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EVALUATION REPORT



UDF-BGD-07-174- Promoting Rights of Women through changing mindset

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All errors and omissions remain the responsibility of the authors.

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this report are those of the evaluators. They do not represent those of UNDEF or of any of the institutions referred to in the report.

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Table of contents

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
(i) The project	4
(ii) Conclusions.....	4
(iii) Recommendations	5
(iv) Overall assessment.....	6
II. INTRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT	7
(i) Project and evaluation objective	7
(ii) Evaluation methodology.....	7
(iii) Development context.....	7
(iv) Other relevant initiatives	9
III. PROJECT OBJECTIVES, STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION.....	11
(i) Objectives and strategy	11
(ii) Implementation aspects.....	12
IV. EQ ANSWERS / FINDINGS	14
(i) Relevance	14
(ii) Effectiveness.....	15
(iii) Efficiency	18
(iv) Impact.....	18
(v) Sustainability	19
V. CONCLUSIONS.....	20
(i) The Project strategy was in line with actual and evolving women’s policy needs; however, some factors reduced relevance as well as effectiveness.....	20
(ii) The overall intervention logic lacked coherence, resulting in weak impact.	21
(iii) The added value of UNDEF is not clear, but changes in project strategy and implementation could have brought UNDEF’s comparative advantage better to bear.	21
VI. RECOMMENDATIONS	22
(i) Maintain support to gender policy advocacy and women’s movements.	22
(ii) Future studies should include original research to generate new information and ensure its use in the policy process.....	22
(iii) Future projects should include more participatory research and more clearly articulate the relationship between the production of studies, their dissemination, and policy impact.	22
VII. OVERALL ASSESSMENT AND CLOSING THOUGHTS.....	23
VIII. LIMITATIONS, CONSTRAINTS AND CAVEATS	23
ANNEX 1: EVALUATION QUESTIONS.....	24
ANNEX 2: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED	26
ANNEX 3: PERSONS INTERVIEWED	27
ANNEX 4: ACTUAL IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTIVITIES – MILESTONES AND DATES.....	28
ANNEX 5: SUMMARY OF STUDIES CONTENTS	29
ANNEX 6: LIST OF ACRONYMS	30

I. Executive Summary

(i) The project

The project “Promoting Rights of Women through Changing Mindset” targeted critical gender issues to make the policy makers and duty bearers more responsive. The project aimed to accomplish this through identification of gender gaps in policies, national budget allocation decisions, and Poverty Reduction Strategy Programmes (PRSP) and by supporting large dissemination efforts to sensitize stakeholders.

(ii) Conclusions

The project strategy was in line with actual and evolving women’s policy needs, however some factors reduced relevance as well as effectiveness.

The project strategy was consistent with the Bangladesh development context, re-introducing an updated version of the National Women Advancement Policy of 1997 and developing a road map for gender policy, especially for marginalized women. The project was also relevant in including, in its design, activities to raise women’s voice to make governmental authorities more responsive and accountable. Working with the organized women’s movement at national and local levels and stressing media events were sound strategic decisions to disseminate information over the country to raise global awareness and to improve analytical and technical capacity on gender.

However, commissioning new studies was not preceded by a thorough screening of available information nor by a concise justification, or by a clear methodological approach. There was no real explanation on how those studies could bring an added value to the existing information. The project overall logic of intervention suffered from the dis-connect between the overall goal of giving voice to women in policy processes and the activities/outputs foreseen. No indications were given on how studies and its dissemination would align with Government current planning and bring policy changes.

In project implementation, relevance and effectiveness were hampered by failure to generate new knowledge based on a local perspective, the narrow range of persons involved in dissemination activities, and absence of an effective mechanism for taking feedback into account.

The overall intervention logic lacked coherence, resulting in weak impact.

