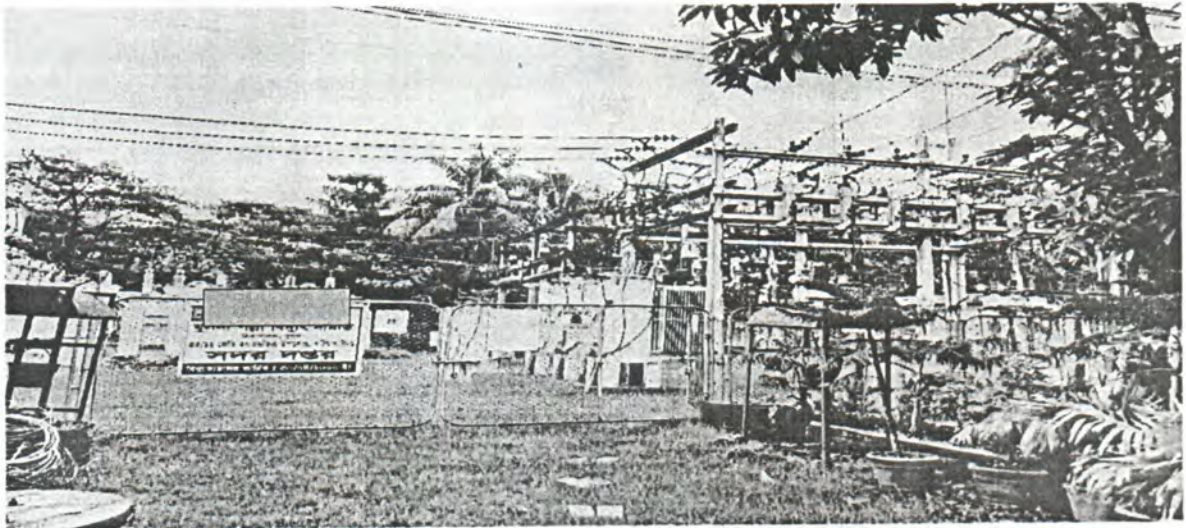




Assessment Report on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

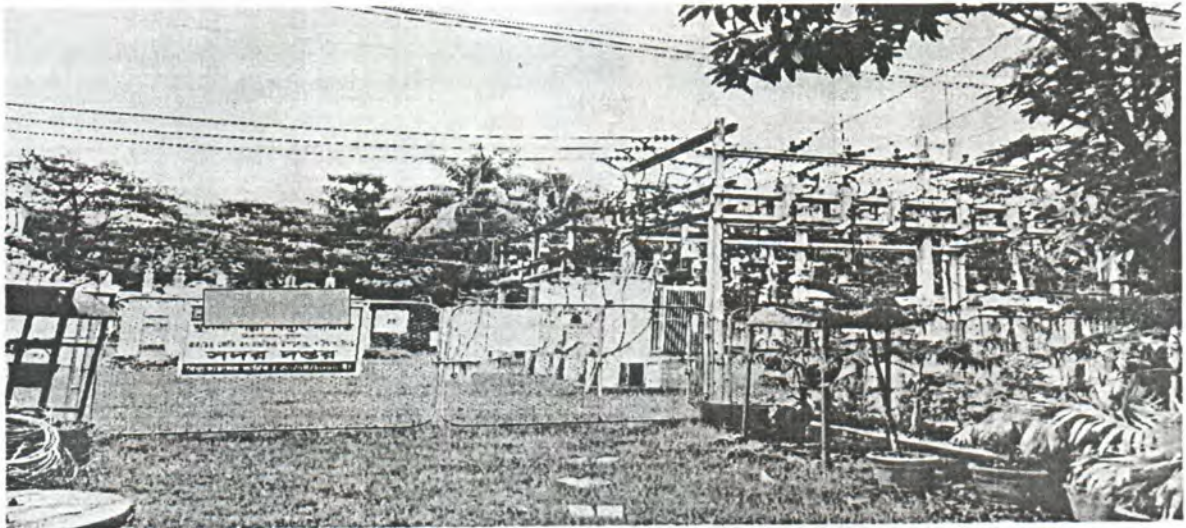


Bangladesh Power System Enhancement and Efficiency
Improvement Project (AF)

Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board



Assessment Report on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion



Bangladesh Power System Enhancement and Efficiency
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Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AGM	Assistant General Manager
BREB	Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board
CEDAW	Convention on The Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DGM	Deputy General Manager
DIE	Drug, Illegal Gratification and Extramarital Affairs
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GES	Gender Equity Strategy
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GM	General Manager
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
ILO	International Labour Organization
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
MOWCA	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
NWDP	National Women Development Policy, 2011
PBS	Palli Bidyut Samity
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SH	Sexual Harassment
TA	Technical Assistance
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Bangladesh has seen rapid socio-economic growth and is recognized as a lower-middle income country since 2015. The country continues to be in the medium level of human development since 2015 as per the Human Development Reports of the United Nations Development Programme¹. The international community has also appraised the country for promoting gender equality, as underlined in the 2022 Gender Gap Report² published by the World Economic Forum.

The Government of Bangladesh (GOB) is a signatory to several international treaties and instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the ILO Conventions, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Beijing Platform for Action, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The GOB is committed to promoting gender equality³, social security and inclusive development leaving no one behind. The GOB formulated the National Women's Development Policy (NWDP)⁴ 2011, and developed a national action plan for its implementation, since 2013. The GOB has also adopted several policies including the National Elderly Policy 2013, the National Policy on Disability 1995, the Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act 2013, the Orphanage and Widows' Home Act 1944, the Vagrant and Destitute Persons (Rehabilitation) Act 2011, the National Social Welfare Policy 2005, National Social Security Strategy 2015, the Children's Act 2013 (amendment 2018) and such other to ensure social inclusion for all excluded and vulnerable people in line with the principle to "leave no one behind".

The people of the excluded and vulnerable groups and women, often cannot access services, resources and opportunities provided by the government and others due to social norms and practices. The factors of social exclusion can be gender, age, disability, caste, ethnicity, income status, geographic location, and prevalence of HIV/AIDS and such other for both men and women.

The needs of women and girls from various excluded and vulnerable groups have been addressed in all key strategic areas of the 8th Five-Year Plan in line with the national policies and the SDGs. Accordingly, the GOB implemented many initiatives to promote gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) in various sectoral services. With the implementation of the acts, policies and programmes to promote GESI in the formal public sector, significant progress has been made in the social indicators.

Despite progress on various fronts, the pace of economic growth, social development and gender equality is not uniform. Some traditional values, norms, practices and the burden of household chores place women in a vulnerable position and prevent them from participating in productive activities, public domain and decision-making. They also become subjected to gender-based violence and harassments due to the same reasons. Developmental challenges and constraints

¹ https://hdr.undp.org/system/files/documents/global-report-document/hdr2021-22pdf_1.pdf as of 12 Feb 2024

² https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2023.pdf as of 12 Feb 2024

³ See Annex 1 for Glossary of Terms

⁴ See NWDP 2011 in

https://mowca.portal.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/mowca.portal.gov.bd/policies/64238d39_0ecd_4a56_b00c_b834cc54f88d/National-Women-Policy-2011English.pdf

The bottom of the page features several handwritten signatures and initials. On the left, there is a small, stylized signature. In the center, there is a larger, more legible signature that appears to read 'Bina'. To the right of this, there are several other initials and signatures, including one that looks like 're' and another that is a simple 'B'. The page number '1' is located at the bottom right corner.

to promoting equality are visible in several sex-disaggregated socio-economic indicators, where underachievement of women, the excluded and vulnerable groups is evident.

Economic empowerment of women has become important due to the challenges caused by the Covid19 and the recent economic crisis. Women's equal access to economic opportunities remains a distant goal, as women's participation in the labour force is low and they mostly work in irregular jobs in the informal sector. Women's professional diversity in the workforce is also limited, as traditional gender norms and social values continue to create social stigmas about women's access, choice, participation and decision-making in their professional careers. In addition, gender stereotypes create biases against women in selection, placement, promotion and training decisions. In this context, organizational political is an important factor for promoting gender equality and social inclusion, developing women, the excluded and vulnerable groups as a professional group with leadership capacities.

1.2 Electrification for Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

The benefits of electrification are multifaceted, both direct and indirect. The direct effects are mostly economic, such as increased income and employment, and also optimizing expenditure patterns, surpluses, savings and increased assets. The availability of electricity has a positive effect on income, consumption, household expenses, time use and employment. It helps the modernization of agricultural production and also the creation of non-farm employment opportunities in commercial, manufacturing, and service sectors. Besides creating non-farm employment, it also generates employment in various support services and ensures a higher standard of living with improved quality of life. The livelihood of most rural households depends on agriculture and extensive farming. Employment in some rural industries and services, mainly agro-based, gradually increased due to rural electrification. Thanks to electrification, participation of women in labour force has increased.

The indirect effects refer to social and cultural aspects of life in areas such as education, health, empowerment of women, girls, the excluded and vulnerable groups, and use of modern technology, etc. Electricity not only provides light, but also supports human development, economic growth and people's social emancipation. Electrification significantly increased non-agricultural employment and income leading to diversification of economic activities. Electrification of households has been found to have a positive impact on study times, access to information from electronic media, fertility behaviour of women like having fewer children, and also on the economic empowerment of women. Direct effects of electrification include increased access to internet and electronic gadgets. These influence on time use, workload, recreation; and information and awareness on home management, available support services, family planning, cleanliness, sanitation, primary health care, personal hygiene and against child marriage, dowry, and harassment of women and others. Electricity facilitates women's safety and mobility, self-employment, access to micro-finance, longer hours for household work, participation in productive and income generating activities (IGA), and reduces household drudgery.

Thus electrification has impacts on women's empowerment, gender equality, and social inclusion. The direct and indirect benefits together have an impact on the national economic growth, poverty reduction, and human development.

1.3 Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board (BREB)

Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board (BREB) is an autonomous body of GOB under the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources. The BREB is the apex agency responsible for electricity

supply in rural and semi-urban areas and supports the GOB in achieving its target of 100% electrification by 2021. BREB aims to both generate demand and develop connectivity through electricity infrastructure to meet industrial, commercial, irrigation and domestic electricity demand in semi-urban and rural areas. BREB has a comprehensive rural electrification program and electricity distribution network funded by several development partners to support the GOB in achieving GESI goals under the 8FYP, SDG, CEDAW and other conventions. BREB reaches last mile connectivity through its network of 80 Palli Bidyut Samities (PBS- Rural Electrification Societies) across the country. New consumers are added every day, making life easier for rural communities, including women. BREB serves 3,51,68,552 consumers, of which 3,16,68,825 are domestic, 23,77,892 commercial, 278,120 industrial consumers⁵ and also serves rural and semi-urban irrigation as well as other requirements. BREB also facilitated public safety and security by ensuring electrification of the national infrastructure like Padma Multipurpose bridge.

