpower in community clinics and to provide training to the existing manpower to improve their skill • Encouraging more women to participate in vocational training • Arranging Sports and providing adequate sports equipment and facilities to female and giving certificates and awards in recognition of women's achievements in sports and • Ensuring women friendly infrastructure (dressing room, wash room, day-care) in every working place and sports complex.

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Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

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