At the institutional, operational and political levels, the project has had little impact to date. To some extent, this is because the studies have not been published yet, but it seems that the overall lack of coherence in the project design will limit the project impact even after studies’ publication. The project studies should have gone beyond analytical review of existing data and information. Lack of local and grassroots input / feedback, more a weakness in implementation rather than strategy, reduced the potential of the studies to be used as reference tool by policy makers. It does not appear that the studies have made progress in encouraging inclusion of gender equality indicators in monitoring and evaluation frameworks related to the PRSP, budget programming or global policy processes. Gender-related accountability has not been improved.

The added value of UNDEF is not clear, but changes in project strategy and implementation could have brought UNDEF's comparative advantage better to bear.

The project fell within UNDEF's mandate and yet, it is not clear that the project had impacts that could not have been achieved by another donor. UNDEF's comparative advantage revolves around the fact that, first; it is a UN agency, with privileged access to government and civil society. Given its UN status, the UN is able to become engaged in controversial areas where other donors might be reluctant to venture. While gender is controversial in Bangladesh, there is no sign that this project involved itself in particularly sensitive and specific areas. Dissemination disproportionately targeted groups that were already committed to women's empowerment and did not involve marginalized women. The project operated firmly within the boundaries of the existing government policy process and did not change the nature of the dialogue. There are, of course, limits on what can be accomplished given limited funding and time, but one is left with the impression that more could have been accomplished.

(iii) Recommendations

These recommendations stem from the conclusions of the evaluation:

Maintain support to gender policy advocacy and women's movements.

Women's situation in Bangladesh remains a critical barrier to development and momentum is required for women's progress. There is a need to pressure the government to better address gender issues. In this respect, the identification of performance criteria through studies related to women's issues is fundamental to ensure proper policy attention and the allocation of needed resources.

There is also a need to continue to support the strong and highly motivated women's movement in Bangladesh. This movement has perhaps made the most significant contribution to ensure that gender mainstreaming remains a government concern. Women-led NGOs have been pushing for change in women's societal roles through research, advocacy, and taking direct action where possible. UNDEF should continue to support women's movements in Bangladesh and elsewhere.

Future studies should include original research to generate new information and ensure its use in the policy process.

Studies should not only consist of reviews but should generate new knowledge, especially in areas where such knowledge is lacking. Studies should cover not only topics and areas in which government commitment is already present, but should venture further into areas that deserve more attention. This would bring to bear UNDEF's comparative advantage as an agency willing and able to get involved into controversial area.

Future projects should include more participatory research and more clearly articulate the relationship between the production of studies, their dissemination, and policy impact.

We have found that, at the project design stage, there was insufficient consideration of how the studies produced were going to have the substantial impact on policy and programming. Such consideration would have revealed the necessity for a more inclusive and participatory approach in the production of the studies, involving extensive stakeholder consultations and the inclusion of comments and suggestions. The resulting “buy-in” would have increased impact.

(iv) Overall assessment

The project was clearly relevant to UNDEF’s mandate and, subject to the reservations about project design pointed out above, was appropriate for the development context. It represented, in theory a sound investment of UNDEF resources. However, some of the weaknesses of the project identified here were already present at the design (i.e., proposal and project document) stage and could have been identified. Adjustments made at that stage could have greatly increased the impact and overall value of the project. Specifically,

- Bangladesh has been a virtual laboratory for research and the site of some of the most rigorous empirical work on social and gender issues in development. UNDEF could have expected a stronger justification for additional studies to be made in the original proposal.
- UNDEF could have scrutinized the proposed methodological approach more carefully to ensure that it provided for not only a review of the situation but provided, as well, a strategic basis for future action. It would have been fundamental to ask the original proposal to show how the proposed studies would be aligned with ongoing government planning and to ensure that they would incorporate local and grassroots perspectives. The issue of UNDEF value added could have been more critically assessed at the proposal stage, not after project completion.