BREB not only focuses on electrification, but also considers it important that development initiatives support women and address GESI. Therefore, BREB has taken many initiatives to involve women, promoting gender equality and empowering women in the organization. Hence, this GESI assessment study was conducted to map the practice of GESI in BREB, to identify the problems and needs of women, excluded and the vulnerable in participating in the operation and services and the challenges of the BREB. This assessment forms the basis for the development of a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy (GESI Strategy) for BREB, which will guide the future integration of GESI perspectives in addressing issues and challenges identified during the assessment.

⁵ MIS report of BREB, September 2023,

https://reb.portal.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/reb.portal.gov.bd/page/8f29e63c_7bea_4373_be82_923752ffe29a/2023-10-18-04-07-443e69397caa7addfd88566876c911ca.pdf

2. The Assessment

Development initiatives are generally anticipated to generate equitable benefits for all. The benefits are at times not equitable because of the existing gender disparities, social exclusion and vulnerabilities⁵. The existing social norms, attitudes, and practices limit women's mobility and hinder access of women, excluded and other vulnerable groups to human, social, and economic development opportunities. The outcome is often their low participation in and benefits from development. Appropriate development planning grounded on social assessments, is therefore, essential and beneficial.

Gender inequality intersects with all dimensions of exclusion and vulnerability. The needs and perspectives of women, excluded and vulnerable groups need proper consideration in development initiatives. Women who belong to excluded groups experience numerous additional disadvantages, are doubly susceptible, and unable to achieve equal outcomes of development. Thus, to promote GESI, it is crucial to ensure that all development efforts consider the intersectionality between gender inequality and other disadvantages to address the pertinent concerns of all groups.

This assessment intends to document the current gender equality practices of BREB and assist the BREB in supporting the GOB's efforts to address social inclusion issues, existing gaps in the energy sector, and persistent gender inequities. It entails determining BREB's institutional capacity, good practices for GESI mainstreaming, gaps, and potential avenues for strengthening systems and practices.

2.1 Purpose and Scope of the Assessment

The GESI assessment is to establish a baseline of GESI interventions and support BREB formulating a GESI strategy for the organization. This report includes the findings from the assessment, the approach and methodology used for the assessment and relevant recommendations. Based on the current GESI mainstreaming measures and practices, the report describes the gaps and potential steps for enhancing GESI results of BREB's operations. Additionally, it contains a list of actions that BREB can take to advance GESI. Also, it offers an outline of a GESI strategy.

The assessment looked into the following aspects of the organization

1. Organizational vision and institutional arrangement on GESI;
2. Human resource of BREB and PBSs;
3. Work environment for promoting GESI;
4. Participation and decision-making of women a, excluded and the disadvantaged;
5. Training and capacity development;
6. Supportive services and infrastructure facilities;
7. GESI responsiveness in planning, budget, and monitoring
8. Lessons from GESI-focused client support;
9. Gaps and challenges;
10. Emerging recommendations; and
11. Scope and elements of a GESI strategy with a list of activities for BREB and the PBSs.

⁵ See Glossary of Terms and the Framework for Integrating Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in the Asian Development Bank's South Asia Operations, August 2023. <http://dx.doi.org/10.22617/TIM230294-2>

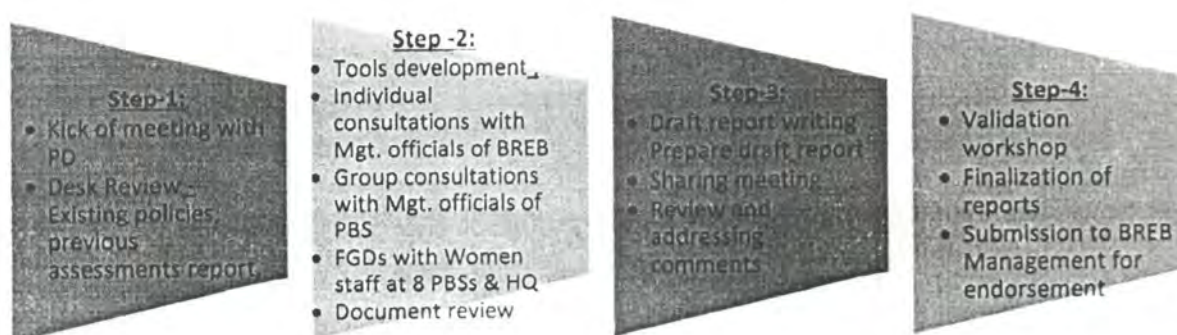
2.2 Approach and Methodology

The methodologies used for the assessment were qualitative ones. These included a variety of techniques, including focus groups discussions, interviews, consultations, and the review of secondary data/information for the assessment on two different aspects.

1. **Organizational Practice:** Organizational practice on GESI refers to how the BREB promotes GESI within its internal systems, management, policies, and practices, such as in staffing, capacity building, inclusive work environment, planning, monitoring, and other organizational systems.
1. **Field Operation for Services:** How GESI is practiced in field service provisions, work rules, and opportunities that is, how BREB actively promotes GESI while delivering electrification services in the community.

The methodology is depicted in the diagram below. The first step included a desk review of existing policies, plans, available reports, rules, and regulations of BREB. The second step involved information gathering tools development, individual interviews with BREB's senior management officials, consultations with Palli Biddiyut Samities' (PBS) management officials in group, and focus group discussions (FGD) with women officers and staff of PBSs in August 2023. The third step included analysis of information collected from various sources and drafting the report and sharing of the key findings. In this step recommendations were shared with relevant sections for reality check. In the fourth step, based on the comments and suggestions received from the BREB, the report was finalized and submitted to the BREB management for endorsement.

Diagram -1 Methodology adopted for the assessment



For primary information collection, consultation and interviews were conducted with 23 senior officials (8 women- all at the senior level) of different directorates and sections of BREB including

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the Executive Director⁷. Additional meetings were conducted with selected officials once again to validate the recommendations.

Eight PBSs in Narayanganj 1 of Dhaka 1, Khulna, Bagerhat, Pirojpur, Jhalokadhi, Barisal-1 and Barisal-2 were visited. At the PBS level, FGDs were held with women staff and consultation meetings with the management officials. A total of 94 women staff of the 8 PBSs participated in the FGDs where discussions were conducted in an informal mode using a checklist. A consultation meeting was held at every PBS with a total of 58 management officials (4 women in 8 PBSs following the FGDs with the women staff to further cross-check and validate the issues and concerns that came out from the FGDs. The consultations were to gather information, and evidence and also to understand the issues of equal opportunity, affirmative measures for women staff, and the overall working environment of the PBSs.

Table 2: Participants of consultations and focus group discussions at the PBS Level

Number of Management staff consulted			Number of women staff consulted
Men	Women	Total	Total
54	4	58	94

Secondary data collected through document review were also used to validate the information. Information on existing human resources, skills enhancement practices, women's participation at different levels, organizational practices in mainstreaming GESI in planning, budgeting, monitoring systems, etc. were gathered from interviews, and documents. The overall working environment for women at the PBSs was observed.

Several discussions took place with the Project Team of the ADB-funded Project BAN - Additional Financing for Bangladesh Power System Enhancement and Efficiency Improvement Project. Visits and familiarization with the activities of PBSs enabled the team to understand the operation at the field level. Review of documents included documents from different departments, information on the ADB-funded TA project, documents on WePower and other relevant documents of the GOB. The key questions asked during the primary interviews with the officials included the following:

(i) BREB senior officers

1. Existing initiatives and practices in promoting gender equality and social inclusion;
2. Existing sex ratio of staff of BREB and PBSs at different levels, and practice for gender parity and social inclusion;
3. Existing organizational mechanism for coordinating GESI-related activities;
4. The existing system of mainstreaming GESI in project planning, budget, procurement, and organizational systems;
5. Past and ongoing efforts of women's empowerment in service delivery at field level, lessons learned, and utilization of lessons;
6. Activities and efforts to promote gender gender-friendly work environment;
7. Initiatives for organizational awareness building on prevention of workplace sexual harassment, abuse, and bullying and the related redress mechanism;

⁷ Executive Director-PBS management, Chief Engineer (planning and operation), Inquiry and Discipline Directorate, Personal Administration Directorate, Public Relations Directorate, Training Directorate, Controller (Accounts, Finance & Budget, Procurement Directorate, Legal Affairs Directorate, Sr. Director -Loan & budget, Director-Accounts, Deputy Director (Admin) Program & Planning, Deputy Director (Technical) – H&D.

8. Capacity-building efforts on GESI and the training needs;
9. Existing practice of gender responsive planning and budget;
10. Existing MIS system, collection of sex-disaggregated data, and monitoring of GESI-focused results; and
11. Possible gaps and challenges in the above areas and ways to improve them.

(ii) Field officials at the PBSs

1. Existing systems of women's participation in PBSs operation;
2. Existing work environment and support system for women staff;
3. Opportunities for women in decision-making and leadership;
4. Opportunities at the community level for women's employment and empowerment through electrification;
5. Awareness of workplace sexual harassment, abuse, and bullying, existing functioning committee, and reporting mechanism;
6. Capacity building opportunities and needs;
7. Ways to empower women and the excluded groups through BREB's services;
8. System of monitoring GESI-oriented results of rural electrification; and
9. Possible gaps in the above areas and ways to improve them.

(iii) FGD with women staff of PBSs

1. Work distribution among staff in PBSs and work-life balance;
2. Existing work environment, office facilities, career progression opportunities, and support system for women staff;
3. Awareness of workplace sexual harassment, abuse, and maltreatment, existing functioning of committee and reporting mechanism;
4. Skills enhancement and capacity building opportunities and training needs;
5. Leadership skills development opportunities; and
6. Constraints, any women face in the workplace.

The assessment identified good practices, gaps and possible ways to address them through organizational efforts that can be incorporated into the GESI Strategy and Action Plan.

2.3 Limitations

The assessment focused on the organizational systems and work environments of BREB and the PBSs. It was mainly qualitative in nature based on information from different sources, consultation, available reports, and general observations on certain issues assuming that the respondents and interviewees represented their respective stakeholder groups. The findings were validated through sharing with BREB. Due to limited field days, information on client services mainly relied on secondary information and interviews with the officials of BREB HQ, PBSs and the FGD at 8 PBSs. Information on poverty, economic, and social variations of GESI issues and the impacts of energy was collected from the PBSs and earlier project assessments. Several officials provided information on practice of promoting GESI according to their knowledge based on which the overall institutional picture of GESI mainstreaming was created. The MIS is yet to include information on GESI or the support provided to clients for social development. Therefore, GESI information was not available in the system. Although sex-disaggregated data was available in the personal system, the assessment recognized the need for further information on diversity in workforce.



3. Findings

GESI is a multi-dimensional agenda, and organizations require strategy, action plan and capacity to promote it. It includes access to services, resources, skills, employment, information, and techniques to institutionalize GESI and create opportunities for women, excluded and the vulnerable groups. The BREB provides an essential service of electricity to the rural and semi-urban people of all strata. It supports improving the quality of their life, their empowerment and in promoting GESI through the development activities. This service significantly contributes towards achieving the GOB's Future Vision for inclusive development and the SDG's aim to 'leave no one behind'.

