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Bangladesh: Participatory Small Scale Water Resources Sector Project

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Project Context

PURPOSE:

- Improve rural livelihoods by enhancing agricultural and fishery productivity and sustainability through small-scale water resources (SSWR) development.

HOW:

- Stakeholder-driven small-scale water resource management (SSWRM) system targeting the poor
- Formalizing O&M beneficiaries into registered Water Management Cooperative Associations (WMCA)



Gender Analysis => Gender-Inclusive Design

GENDER ANALYSIS FINDINGS	GENDER DESIGN FEATURES
SSWRM considered men's domain Lack of awareness on women's key roles in SSWRM Women's limited ownership of agricultural land	Strong community mobilization is required <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mass awareness raising activities on women's agricultural and fisheries activities
Women's limited participation in WMCA and in decision making bodies Weak skills in SSWRM, WMCA management and weak leadership skills of women members	Women's capacity for effective roles in WMCA needs to be developed <ul style="list-style-type: none">• WMCA O&M and by-law committees w/33% women members• Training all O&M Committee members, including women, in effective participation in O&M meetings and activities• Registration of WMCAs w/30% women in management committees
LGED's limited capacity to promote an inclusive participatory process and empower women	EA capacity to promote inclusive participatory process and empower women needs strengthening <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gender and Social Development Unit formed at LGED HQ with project staff (20% women); sex-disaggregated MIS set up• Women's participation in poverty reduction plan preparation and implementation; at least 1 woman in each Participatory Rural Appraisal Team
Landless women, female HH with little Livelihood options; Women hit hardest by droughts and floods	Women's resilience to external shocks needs to be improved <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Skills training on income generation for women



Practical benefits

- Improved skills in income-generating activities and increased income of women
- Increased mobility of women and access to basic services
- Improved services to destitute members of the communities

6,605 women accessed loans from WMCA and approximately 50%-60% of them became entrepreneurs

The 17,613 poor women members of WMCA, who received training in agriculture, fisheries, and livestock and orientation on alternative livelihood options, learned skills to increase their income

35,611 LCS women members earned good income in canal embankment works

Women's increased income enabled the family to buy enough food and household assets (e.g., homestead, arable land, and cattle) and support their children's education

Strategic Benefits



Transformative Impact

Gender equality in leadership and decision-making

- Increased voice in community decision-making
- Men's increased support for women's participation and leadership in WMCAs and their willingness to listen to women's needs and priorities

Women's economic empowerment

- Increased financial security with control of income and savings
- Improved resilience to climate driven and economic shocks

Gender equality in human development

- Women's Increased confidence, status and voice in family due to improved skills and income changing gender relations with men sharing HH work
- Increased mobility leading to human capacity development and economic empowerment for women with improved access to markets, health care centers, skills training and social protection programs



Institutional Impact and Sustainability

LGED formed a Gender and Social Development team at LGED headquarter with two full-time women staff to mainstream gender institutionally and operationally, particularly in water sector projects

Gender equality principles or themes have been integrated in training manuals and materials of LGED

The capacity of LGED staff, project staff, partner agencies, WMCA members and local government officials of union parishad and upazila parishad on gender mainstreaming developed and streamlined