II. Introduction and development context

(i) Project and evaluation objective

This report is the evaluation of the project “Promoting Rights of Women through changing mindset” implemented by Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS) in Bangladesh from September 1, 2008 until August 31, 2010. The objective of the evaluation is to gain a better understanding of what constitutes a successful project which will in turn help UNDEF to devise future project strategies. Evaluations also assist stakeholders to determine whether projects have been implemented in accordance with the project document and whether anticipated project outputs have been achieved.

(ii) Evaluation methodology

Two experts, one international and one national, were in charge of carrying out the evaluation under a framework agreement between UNDEF and Transtec. The methodology of the evaluation is set out in the Operational Manual governing this framework agreement, with brief additions in the evaluation Launch Note prepared for this project. In accordance with the agreed process, a set of project documents was provided to the evaluators in November 2010 (see list of all documents consulted in Annex 2). On that basis, they prepared the Launch Note (Launch note_UDF-BGD-07-174) setting out issues to be considered during the field visit, which took place from 3 to 9 December 2010. During their visit in Dhaka and in Netrokona the evaluators conducted interviews and held focus group discussions group exercises with a range of stakeholders (see list of persons met in Annex 3), including:

- Personnel from BNPS and from the Institute of Environment Development (IED), the latter being the partner in charge of workshops,
- Consultants in charge of producing studies,
- Participants in selected workshops and national seminars, including representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs); Members of Parliament (MPs), civil servants, and journalists,
- Participants who attended the local workshop on Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) issues in Netrokona.

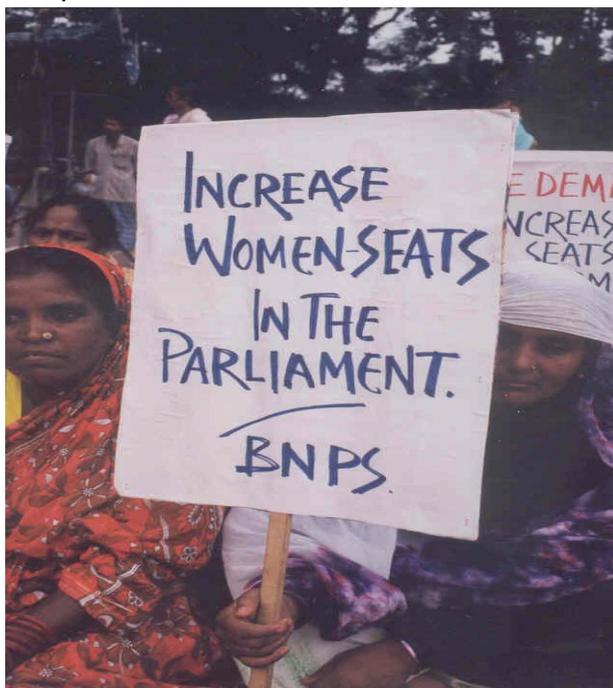
The evaluation team took into consideration the existing literature on women’s rights promotion to assess added value of the studies and potential for influence at the Political level in Bangladesh.

(iii) Development context

Despite achievements in reducing both income- and non-income poverty, Bangladesh is still one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 129th out of 169 countries with comparable data in the UNDP 2005 Human Development Index (HDI). Between 1980 and 2010 Bangladesh's HDI rose by 2.0% annually from 0.259 to 0.469 today.

According to UNDP, “Women’s opportunities and public participation in Bangladesh have changed significantly in recent decades. Although aggregate gender equality

indices of the UNDP Human Development Report¹ make it clear that broad women's challenges remain. The gender-related development Index (GDI)² is lower than the human development index (HDI), indicating that the aggregated index masks gender inequalities³.



The Constitution of Bangladesh grants equal rights to women and men in all spheres of public life and has been supplemented by a number of Acts and Ordinances to safeguard women's equal rights⁴. Although such laws provide part of the essential legal framework for protecting and promoting women's equal rights in the public sphere, the practice of a range of customs and traditions continue to undermine gender equality. Bangladesh has ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) agreeing to the Optional Protocol in 2000. However, reservations on Articles 2 and 16 pertaining to

marriage, divorce and inheritance remain in force.