Since its establishment, BREB has taken a number of initiatives that promote GESI in the organization, the PBSs, and in the community through its programs. These are evident in the prioritized recruitment of women in certain positions, partnership with WePower for the creation of a congenial work environment for women, the establishment of a committee against sexual harassment of women at the workplace, provision of women-friendly support facilities in the office and support to women's lifeline consumers. As part of the GESI assessment, the important initiatives, the challenges and issues around them, and the possible ways to overcome the challenges and gaps are briefly discussed in the next sections.

3.1 Organizational Vision and Institutional Arrangement on GESI in BREB

BREB's initiatives for creating gender awareness and promoting equality within the organization mostly are related to women's employment in selected positions and their convenience at the workplace.

3.1.1 Organizational Vision on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

Current Practice: BREB's commitments to promote GESI are evident in its several initiatives towards the cause. The initiatives focused on i) women's employment and work environment; and ii) addressing the energy needs of the rural men and women with a focus on empowerment of women and the marginalized.

Issues, Challenges and Possible Measures: An organizational vision for institutionalizing GESI with focused actions for capacity building, programming, coordination, and monitoring are vital in an organization like BREB that serves all over the country. A Gender Equity and Social Inclusion Strategy (GESI Strategy) with an organizational vision incorporating goals, activities and institutional arrangements to facilitate institutionalizing GESI perspectives in the organizational system would help BREB establish systems, coordination mechanisms, and ensuring accountability. A documented strategy or statement with action areas would also help the related stakeholders understand the vision, support systematically enhancing capacity, institutionalizing systems, implementing actions, and tracking results. An time bound action plan incorporating doable actions for all relevant departments and PBSs will bring better results.

3.1.2 Institutional Arrangement for GESI Mainstreaming

Current Practice: A committee for coordinating activities under a partnership with WePower, a mechanism for coordination of women in energy in the South East Asia Region has been established. During this assessment, in November 2023, the terms of reference of the Committee has been revised. It has been assigned to addressing continuous need of women's capacity building in science and technology, women's presence in the energy sector, and creating a women-friendly work environment, looking at the gender issues and taking appropriate measures. The scope of the partnership is consistent with the Principles of GESI. One woman Deputy Director has been identified and assigned as the Focal Point to coordinate gender focused activities of BREB and the PBSs.

Issues, challenges and possible measures: Identification of a Gender Focal Point is a notable initiative. Nonetheless, institutionalizing GESI in an organization requires work in multiple areas collectively by all units/departments and requires oversight and guidance from higher management. Therefore, establishing a dedicated unit or forum headed by a suitable senior person in the organizational hierarchy with authority is helpful to guide actions and influence decisions. The Unit/Forum is to guide and coordinate implementation of the GESI Strategy and Action Plan including policy formulation, planning, capacity building, result tracking, documenting and disseminating the story or corporate journey of gender mainstreaming. Therefore, the central unit or forum need to be supported by establishing focal points in all departments and PBSs for mainstreaming GESI and coordinating such activities. This is to ensure that all departments/units/PBSs play their roles in mainstreaming GESI by using a GESI lens in their own area and contribute towards achieving the organizational vision. The Forum/unit is to be headed by a senior officer supported by a committee is to coordinate and assist in capacity building, monitoring, reporting, and guiding in implementing the actions for improving the results. Similarly, gender focal person, or a desk system at the PBS level would help to compile the story and coordinate actions of the field.

3.2 Human resource of BREB and PBSs

Human resource recruitment and placement are done at two levels, the BREB and the PBSs. BREB's core staff and officers are governed by the GOB rules in recruitment, pay scale and promotion. Some PBS staff are recruited following the approved Bylaws of PBSs.

3.2.1 Employment in BREB

Current Practice: As an autonomous organization, BREB follows the rules and process of GOB in recruitment, placement, and promotion of the staff of BREB. An organogram approved by the BREB Board is followed and the pay scale is same like that of the government officers and staff. The recruitments and promotions are open to both women and men. The existing quota provisions for staff level is followed and at officer level it is competitive as the GOB eliminated women's quota in recruitment of officers. The staffing situation with the distribution of men and women as of July 2023 is given below.



Table 2: Staffing at Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board

Sl. No.	Designation & Level	Total no of officers and staff			Percentages	
		Total	Men	Women	Men	Women
1	Grade 4 and above	51	49	2	96	4
2	Grade 5 to Grade 9	469	416	53	88	12
3	Grade 10 to Grade 13	238	212	26	89	11
4	Grade 14 and below	632	589	43	93	7
5	Total Human Resources	1,396	1,266	124	91	9

Source: Collected from BREB in July 2023.

Men and women ratio among the officers and employees working in Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board (BREB)

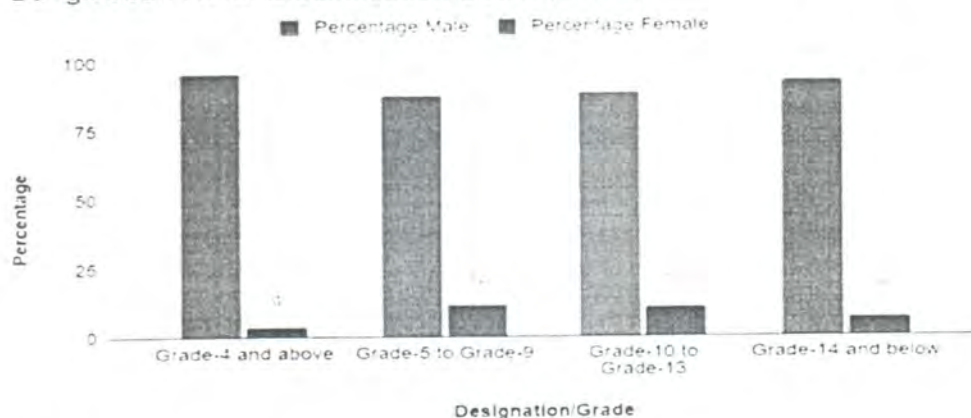


Diagram 2: Ratio of men and women in BREB in different grades

Issues, Challenges and Possible Measures: Out of a total of 1,396 staff of BREB 1,266 are men, and there are 124 women staff. There are 81 women officers and 43 staff. In BREB, women consisted 7 percent in grade 14 and below and overall only 9 percent. There are only two officers in the decision-making level Grade 4 and above. It is understood that the low presence of women in the senior officer category is mainly due to not getting enough qualified senior women engineers at the higher level. It is also associated with unavailability of women engineers to work in rural settings and the result of the stigma on women studying engineering in the past. Low presence of women at staff level was attributed to unavailability of women in competition for recruitment. It is necessary to look into the reasons and how other engineering organizations are working to bring in women at the staff level positions.

Employment of other excluded groups is according to the GOB's rule for recruitment of persons with disabilities and the members of ethnic minority groups. However, the data is not maintained and therefore, not available. BREB can review the reasons of the low presence of person with disabilities, excluded and other vulnerable groups in the staff and officer positions and consider taking some special measures to increase their presence in all positions, especially those below the officer category where availability of qualified persons is less challenging. The recruitment announcements mentioning encouragement for women, persons with disability, other excluded groups and ethnic minorities should be considered.

[Handwritten signatures and marks]

3.2.2 Employment in PBSs

Current Practice: Human resource management of the PBSs is based on the service rules defining the recruitment process, responsibilities, structural organogram, and other rules and regulations related to the PBSs approved by the GOB. All recruitments are open for all, and some of the lower-level functions of the PBSs are reserved for women through a special provision made in the By-laws of the PBSs. BREB specified the positions of cashier, assistant cashier, billing supervisor, billing assistant, computer operator, data entry operator, One Point service providers of the PBSs for women. The percentage of women staff at the lowest level below the junior engineers and equivalents categories is 25 percent due to the reserved positions. About 22 percent of the total staff of the 80 PBSs are women. It was a noteworthy step of BREB to bring in more women through the lower level positions of the PBSs. Generally, meter readers and bill collectors are men. Currently there are 54 women meter readers, who are assigned other office-based responsibilities considering that meter reading involves substantial level of field mobility. The PBSs follow a different pay scale approved by BREB, generally with higher remuneration and is reviewed from time to time when GOB pay scales are revised.

Table 2: Staffing in 80 PBSs of BREB

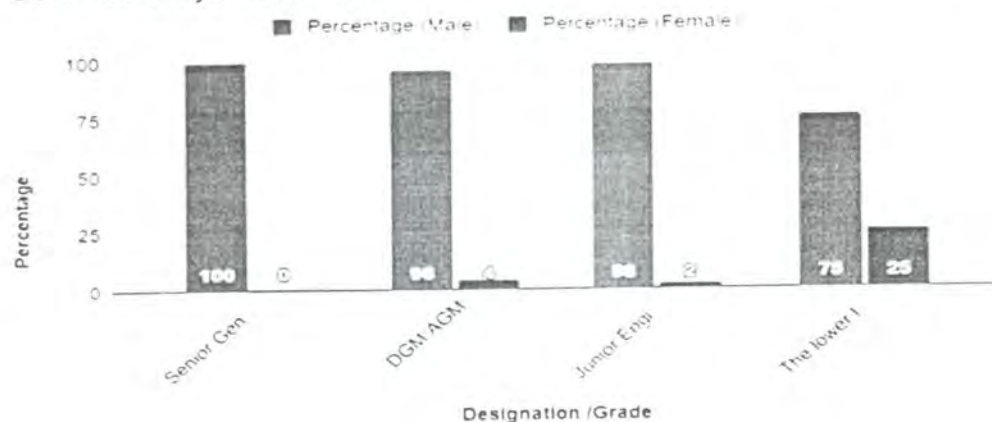
Sl. No.	Designation & Level	Total no of officers and staff			Percentages	
		Total	Men	Women	Men	Women
1	Senior General Manager /General Manager	80	80	0	100	0
2	Deputy General Manager /Asstt. General Manager	1,542	1,484	58	96	4
3	Junior Engineer/ Asstt. Junior Engineer/Enforcement Coordinator/ Asstt. Enforcement Coordinator/ Power Use Coordinator/ Member Service Enforcement Coordinator	2,304	2,252	52	98	2
4	Human resources below the levels in Sl. No. 3	24,220	18,262	5,958	75	25
5	Total Human Resources	28,146	22,078	6,068	78	22

Source: Collected from HR of BREB in July 2023

The Diagram 3 next page provides a graphical view of the distribution of staff at different levels in the 80 PBSs.