The National Policy for the Advancement of Women was adopted in 1997 and included commitments to eliminating discrimination against women and girls in all spheres and promoting women's equality. A National Action Plan (NAP) for implementing this policy as well as meeting commitments under the Beijing Platform for Action (PfA) was approved in 1998. The Ministry of Women's and Children's Affairs (MOWCA) established in 1998 for this purpose was in charge of monitoring progress of related gender mainstreaming initiatives. However, the policy and NAP were never really implemented because the mechanisms for implementation and monitoring were unclear and the policy was not well supported by financial and human resources.

Nonetheless, other documents were enacted on women's issues to demonstrate the government commitments. In this respect, the National Poverty Reduction Strategy (National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction, or NSAPR-II) issued in 2005 cited the importance of women's rights and opportunities for progress in the battle against poverty. It is generally held that gender issues have been fully addressed in the NSAPR

¹ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). 2009. Human Development Report 2009, Bangladesh Country; Fact Sheet. http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/country_fact_sheets/cty_fs_BGD.html

² The GDI reflects women's disadvantages in three dimensions – reproductive health (as measured by maternal mortality and adolescent fertility rates), empowerment (share of parliamentary seats and secondary and higher education enrolment,) and economic activity (labor market participation rate),

³ UNDP (2010) Gender Inequality Index, value -

⁴ Dowry Prohibition Act of 1980, the Child Marriage Restraint Act (amended in 1984) and the Family Courts Ordinance of 1985.

II and that the document provided a good strategic overview of both constraints and possible policy and program responses.

While, the PRSP sets laudable goals, there is an apparent gap between its rhetoric and policy decisions. While there were a range of commitments to promote gender equality in the NSAPR II, only a small number have benefited from concrete budget to enable effective implementation.



In the last (2008) election, the ruling Awami League government pledged, in its election manifesto, to re-introduce the National Women's Advancement Policy of 1997. This reintroduction is a demand of the women's rights movement. On the occasion of International Women's Day in 2009 and 2010, the Prime Minister repeated the pledge. The MOWCA is now working on updating the

Policy to include issues related to women belonging to indigenous ethnic groups and women with disabilities as well as to incorporate other recommendations from women's groups and civil society. Officially, this updated policy is expected to be discussed in National Parliament in early of 2011.

In short, the policy environment for women's rights and empowerment in Bangladesh is promising, as evidenced by commitments made and policies adopted. However, the resources made available and concrete results to date are modest when compared to the scale of the challenge.

(iv) Other relevant initiatives

Since UDF-BGD-07-174 consisted in large part of producing research papers and findings, the evaluators paid special attention to existing studies and data, concentrating on whether the new research added value. Among the more important initiatives:

- BNPS itself has realized and commissioned several studies⁵ on the public budget allocation to women's issues and review of the PRSP from a gender point of view.
- Other national policy research institutions, as well as CSOs and NGOs have carried out analyses of the budget, the PRSP, and effective implementation of policies from a gender perspective. In this respect, the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies⁶(BIDS) and the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD)⁷, have

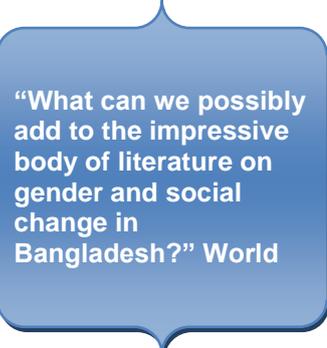
⁵ Examples include Rokeya Kabir (2008), "A review of PRSP in Bangladesh from Gender Perspective"; Paul Majumder (2007), "Factors affecting utilisation efficiency of the allocation earmarked for Women's development in National Budget for Bangladesh"; and Paul Majumder (2003), "Reflexion of women's voice and national gender objectives in the National budget of Bangladesh, 2003."

⁶ <http://www.cpd.org.bd/index.asp>

⁷ <http://www.cpd.org.bd/index.asp>

published research paper on the PRSP⁸ and budget⁹ and have initiated dialogue at local, regional, and national levels between the principal partners to address important policy issues.. The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), perhaps the most internationally prominent NGO in Bangladesh, has undertaken advocacy and research activities for women. For decades, CSOs and NGOs have been involved in provided gender-sensitive services, increasingly accompanied by a policy dialogue, lobbying and advocacy.

- National data disaggregated by sex to track indicators for women and men, girls and boys and to identify and remedy gender gaps have been developed by Bangladesh authorities¹⁰, NGOs, and international donors. Since 2006, the World Bank Gender Norms Survey (WBGNS), which includes both men and women in its sample, provides a nationally representative survey of gender norms and practices¹¹. In 2006, Bangladesh's four largest donors, World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the UK Department for International Development (DFID) together prepared a Joint Assistance Strategy (JAS) with a matrix of selected outcomes derived from the PRSP. This JAS recognizes the empowerment of women as a key driver to achieving MDG goals.
- The quotation from the World bank¹² page 11 stresses how important is studies contribution and use.



“What can we possibly add to the impressive body of literature on gender and social change in Bangladesh?” World

⁸ Debapriya Bhattacharya, Delivering on the PRSP in Bangladesh: An Analysis of the Implementation Challenges, Paper 54, Centre for Policy Dialog, November 2005

⁹ Centre for Policy Dialogue, State of the Bangladesh Economy and an Analysis of the National Budget for FY2008-09, Paper 68,, 2008; BIDS, Role of National budget in developing entrepreneurship among women in Bangladesh, 2006; Review of current resource Allocation to the Ministry of Women and children Affairs, 2005; Enabling women to contribute to Economic growth ; an analysis of allocation in the national budget of Bangladesh, 2003;

¹⁰ The Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Gender Statistics, 2008

¹¹. The World Bank Gender Norms Survey is based on a sample of 5,000 adults, which includes: 1,500 married women aged 15-25 years, 1,500 married women aged 45-60 years, 1,500 married male heads of households aged 25-50 years and 500 community leaders.

¹² ¹² The World Bank, Whispers to Voices, genders and social transformation in Bangladesh, Development SeriesN°22, March2008.

III. Project objectives, strategy and implementation

(i) Objectives and strategy

The project's overall objective was to promote women's advancement policies, including those related to women from indigenous groups from rights and equity perspectives. The project aimed to do this by (i) identifying gender gaps through research papers related to the status of women in PRSP, the treatment of women's issues in the national budget, and the status of implementation of national and international policy commitments and (ii) disseminating the information to stakeholders at national and district levels. Two main outcomes were expected to be achieved by successful implementation of the project: (i) to integrate women's equity and rights issues, especially those related to indigenous groups,¹³ into national policies, specifically the PRSP and budget, and (ii) to support the organized women's movement in its efforts to achieve proper treatment of those issues.

Activities	Results & effects	Intermediate impact	Development objectives
<p>1. PRODUCTION OF THREE STUDIES / REPORTS</p> <p>(i) The status of women in national PRSP</p> <p>(ii) The treatment of women's issues in the national budget.</p> <p>(iii) The status of the implementation of national policy commitments in the area of gender.</p> <p>2. DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION AND VALIDATION OF FINDINGS WITH STAKEHOLDERS AT NATIONAL AND DISTRICT LEVELS THROUGH EVENTS</p> <p>(i) 9 local workshops (ii) 3 national seminars (iii) Media activities (press conferences, TV talk shows) (iv) Rallies</p>	<p>1. Completed studies published and available to policy makers and representatives of civil society networks.</p> <p>2. Gaps between commitments and implementation in the three selected thematic areas identified.</p> <p>3. Sensitization of a large panel of CSOs as well as policy makers and government officials at the district, divisional and national levels</p>	<p>1. Studies are used as reference tool for policy making</p> <p>2. Studies' findings are accepted as baseline for issues concerning women's advancement, especially as regards indigenous groups.</p> <p>3. Accountability demanded from government duty bearers and policy makers.</p> <p>4. Participation of civil society in decision making process strengthened.</p>	<p>1. Increased gender sensitivity of the PRSP and the national budget, increased effectiveness in implementation of national policies and international commitments</p> <p>2. The organized women's movement empowered to serve as watchdogs and counterparts of public authorities.</p> <p>3. Mindset of members of the civil society groups, policy makers and government officials towards the rights of women, ethnic and minorities changed.</p>