Diagram 3: Men and women ratio in PBS at different positions

Men and women ratio among the officers/employees working in 80 'Palli Vidyut Samitis'



Issues, Challenges, and Possible Measures: There is no woman at the senior level of the positions like Senior General Manager or General Manager at the PBSs. Women occupy only 4 percent of the mid-level management positions like Deputy General Manager (DGM), Assistant General Manager (AGM) and 2 percent of the Junior Engineer and Coordinator level positions in the PBSs. The turnover of women staff in technical and engineering positions is high because of the nature of work and the place of posting in rural/semi urban setting. The extensive field travel, 24-hour emergency services, posting in remote areas, and transfer after a certain time, children's education are some of the reasons for women not staying in the job. BREB may review the incentives/mechanisms, to bring in more women, disabled and excluded groups in various positions.

3.3 GESI-friendly work environment (Workload, promotion, and job satisfaction)

3.3.1 Workload and job satisfaction of PBS staff

Current Practice: The billing assistants are responsible for handling 8,500 and 10,000 consumers per month based on their position in PBSs hire temporary women staff, on a "no work no pay" basis with equal responsibilities. The billing assistants and billing supervisors ensure timely completion of the billing supported by meter readers for timely submission of the bill books. They also work to resolve disputes related to bills and dues. Billing Supervisors are to handle 40,000 clients. There is a provision of recruiting an additional Billing Supervisor when the client exceeds this number.

Issues, challenges and possible measures:

- The Billing Assistants and Supervisors felt that the work for long hours until evening and even on holidays to complete their assigned tasks. In many PBSs, the Billing Assistants handle more than 10,000-12,000 consumers per month and even more in

semi-urban areas as the number of consumers increase daily. Some Billing Supervisor deal with 70,000 - 80,000 clients due to not recruiting the additional staff as per rule. The digitization led to a stoppage of recruitment in the vacant positions increasing number of clients per staff. As informed, all other work on consumer file maintenance other than the bill entry and printing is still manual, and the benefit of reducing billing time and workload has not reached at the expected level until the system is fully automated.

- b. As informed, staff turn-over is high and recruitment/replacement takes time. Therefore, the workload is always high for the staff. Women staff raised their concern about long-after-office work impacting on their personal lives. They raised an issue of safety and security over the unsafe external environment for women traveling after dusk, especially in the winter. Assessment of the workload for rationalization, faster digitization, and faster system for recruitment would be helpful.

3.3.2 Promotion of women staff of reserved positions in PBSs

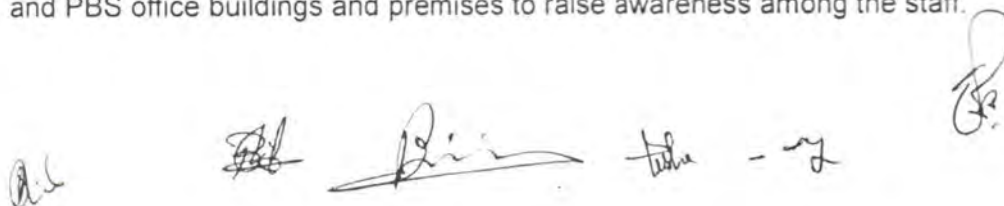
Current Practice: The Billing Assistant and Assistant Cashiers can be promoted to the next level of Bill Supervisors and Cashiers of the PBSs. One can move from the position of Data Entry Operator to Office Secretary, a post of the same grade with same benefits.

Issues, challenges and possible measures: Due to a scarcity of higher-level job opportunities and promotions tied to a competitive examination across 80 PBSs, some staff members, despite passing the test, spend their entire careers in the same position, awaiting promotion even until retirement. The challenge is compounded by blocked higher positions. Staff in billing, cash or data entry positions have limited opportunity of promotion. Roles involving travel, such as Line Man or Meter Reader with scope of promotion are deemed unsuitable for women. Additionally, women in the reserved positions with higher education levels feel frustrated though they joined the low-level positions willingly. A feeling of discrimination persists suggesting the need for a comprehensive review.

3.3.3 Workplace harassment

Current Practice:

- a. A four-member all-women committee named the Committee on Elimination of Sexual Harassment of Women at Work Place has been formed at the BREB central level. Its terms of Reference (TOR) include receiving complaints and initiating investigation, when necessary. The Committee is to sit every month to review complaints.
- b. Similar committees have been formed in PBSs not specifying all women membership. The Committees were formed a few years back, perhaps according to the directives of the Honorable High Court to form such a Committee at the workplace.
- c. Complaint boxes have been placed in BREB and the PBSs in open locations. However, the committees have never received any complaints.
- d. A session is included in all training on how to behave with the women colleagues and the ex-ED use to take the session. Upon her retirement it is continued by other officers.
- e. BREB continues a campaign against drugs, illegal gratification, and extramarital affairs (DIE). Posters, stickers, discussions at staff meetings, billboards, and stickers are visible in BREB and PBS office buildings and premises to raise awareness among the staff.



Issues, Challenges and Possible Measures

- a. Some women staff expressed during the consultations that at times they face workplace bullying, individually or collectively from colleagues or members of senior officials even those who are not their direct supervisors. The grounds of negative behaviors vary and include open comments on women's ability to perform, the tendency to leave office shortly after office hours, employment in reserved positions, simple mistakes, support sought, and others. Raising a voice against harassment leading to further harassment was also learned in a few cases. Though there was not institutional record of such complains, but the cases were presented during the FGDs. These were later discussed with the senior officers of the PBSs maintaining anonymity. The scale of the problem is not known, but its evident presence is against the principle of zero tolerance. Even presence of one case deserves looking into the matter seriously. It affects organizational culture, values, working environment, and the morale of the women staff.
- b. The effectiveness of the Committee at the PBS level varies. Meetings are irregular, and clarity on its membership, or recording was unclear. A formal guideline on the prevention of sexual harassment at workplace the formation and terms of reference of a committee, scope, definition, type of sexual harassment, coverage, the measures to be taken and capacity building on handling the harassment incidents as per the Honourable High Court's directives needs to be in place. The understanding of sexual harassment has to be clarified and awareness raised among staff as the understanding is often narrowed to physical or sexual assaults and that it is applicable only to women.
- c. It is understood that due to the social context, such cases often go unreported in the absence of a strong institutional redress mechanism that makes women confident of complaining without fear of being further harassed. An effective mechanism would require overall awareness of sexual harassment, its scope, codes of conduct, defining behaviors falling within the category of harassment and a strong mechanism to address it. It should also include the scope of work of the Committee, the treatment with complainant with privacy where one can raise voice/ concerns with confidence, and the placement of the complaint box at a confidential place and a confidential e.mail or so.
- d. A mechanism to assess the situation in BREB and the PBS level by the Committee with confidentiality can be considered, where a victim is able to raise the voice in confidence. The Committee should establish a way of verifying the reports of the PBSs.
- e. Alignment of the issue of extramarital affairs of the DIE campaign within the scope of sexual harassment, and a similar campaign for GESI promotion and against sexual harassment can create awareness among all. Workshops for staff and officers and posters, leaflets, bill boards can be the means of the campaign.

3.3.4 Weekly holidays

Current Practice: Unlike the BREB Headquarters, the weekly holidays are different in the PBSs. PBSs enjoy a half a day holiday on Thursdays and an off day on Fridays.



Issue, Challenges and Possible Measures: Generally officers and the staff work for long hours in office and some of them provide 24-hour services and handle emergencies. Most often the staff of the PBSs work full day on Thursdays as the BREB office remains open, information or reports are asked or meetings arranged in the afternoons. The PBSs are open on Saturdays, while BREB is closed and the cash section remains closed due to closure of banks. Therefore, Saturday is slow except for the completion of any pending work. Both officers and staff irrespective of their sex often cannot enjoy the half day holiday on Thursdays. It affects their personal lives, especially for women and there is request for making the holidays uniform.

3.4 Participation, and Decision Making

Current Practice: BREB has taken several measures to ensure women's participation in decision-making, which are explained below.

- a. **Women as Committee Members:** Women officials are involved in different committees of BREB. They are members of the committees on Pension and funding, ISO (International Organization for Standardization), Recruitment, Promotion, Organizing GM (General Manager)/DGM (Deputy General Manager)/AGM (Assistant General Manager) Conference, WePower, etc.

Several committees at the PBS level include women, such as the Complain Committee for the Prevention of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace, the Purchase Committee, and the Recruitment Committee etc. However, participation of other excluded groups is not specified.

- b. **Women Director of PBSs**

A Board of Directors administers the business and affairs of each PBS with no more than 15 members from among the consumers of the PBS. A maximum of three (3) women called Lady Directors are nominated by the Board from among renowned women of the PBS area based on an assessment criteria. They are to assist and advise the Board on matters of concerns, desires, and interests of the women members of the PBS. The Board appoints the Lady Directors during the Board meeting for a period of three years following the rules in the by-laws and BREB approves the nomination. The Lady Directors receive the same courtesies and respect as other Directors, have the right to sit in Board meetings and vote on issues dealt with.

As discussed earlier, women are members of the committees against sexual harassment of women at the workplace of BREB and all 80 PBSs.

Issues, Challenges and Possible Measures

- a. The management decision-making committees composed of the senior managerial staff at the PBSs do not include women because presence of women is very low at the management level. Women's participation in those committees can only increase, if more senior women are posted in the PBSs, which will take time.
- b. It would be good to arrange an annual forum for all staff with management. A functional platform where all staff, especially women, can meet, learn and voice their opinions is beneficial for improved communication, awareness, and understanding between staff and the management.

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3.5 Training and Capacity Development

3.5.1 Staff training

Current Practice:

- a. BREB has a training unit adjacent to the central office headed by a Director. The senior officials take responsibility as resource persons for all relevant training.
- b. All officers and staff receive foundation training and other training based on their job responsibilities. The officers' trainings include leadership development, management, public procurement rules, prepayment meter use, and other technical training in the country and abroad. Women officers receive all training applicable for the particular job position.
- c. The officers receive training internally and the senior ones receive training on leadership or management at the Bangladesh Power Management Institute (BPMI). They are also selected for training abroad. Overall, during the FY 2022-23 about 20 percent of all trainees were women.
- d. A session for one hour is included in all training about the principles and dos and don'ts of sexual harassment in the workplace and behaviours with women colleagues. The ex-ED used to conduct the session either online or offline depending on the location of training. Currently other officers conduct the session in her absence.
- e. The women staff of the BREB and the PBSs receive training on their functions and necessary software. Compulsory annual 70-hour need-based training is imparted through monthly day-long training at the PBSs. The contents of training include disaster management, safety, job rules, client services, etc. and the officers of the PBSs impart the training. BREB determines the subjects of the training based on organizational priority.
- f. The level of exposure and understanding of GESI varies quite widely among the officials. A training manual on Gender, Safety and Security containing the concept; policies; national and international commitments on gender equality was developed under an ADB-supported TA. Its contents include gender-responsive work environment, sexual harassment prevention, and menstrual hygiene management as well.
- g. Staff of the PBSs receive training at the training centre according to the annual plan.
- h. The Billing Assistants receive training on digitized system of billing.
- i. Trainees from PBSs are mandatorily accommodated at the Residential facility of the dormitory of the training institute located in Savar.