The justification to commission the three studies was, at the time of project formulation, there was not yet a comprehensive analysis of PRSP and budget issues from gender perspective, that existing information was fragmented, and that no research had been commissioned to date to monitor the effective implementation of the existing commitments relating to women's issues.

¹³ The outcomes in the project document stated "marginalised groups" but it means clearly indigenous groups in Chittagong Hill Tracts

The project strategy was designed to operate in three stages.

- BNPS commissioned three studies focused on the gender perspective in policies, PRSP, and budget. All consultants recruited by BNPS were knowledgeable academic experts.¹⁴
- BNPS strategy was designed to use events to (i) create information and knowledge at local and national levels and (ii) validate studies' findings. All awareness and visibility activities were organised by the Institute of Environmental Development (IED) over 18 months. It was intended to select a wide range of attendees, involving all sections of society, to ensure adequate stakeholder involvement and input.
- It was anticipated that publication of reports would increase pressure on policy makers by identifying gaps between commitments and implementation. Publication of the studies would also provide a new baseline for demanding government accountability.

(ii) Implementation aspects

BNPS recruited a project coordinator to be responsible for overall implementation but “outsourced” the main project activities. It directly contracted three external consultants to conduct studies, and all awareness and visibility activities were organized by IED. Although BNPS benefits from extensive experience on gender issues, at the time of the project it had recently experienced large staff turnover. The evaluation team’s meetings with BNPS staff demonstrated that most were new and did not have expertise on gender issues. This situation is apparently due to BNPS history, in which the organization was targeted by a government inquiry in 2002-2006.¹⁵ BNPS was in charge of monitoring the consultants’ work and IED was responsible for selecting participants, providing methodological guidance, organizing and documenting the events under the BNPS’ overall operational and financial supervision. Planned activities were:

- Three validation workshops (1 per study) with the objective of soliciting comments on studies’ findings and recommendations for improvement. The underlying assumption was that participants would be knowledgeable on women’s issues and familiar with the studies’ contents before the workshops.
- Nine local workshops (3 per study), with the objective of sharing findings from the research reports and validating findings from the local perspective. Workshops were planned for Netrakona, Barisal Rajshahi, Mymensing, Sirajgonj, Tangail, Chittagong, Comilla and Narsingdi district.
- Three national seminars (1 per study) with the objective of sharing study findings in order to formulate an action plan to advocate change in policy making

¹⁴ The PRSP consultant had participated into both PRSP processes on behalf the Ministry of Finance. The expert, Paul Majumder retained to realize the budget study had collaborated several times previously with BNPS and published many studies related to women and the budgetary process from gender perspective. Paul Majumder, Factors affecting Utilisation of Allocation earmarked for women’s Development in the National budget, BNPS, May 2007. Role of National budget in developing entrepreneurship among women in Bangladesh, BNPS, 2006 ; Review of current resource Allocation to the Ministry of Women and children Affairs, BIDS, 2005; Enabling women to contribute to Economic growth ; an analysis of allocation in the national budget of Bangladesh, BIDS, 2003 ; Reflexion of women voice and national gender objectives in the National budget of Bangladesh, BNPS, 2003 ; National Education Budget and empowerment of Women, BNPS, 2003.

¹⁵ Darcy Ashman, Daring to Lead, the Evolution of Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha, 1986- 2009, June 2009

- Visibility activities including TV talk shows, press conferences, publication and dissemination of booklets, posters and leaflets and organisation of two mobilization rallies related to the implementation of National Women's Advancement Policy Reformation of Law in Favour of Women. The objective of all these activities was to disseminate the information and to raise collective voice in favor of women's equality and rights.



Figure 1: Workshop held in Netrokona on PRSP

IV. EQ answers / findings

The evaluation is based on a set of evaluation questions or EQs, designed to cover the (DAC) criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability; plus the issue of UNDEF value added. The Evaluation Questions and related sub-questions are presented in Annex 1.

(i) Relevance

The project was conceived as a pragmatic response to complement government efforts to implement gender policies. The project strategy was consistent with the Bangladesh development context described above. Improved understanding of gender issues in the PRSP, budget and policy, especially identification of implementation gaps, was needed to improve performance in this area. Many ministries lack the analytical and technical capacity to assess the impact on women in their area of responsibility. In a situation where measurable monitoring indicators are scarce, flexible instruments such as analytical studies represented a potentially valuable means to mainstream gender issues across the policy spectrum.

The project was also an anticipated response to obtain and incorporate more accurate information of the socio economic status of women in marginalized communities. As part of its task to update the 1997 national women's policy, the MOWCA is, and was at the time of the project, committed to include issues relating to indigenous women and women with disabilities.

The project was also relevant in including, in its design, activities to raise women's voice to make governmental authorities more responsive and accountable. Working with the organized women's movement and stressing media events were sound strategic decisions.

However a number of strategic weaknesses in project design ultimately weakened relevance (as well as effectiveness, see below). Specifically, the project implementation modalities were only vaguely related to the stated objectives:

- While the main objectives were clearly stated, implementation modalities were only briefly explained in the project document. It is surprising that the project document did not refer to BNPS' past experience and knowledge in the gender area, and that there was no contextual information given on what had been achieved to date and what was needed in the studies in order to make their reference tools for policy change. Similarly, the overall challenges in relation to the PRSP, the treatment of women's concerns in budget allocation, and the effective implementation of national and international commitments were not well documented and priorities were not identified. The project document did not mention any studies and data available and did not give methodological guidance for the research to be done. This may be because the UNDEF document format required, in a broad way, statement of the strategic goals but, provided less guidance on establishing priorities, needs, and how to achieve these goals. As a result, the prodoc gave no information on how those studies and how findings could have potential analytical added value.
- Links between the three areas of work were not explored, although it is obvious that the three topics are closely related.

- While the project document stated that the dissemination of findings would help to increase knowledge, it was not specific on how the workshops' recommendations would be used to support policy change. The articulation between local and national seminars on the same issues was not clarified. The prodoc treated each event in isolation and did not specify how the studies would attain the status of being a reference tool for policy makers or contribute to an action plan for policy changes.
- Outcomes specified were ambitious in relation to the outputs expected to contribute to them. It appears to have been assumed that disseminating study findings would be sufficient to change policies on women's issues. The logical link between the studies and the expected outcome regarding the integration of indigenous women's issues into policies was not made clear.¹⁶

(ii) Effectiveness

Except for the publication of the studies, which as of this writing (mid-January 2011) is still in process, all the planned activities were implemented on time and according to schedule. The production of research papers was realized over a eight month period, from November 2008 to June 2009. While the Terms of Reference of the consultants were explicit on the study objectives, they provided less guidance on methodological approaches to be used or on the expected added value given existing studies and data. There was no consideration given to determine how the studies would align with ongoing Government planning and strategy. These weaknesses adversely affected both relevance and effectiveness.