Issues, Challenges and Possible Measures:

- a. Leadership training is necessary to capacitate women officers for the higher positions. More senior level women officers should be selected for such Training.
- a. The BREB Training Centre does not have a dedicated trainer pool and expert officers act as resource persons of the subject. Sometimes trainers are invited from other agencies and the Power Division. However, at times training schedules change due to other engagements of the senior officers/resource persons. Many of them do not have any trainers' training. Development of a dedicated trainers' pool by training the subject matter expert officials with training of trainers will be useful for effectiveness of training.
- b. A structured written content on the topic on behaviour with women colleagues would ensure delivery of uniform message to be delivered by all respective trainers.



- c. The compulsory stay in the dormitory and daily travel to Dhaka by BRDB's bus at times even takes 3-4 hours of travel. This is difficult time-wise and also draining the energy out, especially of women during their periods or pregnancy.
- d. No training on GESI or gender equality is not yet included in the training calendar. There was no trained personnel to impart training on GESI. A specific training module on GESI needs to be developed and incorporated in all key and regular training contents so that all officers and staff are oriented of the vision related to GESI, organizational perspectives and their own responsibilities related to it.
- e. The training Directorate need to consider development of a specific GESI training manual for a separate course for the inclusion in the training calendar.
- f. Use of the manual developed by the ADB supported TA with necessary modifications and incorporating some new specific contents on organizational systems, GESI mainstreaming, GESI responsive planning for the power sector, GESI responsive budget, GESI responsive result monitoring, procurement, and others will be useful.
- g. Scope of additional skills, leadership, and knowledge needs to be expanded. The contractual staff working on a "no work, no pay" basis, having the same responsibilities as the regular staff should also be imparted training on their job.

3.6 Supportive Services and Infrastructure Facilities

Current Practice: The BREB office and the PBS infrastructural facilities include separate toilets, prayer, and refresher rooms for men and women. Some buildings have ramps. The quality of maintaining the facilities varies among the PBSs depending on the design of the buildings and the gender-responsive care by the PBS management.

Issues, Challenges and Possible Measures: The accessibility of persons with disabilities (PWD), and people with special needs (pregnant, sick, old aged) are lacking in the infrastructure designs. Inclusive accessibility in different office premises both for service providers' and clients' is to be emphasized.

3.6.1 Office Space and Toilet Facilities

Current Practice: Separate sitting space is available for women staff in both BREB and the PBSs. Toilet facilities and separate prayer rooms have also been arranged.

Issues, Challenges and Possible Measures

- a. In some PBSs, one toilet is for 15- 20 women staff, and at the sub-PBSs the facilities are inadequate. The location is also deficient in ensuring the privacy and comfort of women due to allocation and building designs. In one PBS the women's toilet was allocated between the two toilets for the officers and for men staff, and clients. In some PBSs, the entrance of women's toilets is used for storage. Proper cleanliness, running water, hygiene management (soap, disinfectants, or waste bins), and amenities for menstrual management seemed to be inadequate in most of the PBSs and also at BREB. Toilet cleaners are often men for the toilets used by women. The use of washbasins in the toilet area for washing plates and cups is unhygienic for all and needs additional arrangement. The situation is almost the same in the PBSs, especially in the old ones. The toilets should include provisions of hygiene and cleanliness for the reproductive and menstrual health management of women. Women staff requested for facility for wudu in the toilet area.

- b. The sitting area of the Billing section is often congested with storage of files, and difficult to accommodate clients for any discussion. In most of the PBSs, the billing assistants sit in one room with their computers and printers. The noise of simultaneous printing of bills in multiple printers at a time makes it difficult to hear each other. The Billing Assistants complained of hearing problems and headaches due to noise. The placement of printers should be reviewed to help reduce the noise.

3.6.2 Child Day Care Centre

Current Practice: BREB Central office runs a very well-designed and maintained standard child day care centre with three caregivers and a staff. The centre houses children of both men and women staff, and officials. All of the PBSs have a space allocated for childcare centres according to a directive given by BREB to all 80 PBSs. The childcare centres at the PBS levels are generally a room or space allocated with different standards and with a few amenities like a bed, some toys, or both adjacent to the workstations of women.

Issue, Challenges and possible measures: The childcare areas at the PBSs lack human resources for childcare or an operational budget for the amenities. Since most of the women staff of the PBSs are above reproductive age, they do not need childcare. The rooms are used for purposes like prayer, storage, dining, rest, and others. Most facilities are limited to a small room or a space separated by a temporary fence with or without a bed or toy, unsuitable for children or women to work, if children are there. The need for childcare for male officials is yet to be disseminated and understood. In the rural and semi-urban areas, children are managed at home by spouses, relatives, or helping hands. Therefore, a need assessment of both women and men is warranted. Needs should be identified from both women and men staff and a proper childcare facility should be established in the PBSs, where necessary with human and logistics, based on the identified needs.

3.6.3 Medical Care

Current Practice: BREB has ensured initial general and emergency medical care facility for the staff at the Headquarters provided by two medical practitioners. They include one woman doctor serving in the morning, a convenient and good support for women staff, and they can take services without hesitation. Part-time doctors are available in the PBSs, sometimes on a weekly basis for general consultation.

Issues, Challenges and possible measures: Women staff of the PBSs felt that weekly visits of the doctors were not of much help in emergencies. They hesitated and felt a lack of privacy with male doctors. Some of the PBSs lack a convenient dedicated space for the doctors.

3.6.4 Flexibility

Current Practice: To support work-life balance, both men and women are informally granted some flexibility. These include posting of both spouses in the same or nearby PBSs where possible, being excused from staying after the office and having flexible time to manage family affairs. Due to workload, the flexibility is seldom enjoyed. For the sake of timely fulfilment of targets, it becomes difficult even to enjoy the regular leave.

3.6.5 Awareness and Public relations

Current practice:

- a. **Public Relations:** The Public Relations Directorate publishes the annual report and quarterly bulletin. It also provides guidelines of the courtyard meetings for community awareness, as per the guidance of the management. Once it published the activities of WePower in BREB and BREB's good work and contribution towards GESI and socio-economic development are yet to be communicated to a broader audience (internal and external). BREB has scope to disseminate and highlight such good works of BREB for dissemination among stakeholders.
- b. **Observation of International Women's Day (IWD):** BREB observes IWD at the HQ level. A few PBSs observe the day individually, and the others attend in a joint program of the government at the district level.

Issues, Challenges and Possible Measures:

- a. Highlighting the good practices and contributions in promoting GESI, women's empowerment, socio-economic development, and the achievements of BREB in GESI mainstreaming through publications and dissemination events can bring better recognition of BREB's role towards national development. Better mileage could be harnessed by documenting and disseminating the cases/lessons/good practices from various initiatives of BREB.
- b. Instead of the PBSs observing the IWD in different modes, a uniform system or collective effort of PBSs and the BREB can be considered. In some PBSs women staff are not aware of observance of the day. A uniform and participatory observance of the day by the PBSs and BREB would help raise awareness of women's empowerment, express solidarity with the GOB's vision, and highlight the role of BREB in such endeavors.

3.7 GESI responsive planning, budget, and monitoring

Current Practices: Due to taking several GESI-focused initiatives, some good results have been yielded, and some level of awareness among BREB officials about the benefits of the practice of GESI created. There are some limitations to GESI responsive planning, budgeting, and monitoring, mainly due to the limited exposure of the officials to gender mainstreaming tools, guidelines, and methodologies.

3.7.1 GESI Responsive Planning

Current Practices: BREB designs and implements its projects following the guidelines and using the formats on the Development Project Proposal (DPP) issued by the Planning Commission and approved by the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC). The DPPs include statements that the project would not harm women and benefit women in their socio-economic development. Some gender-focused technical assistance projects are implemented or activities are incorporated into project designs.

Issues, Challenges and Possible Measures: The interviews revealed the limited information and exposure to the existing documents like, the Gender Responsive Guidelines for Design and Review of Development Projects, formulated by the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and endorsed by the ECNEC and the gender strategy of the 8th Five-Year Plan. Consequently, the GESI outcomes of the initiatives are short of their potential. The relevant officials involved in planning need to be oriented on the existing guidelines and gender responsive project design. Developing a simple guideline based on the existing one of the GOB and orientation on the same

will help in design and examine the project documents through a GESI lens. The GESI Unit/Forum may be assigned to take initiative by taking up the issue and organizing a committee with GESI experts to develop such a guideline and orient the relevant officials.

3.7.2 GESI Responsive budget

Current Practice: The Government of Bangladesh publishes an annual report on Gender Responsive Budget (GRB). The report covers 44 ministries and divisions including the Power Division that talks about 100% electrification. The establishment of 'Day-care' centers for women; regular training to improve the skills of the women workers; preference of women in applicable cases; employment of women workers during project implementation; conducive work environment for women etc. are included in the report. These narratives are clearly consistent with the work and achievements of the BREB and the agreements with WePower.

Issues, Challenges and Possible Measures: The officials involved in the budget in BREB need to be oriented on GRB formulation and reporting. Orientation and practice of GRB would enable BREB to achieve better GESI results.

3.7.3 GESI Responsive Monitoring

Current Practice: BREB's MIS is efficient in reporting the expansion and distribution of electricity network. BREB through its domestic, industrial, small and medium enterprise (SME), and agricultural connections supports in generating of employment across the country. BREB delivers significant socio-economic development and promotes gender equality and social inclusion through its field operations. A gender-focused TA has shown the positive impacts of services by maintaining sex-disaggregated data.

Issues, Challenges and Possible Measures: Data provide evidence of progress. The consumers' data are without sex-disaggregation on domestic, agriculturists, commercial and entrepreneurs. Electrification of households provide significant benefits of GESI and human development. BREB significantly supports the poor through the lifeline consumers. In addition substantial employment is created through electricity connections. The MIS does not yet include information or indicators on social or gender perspectives. Therefore, much of the impacts go unreported and unrecognized due to not keeping evidence. In absence of sex-disaggregated records, BREB misses a significant opportunity to claim on its contribution towards supporting poor, women's emancipation, GESI impacts, socio-economic development, poverty reduction, and achievement of the SDGs. The field-level officials agreed on the benefits of keeping sex-disaggregated data. The domestic client group is the majority, and household-based self-employment would only possible to identify through survey. The SME client group is small, and disaggregated data collection and reporting on clients and the employment generated under the enterprises on a semi-annual manner is not difficult. As the existing MIS system is under improvement, the inclusion of a few indicators in the system would facilitate such reporting and enable BREB to claim its contribution.

3.8 Lessons from GESI-Focused Client Support

Current Practice: BREB has taken conscious steps to create a safe and congenial work environment for women at the institutional level. At the field level, some initiatives were taken from time to time to support the client groups from GESI perspectives. Some key ones that have provided useful lessons, and are worth replicating and upscaling are discussed below.



3.8.1 Promoting GESI through ADB-supported project

The "Bangladesh Power System Enhancement and Efficiency Improvement Project" supported by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), was classified as effective gender mainstreaming. It included a Gender Action Plan (GAP)⁸ with several activities within the outputs specified in the design and monitoring framework. The activities of the GAP were, i) a. baseline study to identify energy-based livelihood opportunities; ii) training on energy-based livelihood and business development services, (12 priority skills for employment for women consumers were identified by the survey); iii) end-user education for safe and efficient use of energy for new domestic consumers; iv) technical training on maintenance of electricity and energy management; and v) enhancing the technical skills of the PBSs.

The project generated jobs for local communities during the construction and operation of the physical infrastructure, in GIS, and asset mapping and ensured women's participation in such employment opportunities.

A TA grant project "Translating Electricity Supply into Improvement of Rural Households" financed by the Japan Fund for Prosperous and Resilient Asia and the Pacific (JFPR) supported the implementation of the GAP. The TA supported the following activities:

- a. developing electricity-based microenterprises for disadvantaged populations, especially women-headed households of the lifeline electricity consumers of 5 PBS;
- b. raising the awareness of the lifeline users on the safe and efficient use of electricity to revise and update the electricity distribution safety standards of the BREB and the PBSs;
- c. improving the socio-economic condition of the lifeline electricity consumers;
- d. reducing the barriers to employment for women employees by contributing towards an inspiring working environment in five PBS; and
- e. developing a GIS database along with GIS skills of the BREB employees to support the digitization process of the PBSs and enable women to secure employment and livelihood opportunities.

The TA helped develop energy-based livelihoods through micro-enterprise development for 500 below-poverty-line (BPL) consumers including 160 (32%) women through training on selected businesses. A total of 385 entrepreneurs including 215 (56%) women received technical skills, business management skills, and equipment for business along with end-user education for the safe and efficient use of energy. A total of 1,100 end-user consumers including 506 (46%) women were trained in energy-related technical skills to avail employment and livelihood opportunities. The training covered energy-consuming electric appliances, safe house wiring, primary treatment of electricity hazards, basic rules and laws for electricity consumers, etc. The trained consumers were linked with different government, non-government, local financial institutions, and corporate bodies for entering the labour market. The TA project also developed a gender and safety security training manual for all PBS employees. The PBSs assisted by the TA are playing the role of incubation centre to provide information, awareness raising and advisory services for the entrepreneurs and women staff.

Given the success of the TA in developing the model, BREB is considering a follow-up project of similar nature with its own funds. In the past, BREB implemented such technical training on safety, repair, and maintenance of appliances, etc. for the lifeline consumers. The construction activities also generate employment for both skilled and unskilled workers including women. Thus, BREB's

⁸ Asian Development Bank, Gender Action Plan, Bangladesh Power System Enhancement and Efficiency Improvement Project

good initiatives for overall socio-economic development at the client level alongside its main activities are evident. Mainstreaming GESI across institutional systems, structures, and mechanisms is possible, with the sincere and consistent efforts of the BREB management. The additional financing project by ADB includes a GAP with three new activities. These included i. development of a GESI strategy for the BREB, ii. renovation of some of the existing BREB offices to address the needs of women and other vulnerable groups, and iii. developing a friendly work environment for all. Improving the working environment in the PBSs for women employees and lifeline customers was undertaken to retain women in the sector. Incorporating some of the good practices in the regular projects and activities of BREB would yield good GESI results.

3.8.2 Partnership with WePower

WePower is a network of women working in the power and energy sector of South Asia initiated with support from the World Bank. It brings the women working in the power sector together and aims to increase opportunities for women to be in the in the sector by encouraging girls to enrol in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education and developing professional capacity of women. BREB has a flexible partnership with WePower to undertake a few steps for the purpose. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with WePower includes activities in several action areas under five different pillars as follows:

Pillar 1: STEM Education: On-line site visit training with female students

Pillar 2: Recruitment: Online events for female students.

Pillar 3: Development for female professionals: Online training on leadership for fresh female recruits tagged with a mentor and female engineers/employees are sent for international conferences and local events

Pillar 4: Retention (including facilities and returning mothers): Provision of day-care center, and breast-feeding corner, involving employees in BREB recruitment, and involve at least two women engineers in Pension & Fund related committee, WePower committee; and GM/DGM/AGM meetings.

Pillar 5: Policy and Institutional Change. It forms a cross-cutting base that includes institutionalizing and enforcing gender considerations at the national and institutional levels. It involves policies to encourage women to study STEM subjects, quotas/targets for women. Therefore partnership in this area will foster GESI mainstreaming in BREB.

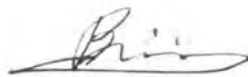
Some women staff have participated in conferences and workshops in Bangladesh and in the region. Some women students of engineering discipline have undergone internship programs with BREB. BREB prepares quarterly Reports for submission to the WePower with stories. BREB received WePower Professional Development Award in 2022 given at the 3rd Regional Conference in Bangkok. The terms of reference of the WePower Committee has been revised in November 2023 with wider allocation of responsibilities that includes gender mainstreaming within the organization.

Issues, Challenges and Possible Measures

This committee would be effective in fulfilling its role in the institutional system by operating as a professionally excellent, independent, and dedicated institutional entity under the proposed GESI Forum headed by a senior official of BREB providing support to the Focal Points and reporting to the chairperson of BREB. The Committee should be capacitated to provide technical and capacity



building support to all other departments and the PBSs. To avert any confusion and to ensure institutionalizing GESI mainstreaming efforts and ownership, the WePower Committee should be a sub-committee under the GESI Forum to effectively reap the benefits of the partnership and highlighting BREB's role. The Committee could play a pivotal role in supporting the Gender Focal Points in the implementation of the MoU of the partnership and to support in establishing the dedicated fully functional GESI forum/unit.



4. Recommendations and Proposed List of Activities

BREB though has taken many noteworthy initiatives for creating gender awareness and promoting women's participation and benefits from its operation. The quality of initiatives and benefits vary depending on the level of understanding, policies, and resources. Therefore, some gaps have been identified, and addressing them would help institutionalize GESI in BREB and deliver better benefits for the client groups. The recommendations emerging from the gaps identified during the assessment have been incorporated in the following section. These will ultimately form the basis of the GESI strategy and action plan of BREB.



4.1 Proposed List of Activities

Sl No.	Area	Issue or gap	Recommendation	Time frame (Short, Medium and Long term)
Organizational Vision and Institutional Arrangement on GESI				
1.	Organizational vision on GESI	An organizational vision with comprehensive strategy incorporating goal and targeted actions necessary for coordinated efforts for GESI mainstreaming.	✓ A Gender Equity and Social Inclusion Strategy (GESI Strategy) with an organizational vision incorporating goals, activities and institutional arrangements to facilitate institutionalizing GESI perspectives in the organizational systems and operation.	• Short term
2.	Institutional arrangement for GESI mainstreaming	- A Committee on WePower and a Focal Point exist since 2019. - BREB arrangement for institutionalizing GESI like a unit, or a forum to coordinate activities; capacity building; planning, performance monitoring and promoting GESI is necessary for a large organization.	✓ An institutional arrangement- a GESI Unit/Forum headed by a senior official with authority to influence decisions and with participation of selected directors and officials with clear terms of reference for GESI mainstreaming, implementing the GESI Strategy. ✓ Establish GESI focal points at the directorate and PBS levels. ✓ Develop TORs for accountability of GESI mainstreaming. ✓ Make GESI visible, integrated and explicit within BREB.	• Short term • Medium term • Continuous
Human Resource in BREB and PBS				
3.	Employment in BREB and the PBSs	- Women's presence at senior and mid-levels is low. - Woman staff at the support level is yet to fulfil provisions at the HQ in accordance with existing government rules/regulations.	✓ Review process and consult with other agencies about mechanisms used to ensure quota provisions ✓ Review and incorporate affirmative actions in the rules as possible to gradually increase the proportion of women for recruitment retention and training in accordance with existing government rules/regulations. until women form a critical mass.	• Medium and Long term

			✓ Maintain rules for recruitment of persons with disability, tribal groups and maintain disaggregated data	
GESI Friendly Work Environment				
4.	Work load	• High load of clients especially in semi urban areas	✓ Faster recruitment or keeping a panel of qualified candidates in each recruitment for faster placement in vacant positions or when no. of clients exceeds targets according to the rule. Ensure faster automation of the system. ✓ Review the rules to consider an opportunity of a higher grade for those who passed the qualifying exam with a number of years of service.	• Short term • Medium term • Medium
5.	Opportunity for promotion	• Women staff of PBSs are in some block positions and scope of their promotion is low causing frustration.		• Medium term
6.	Workplace harassment	• Symptoms of workplace harassment are present, but women do not feel confident to raise it. Needs attention of the authorities. • The TOR of the Committee Against Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace has limited TOR. • The Committees at the PBS level are not active. • A written guideline about definition, scope of sexual harassment, and measures to handle cases, if any is necessary.	✓ Review the TOR and composition of the Committee to expand its coverage (for all) and formulation according to the Honourable High Court's directives ✓ Review, revive and reactivate the committees at the PBS level. ✓ Develop a written guideline based on the High Court directives with definition and scope of workplace harassment, TOR of the Committee, complain mechanism and resolution of any complain in confidentiality ✓ Disseminate the guideline and orient staff to create sensitivity among all. ✓ Keep the complaint box in a place where both women and men can drop their concerns maintaining anonymity. ✓ Undertake awareness campaign and the complain management against sexual harassment at workplace using leaflet, Facebook verified page, Hotline etc.	• Short-term • Short-term • Short-term • Medium (Continuous) • Short-term

Participation and Decision making				
7.	Participation, and Decision Making	A scope for discussion with all staff is not frequent.	✓ Incorporate ways to include more women in all committees and services. Arrange a regular platform to enable all staff to participate for information, and express the workplace issues.	• Medium Term • Continued
Training and Capacity Development				
8.	Training of women officials and staff	✓ Leadership training is yet to be imparted to many men and women officers. ✓ The contractual staff do not get job related training but are responsible to perform equally like the regular ones.	✓ Arrange leadership training for women and men Internally to capacitate them for higher positions. ✓ The Contractual staff should get some job-related formal training.	• Short -term and continued
11.	Trainers and dormitories	✓ There is no pool of trainers in BREB. Officers perform as trainers, which at times create problem in maintaining schedule. ✓ Commuting for training to Nikunja from the dormitory in Savar is difficult	✓ Develop a group of officials as trainer by imparting them with ToT at the BREB and PBS level so that all training is not dependent on the head office officials. ✓ Some training may be delegated to the training centre in Savar and PBSs without burdening the officers at the BREB and reducing travel of staff ✓ Review the policies to allow the trainees to stay close to BREB..	• Short- Term • Medium Term

12.	Training on GESI	✓ The content related to behaviour with women colleagues is not in a written form ✓ Understanding and skills about GESI is limited within women's employment and some supportive facilities for them ✓ There is no formal GESI training or such contents are incorporated in the training.	✓ Develop a written handout or module on sexual harassment, acceptable behaviour and measures to address sexual harassment, if any at workplace so that anyone can conduct the session providing uniform message. Publish the written handout or module on BREB Magazine and website. ✓ Develop awareness on GESI among officials and staff through training, workshop and campaigns ✓ Develop a GESI focused training manual and incorporate in the training calendar for all. ✓ Incorporate basic GESI orientation for all staff in the training calendar. ✓ Design courses to incorporate in the training calendar on GESI mainstreaming, specific training on GESI responsive planning and budgeting for relevant officials. ✓ Identify a number of selected training courses, review contents and incorporate GESI perspectives where relevant.	• Short-Term • Medium Term • Continuous
12.	Socio-economic empowerment through 'Utdan Boithak'	✓ Scope for effective utilization of 'Uthan Boithak' for socio-economic empowerment of community specially women and marginalized	✓ Develop GESI focus simple messages relevant for BREB to disseminate in the regular 'Uthan Boithak' at community level.	• Continuous
Supportive Services				
13.	Office space and toilet facilities	• The quality and maintenance of sitting arrangements and toilets for women staff vary among PBSSs. Provision of menstrual hygiene management is absent.	✓ Ensure a uniform standard of provision and maintenance of sitting arrangements and toilet facilities with support for hygiene and reproductive health management. Ensure women cleaner for women's toilets ✓ The placement of printers should be reviewed to help reduce the noise considering health and well-being of women staff.	• Short term and continued

14.	Child Day care	- Day care centres at the PBSs are a small room or a small space, not suitable for children. Maintains no standard and with no human resource. - It is used for store, rest, prayer or dining purpose.	✓ Assess PBS based needs from both men and women officials/ staff. ✓ Need human resource for child minding. ✓ Raise awareness about the purpose of the facilities for both men and women.	• Short-term
15.	Medical support	At the PBS level, doctors' support is weekly and lack of a dedicated space where women can discuss their problems.	✓ A separate space for doctor's consultation at the PBS level is necessary so that one can consult privately and a women doctor would be good to consider as most of the women in the PBSs are elderly needing health care.	• Short-term
GESI Responsive Planning, Budget and Monitoring				
16.	GESI responsive planning	Information and knowledge on gender responsive project design is limited	✓ Develop a simple gender responsive project design guideline. ✓ Orient the relevant officials involved in planning on gender responsive project design	• Short-term
17.	GESI responsive budget	1. Lack of information and knowledge on gender responsive budget	✓ Create understanding of the gender responsive budget among the officials.	• Short-term
18.	GESI responsive management information system	2. Sex-disaggregated data or social indicator not included in the MIS	✓ Include simple indicators for MIS and collect sex-disaggregated data on BREB's contribution on socio-economic development	• Medium-Term
GESI Focussed Client Support				
19.	GESI focused TA	3. Lessons from initiatives on socio-economic development of clients have not been considered for up-scaling or mainstreaming.	✓ Identify lessons from the TA project to address in future interventions of BREB in general. ✓ Identify one or two good practices that can be integrated and expanded within BREB's main operation for good results, ✓ Some technical training for entrepreneurship development to be continued and use of the corporate social responsibility funds for the purpose may be considered.	• Medium-Term

5. Way Forward

5.1 Scope and Possibilities

Many of the issues raised above are easy to resolve with some effort without much additional investment. Since BREB management has already embarked on this assessment and to develop a GESI Strategy, it is expected that they will address the identified issues. Many of the management-level officials of BREB and the PBSs acknowledged the weaknesses and showed interest in resolving them. Officials of the PBSs were keen to have initiatives, directives, and instructions from the BREB on infrastructure, practice, and monitoring. They showed a positive attitude to have some institutional mechanisms to guide the GESI aspects.

The areas of interest were institutional mechanisms for capacity building, guidance, coordination, work environment, welfare of the women working in the same position for years, and capturing the results of the good work.

5.2 A Strategy for Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

Implementing a GESI strategy not only promotes women's empowerment and participation but also helps men and women share benefits and responsibilities in an organization. It is beneficial for enhancing the internal capacity and overall development of the organization. Strengthening the system and capacity for mainstreaming GESI, will equip BREB to apply several tools of the GOB and contribute to the national socio-economic development.

The GESI strategy will be formulated in consultation with BREB's relevant officials. The Strategy will encompass ways to address the concerns as discussed in the above sections. It will be a living document, intended to be flexible for refinement and improvement as BREB requires over time. The Strategy will emphasize establishing an institutional mechanism, human resource development, work environment, policy and strategies, participation and decision making, awareness and capacity building on GESI mainstreaming, monitoring and evaluation, and financing for promoting GESI. The Strategy will include both mainstreaming and targeted interventions with activities according to the reality of BREB and the needs identified for GESI mainstreaming in some of the systems of BREB.

5.3 Elements of a GESI Strategy

The Strategy will include the following themes.

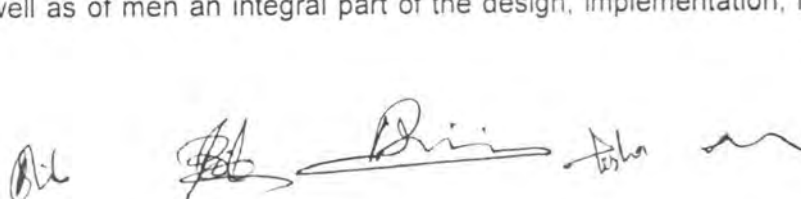
- Institutional arrangement
- Human Resource
- Work Environment, Support Services, Opportunities
- Project Planning
- Training and Capacity Building
- Client Services
- Empowerment: Participation and Decision Making
- Monitoring and Result Reporting
- Financing

A draft Strategy will be prepared in consultation with BREB based on the findings and recommendations on possible actions. Once developed, it will be submitted to BREB for review. After receiving inputs, the Strategy along with the action plan will be finalized and submitted for approval.



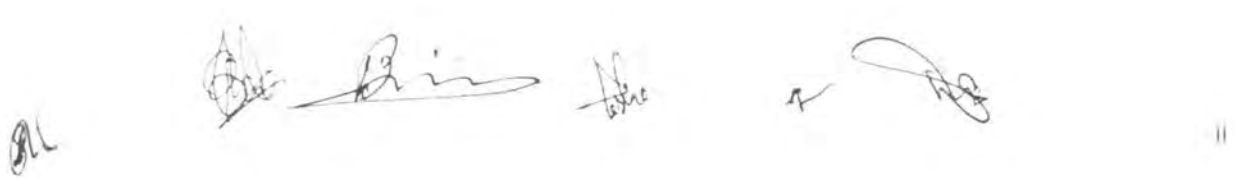
Annex 1: Glossary of Terms

1. **Disabilities:** Disabilities is an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. An impairment is a problem in body function or structure; an activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action; while a participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual in involvement in life situations.
2. **Excluded groups** are those who historically have been unable to fully access and/or benefit from social, economic, and political rights, opportunities, and resources because of their identities, e.g., gender; disabilities; social identities (e.g., caste, ethnicity, and religion); geographic location; and income status. They experience systemic disadvantage
3. **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)** A GESI approach considers unequal power relations and inequalities experienced by individuals as a result of their social identities, including gender, location, (dis)ability, wealth, education, age, caste, ethnicity, race, sexuality and recognises the importance of promoting equality and addressing social injustices to achieve sustainable development. It also considers intersectionality of gender with all other dimensions of disadvantage.
4. **Gender Equality:** Gender equality is about equal opportunities, rights and responsibilities for women and men, girls and boys. It does not mean that women and men are the same. Gender inequality is a result of unequal power distribution between women and men, exacerbated by ongoing discrimination, weaknesses in laws, policies and institutions, and social relations that normalize inequality.
5. **Gender:** Refers to the socially constructed characteristics of women and men – such as norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of women and men. It varies from society to society and can be changed. While most people are born either male or female, they are taught appropriate norms and behaviours – including how they should interact with others of the same or opposite sex in households, communities and workplaces.
6. **Gender inequality** is the social phenomenon in which people are not treated equally on the basis of their sex causing discrimination based on socio-cultural norms prevalent in the society. It is women who are most adversely affected. Gender inequality weakens women in many areas such as health, education, business, life expectancy, interests, family life, economic, and political participation as well as decision making. Gender inequality is experienced differently across different cultures and leads to untapped potential and hampers overall development women that reduced overall equal benefits and opportunities for them.
7. **Intersectionality:** Intersectionality is the understanding that people experience varying degrees of disadvantage based on gender, race, religion, ethnicity, disability, age, indigeneity and other characteristics. Women are not a homogenous group, and intersectionality acknowledges the different ways that women experience discrimination.
8. **Mainstreaming:** Gender mainstreaming is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women as well as of men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of

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policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality.

9. **Marginalized groups:** Marginalized groups are defined as those who are excluded from political, social, cultural and/or social spaces based on identity. This marginalization can impact their sense of dignity, ability, and opportunities afforded to take part in society.
10. **Political will:** is the sustained commitment of organizational leaders and administrators to invest the necessary resources to achieve specific gender objectives. It is the willingness of these actors to undertake reform and implement policy, despite of challenges. Gender Political will is understood in terms of three inter-related concepts-i.e., commitment, leadership, and responsiveness for gender equality promotion.
11. **Social inclusion** is a broader concept, and is about ensuring that all members of society, including people with disabilities, are included in key processes, including but not limited to decision-making, consultation, employment opportunities, or involvement in government service delivery. The United Nations (UN) defines social inclusion as "the process of improving the terms of participation in society, particularly for people who are disadvantaged, through enhancing opportunities, access to resources, voice and respect for rights".
12. **Twin-Track Approach:** An approach which recognizes that in order for development programs to be accessible to certain groups, it is important to recognize the specific needs and vulnerabilities and thus a responsive approach covers two aspects. Firstly, ensuring that Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) is being mainstreamed into organizational functions, processes and systems. Secondly, targeted approach means adopting specific set of targeted interventions focused on a particular identified at risk group.
13. **Vulnerable groups:** are those who cannot access various rights, opportunities, and resources because of their situational disadvantage. People are "vulnerable" when deprivations result from a particular situation that reduces their ability to withstand shocks and access various rights, opportunities, and resources. In a person's life cycle, vulnerability is most experienced in old age and young age—especially by older people (65 and above) and disadvantaged youth. Vulnerability can also be because of climate change or disasters or migrant status. They experience situational disadvantage. (c) Disadvantaged groups (which is the preferred term—rather than excluded groups—in some DMCs) are those who historically have been unable to fully access and/or benefit from social, economic, and political rights, opportunities, and resources because of their identities (systemic disadvantage) and/or because of their vulnerability (situational disadvantage).



Annex 2: References

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5. Asian Development Bank, Strategy 2030, Achieving a Prosperous, Inclusive, Resilient, and Sustainable Asia and the Pacific, July 2018.
6. Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board website, MIS Report May 2023.
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8. Government of Bangladesh, Eighth Five Year Plan – 2020-2025.
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12. Practical Action, Comprehensive Assessment On Skill Level of Existing Female Employees and Reduction of Barriers , Translating Electricity Supply into the Improvements of Rural Households, March 2020
13. United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report 2021-23.
14. United Nations publication, ESCAP, A Systematic Review of the socio-economic impacts of electrification, 2021.
15. USAID/Bangladesh, Gender Analysis & Recommendations for a Gender Plan of Action: Rural Energy Portfolio, May 2005
16. World Economic Forum. Gender Gap Report, 2023.

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Annex 3: List of Persons Met

1. Ferdousi Sultana Begum, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Specialist (International)
2. Hasne Ara Begum, Gender Equality Specialist (National)

Consultation Schedule

Individual Consultation at BREB Head office

Person to meet for Consultation	Date ** to be proposed by concerned Sr. Mgt./ Officials (22-30 May)	Time	Office /venue	Remark
4. Chief Engineer (Planning and Operation) Md. Abdur Rouf Mia	25/05/23	3.00pm	Main Building Level -6	Done
5. Deputy Director Programme Planning Sharmin Mahmud	23/05/23	12.00pm	Main B L-3	Done
6. Executive Director -PBS Management Khaleda Khanom	22/05/23	11.00am	Main B L-9	Done
7. Inquiry and Discipline Directorate Md. Shafiqur Rahman	23/05/23	2.30pm	Main B L-7	Done
8. Personal Administration Directorate	22/05/23	3.00pm	Main B L-1	Done
9. Mr. Md. Mahfuzul Hoque				
10. Public Relations Directorate Md. Abul Hossain	22/05/23	12.00pm	Training Building L-2	Done
11. Assistant Director- PR Selina Akhter Sumi				
12. Assistant Director- PR Rownak Jahan Sadia				
13. Training Directorate K.M Naim Khan	29/05/23	2.00pm	Training Building L-7	Done
14. Nusrat Zahan, Field Reserch Officer				
15. Controller Accounts and Finance/ Budget Md. Hossain Patwary	23/05/23	10.00pm	Main Building L-5	Done
16. Sr. Director -Loan and Budget Md. Idrish				

Person to meet for Consultation	Date ** to be proposed by concerned Sr. Mgt./ Officials (22-30 May)	Time	Office /venue	Remark
17. Director Accounts – Saddam Hossain				
18. Procurement Directorate Md. Idrish	22/05/23	10.00am	Main Building L-7	Done
19. Legal Affairs Directorate Luna Sharmin	22/05/23	2.00pm	Training Building, L-5	Done
20. Director-Energy, Audit and Terrif Md. Khairul Islam	29/05/23	12.00pm	Ex-Building	Done
21. Shams Hassan, DD, MIS				
22. Ashoke Kumar Ghosh, DD, DPP	29/05/23	1.00pm	Main Building L-3	Done
23. Taslima Parvin DD, Admin Program & Planning				
24. Shawpan Banik, SE, GIS	25/05/25	11.00am	Main Building	Done
25. Ms. Trisha , DD We Power	03/08/23	10.30 am	Training Building	Done
26. Md Asaduzzaman, DD-Khulna Project	25/05/23	12.00pm	Project office	Done

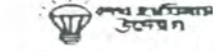
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Annex 4: Schedule of Field Visit



বাংলাদেশ রুরী বিদ্যুতায়ন বোর্ড
BANGLADESH RURAL ELECTRIFICATION BOARD

প্রকল্প পরিচালকের কার্যালয়
এমসিইপি (খুলনা বিভাগ)
এক্সিকিউটিভ ভবন (২য় তলা)
নিকুঞ্জ-১, ফিল্ডস্টেড, ঢাকা-১২১১
ফোন নং: ৯৬৬৬৬৬৬৬
ই-মেইল: pdmceep.kd.reb@gmail.com

স্মারক নং-১৭.১২.০০০০.১১২.৩২.০০১.২৩ (১/১)

১৯ জানুয়ারী ১৪৩০ বঙ্গাব্দ
তারিখঃ-
০৩ আগস্ট ১৪৩১ হিজরি

কিম্বার জেনারেল ম্যানেজার/জেনারেল ম্যানেজার
খুলনা/বাপেরহাট/শিরোজপুর/কালকাঠি/বরিশাল-১/বরিশাল-২ পল্লী বিদ্যুৎ সমিতি

বিস্তারিত: বাপবিরো'র Gender Equality Strategy (GES) প্রণয়ন সংক্রান্ত কাজে এতিবি কর্তৃক
নিয়োজিত দুই জন কন্সালটেন্ট এর পবিস ভ্রমণ প্রসঙ্গে।

উপর্যুক্ত বিষয়ের প্রেক্ষিতে জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, বাপবিরো কর্তৃক বাস্তবায়নধীন "বাপবিরো'র বৈশিষ্টিক বিতরণ ব্যবস্থার
আধুনিকায়ন ও ক্ষমতা বর্ধন (খুলনা বিভাগ)" শীর্ষক প্রকল্পের আওতায় Gender Equality Strategy (GES)
প্রণয়নের প্রণয়নের জন্য এতিবি কর্তৃক তার নিজস্ব অর্থায়নে নিম্নবর্ণিত দুইজন কন্সালটেন্ট নিয়োজিত করা হয়েছে।

1. Ferdousi Sultana Begum, GESI Specialist, Mobile No: 01711-561655
2. Hasne Ara Begum, GES Specialist, Mobile No: 01730-321441

বর্ণিত Gender Equality Strategy (GES) প্রণয়ন সংক্রান্ত কাজে নিম্নবর্ণিত সময়সূচী মোতাবেক নিচে
উল্লিখিত পবিসসমূহে ভ্রমণ করবেন।

পবিসের নাম	ভ্রমণের তারিখ
খুলনা পল্লী বিদ্যুৎ সমিতি	০৬/০৮/২০২০
বাপেরহাট পল্লী বিদ্যুৎ সমিতি	০৭/০৮/২০২০
শিরোজপুর পল্লী বিদ্যুৎ সমিতি	০৭/০৮/২০২০
কালকাঠি পল্লী বিদ্যুৎ সমিতি	০৮/০৮/২০২০
বরিশাল পল্লী বিদ্যুৎ সমিতি-১	০৮/০৮/২০২০
বরিশাল পল্লী বিদ্যুৎ সমিতি-২	০৯/০৮/২০২০

উল্লেখ্য: অত্র দপ্তর হতে অফিস সহকারী কাম কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাক্ষরিক মোমোছসিরা মুনমুন (মোবাইল নং-০১৭৬৬-২৬২৬৬০)
উক্ত ভ্রমণে অংশগ্রহণ করবেন।

এমতাবস্থায় Gender Equality Strategy (GES) প্রণয়নের সংক্রান্ত কাজে বর্ণিত কন্সালটেন্টদ্বয়কে
প্রয়োজনীয় সহযোগীতা প্রদানের জন্য অনুরোধ জানানো হলো।

মোমোছসিরা মুনমুন
প্রকল্প পরিচালক
এমসিইপি (খুলনা বিভাগ) প্রকল্প

অনুলিপি (জ্যেষ্ঠতার ক্রমানুসারে নয়):

1. Ferdousi Sultana Begum, GESI Specialist.
2. Hasne Ara Begum, GES Specialist.
3. Mufasssira Munmun, Office Assistant cum Computer Typist.

ANNEX 5: GESI Self-Assessment Checklist

Questions for GESI assessment at HQ and PBSs

1. Is there any strategy/policy of BREB for GESI?
2. What are the GESI measures practiced?
3. What are the GE good practices in BREB that can be institutionalized?
4. Is there a GESI Forum in BREB for coordination of activities??
5. Proportion of women and men at different levels of HQ and PBSs ?
6. What are the affirmative actions taken for recruitment and promotion?
7. Does BREB has /follow Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy? What are the policy measures?
Do staff know it?
8. How these issues are addressed, if any? Procedure for ensuring safety of women at different levels?
9. Is there any codes and values related to GESI? Does BREB encourage gender sensitive behavior, for example in terms of language used, jokes and comments made to women and special needs?
10. Do BREB project designs include gender equality goals and objectives, and budget criteria?
11. Are gender equality criteria included in the review and approval process for new programs and projects? Is there any project design and implementation guideline / checklist follows for GESI Integration?
12. Is there any established mechanism/committee to ensure gender responsive project planning?
13. Do people know of the Gender Responsive Planning Guidelines of GoB?
14. Do people know of the Gender Strategy of the 8th Five Year plan?
15. Do people know of the Gender Responsive Budget Guidelines of GoB?
16. Do BREB project implementation plans /construction work take into account existing gender roles, needs and interests of both men and women?
17. Is there a mechanism to collect and analysis gender/ GESI data of projects? How? Does MIS integrate sex disaggregated data and gender perspectives? Who can collect data?
18. Does BREB's HR, audit, oversight, monitoring and evaluation functions pay attention to the GESI issues?
19. Any agenda for GESI in internal and external communications?
20. How is the public expression on GESI issues in Public Relation?
21. Any steps for highlighting gender sensitivity?
22. What kind of skills enhancement support available?
23. Type of regular GESI training for staff? Beneficiaries?
24. Has any kind of GESI training initiatives taken?
25. Any Training manual on GESI? Do other training manuals include GESI aspects?
26. Is there any records or data base of persons receiving GESI training
27. Any disaggregated data base for trainees?
28. Who receive Gender training generally?



29. Any training orientation for contractors?
30. Is there a training pool of professionals?
31. Do women staff participate in Chairman's meeting?
32. Contents of the MoU with WePower and Actions?
33. Any GESI Assessment? If any, what are the findings?
34. Who are the persons to meet?
35. How is sexual harassment prevention at workplace addressed?
36. How is the work life balance managed?
37. Election process and role of lady directors
38. Transport support for women
39. How the dissatisfaction about no promotion can be minimized?
40. How is International women day observed?
 - What are the measures taken for gender friendly/women friendly work environment? What are the facilities given in the offices for women? Women's Quota
 - Career progression
 - Job satisfaction
 - Sitting arrangement
 - Day care
 - Toilet
 - Prayer room
 - Ramps
 - Medical care
41. Is there any target for employment of women or disadvantaged in the field level operation? Is there attention on employment of women in construction/ other type?
42. Any tariff rebate for poor?
43. Why women at lower level are still within 25% despite having some positions specific for women?
44. Any priority on connection with poor, women or geographically disadvantaged households?
45. What are the measures taken to enhance efficiency of power in the community?
46. Is there any mechanism for community capacity building and community awareness raising?
47. What are the measures taken for gender friendly/women friendly work environment in the construction sites and in offices?
48. Any specific issues needing attention?