Figure 2: national seminar on PRSP held in the Press Club, Dhaka



The consultants carried out an exhaustive analysis of research reports, studies, government documents and data, followed by interviews and cases studies at district levels. However the identification of gaps in the studies was mainly based on review of existing data and available information rather than on original research. The absence of specific monitoring indicators of gender' processes

from PRSP, budget allocation and policy perspectives did not contribute to design appropriate strategies for women' advancement. Although financial resources were limited and admittedly data collection is not an UNDEF strategic priority, a project to develop new knowledge would have been more relevant than one which merely reviewed existing data and literature.

Each study was accompanied, as planned, by one national validation workshop including Government, NGOs and civil society representatives. The validation workshops were held between April and May 2009, before the finalization of the studies. Local workshops and media events were also held as foreseen in the project document. The impressive number of information and dissemination activities listed in Annex 4

¹⁶ The prodoc refers to "the implementation process of CHT peace treaty with indigenous peoples of Chittagong Hill Tracts." It is difficult to see how this relates to the PRSP and national budget.

(implementation of activities, milestones and dates) were accomplished over the planned 18-month period.

Evaluation Field Mission in Netrokona to assess the workshop held on 'Status of Women in PRSP in Bangladesh',-

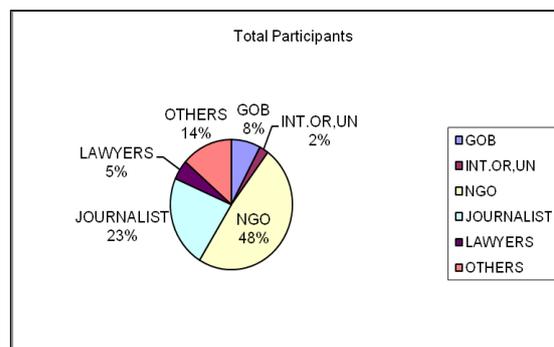
The evaluation team met a number of participants who attended the local workshop held in Netrokona on 1 October 2009 to share findings PRSP study with stakeholders. The purpose of the meeting was to understand better the general opinion of participants related the presentation of findings. In general, the workshop was highly appreciated by attendees, who confirmed that they learned about the PRSP mechanism and were provided with the opportunity to make recommendations. However one attendee questioned the result of such consultations and how the Netrokona recommendations could be taken into consideration at the national level. After the workshop, participants were not informed how the recommendations had been presented to Government and what the results had been. Participants stated that they know what their needs are but are not sufficiently consulted.

Participants in seminars and workshops who were interviewed during the evaluation field mission reported that the events were effective in increasing their knowledge of women's issues. Also according to interviewees, the presence of stakeholders with varying profiles led to an excellent atmosphere for discussions and exchange of views. This must be tempered by the fact however, that as described below, the range of attendees was actually quite narrow. According to journalists interviewed, the strategic inclusion of resources persons from media, academic institutions, and activists' networks was significant in ensuring that information was injected into the political process. As described above, however, project strategy was never really clear on how this would result in change.

There was no mechanism to take attendees' recommendations into account. The evaluation team's field visit to Netrokona revealed that workshop attendees are still

awaiting feedback from the consultation. Such a mechanism could have provided a local perspective which would have deepened the academic views developed into those studies and provided new information rather than a review of existing information. The "top down" approach of the studies reduced the overall effectiveness of the project.

While the project design embraced a large segment of civil society and policy makers from the Government and Parliament as beneficiaries, the view of MPs interviewed during the evaluation field mission was that the national seminars were mainly attended by an elite and were characterized by the absence of grassroots attendees. This assessment was echoed by Netrokona interviewees.



Out of a total of 916 participants¹⁷ (beneficiaries) who attended BNPS validations workshops, the three national seminars and the nine local workshops from April 2009 to

¹⁷ 78 persons attended three validation workshops, 545 persons participated to the local workshops and 293 were presents at the national seminar.

October 2010, no representatives of ethnic minority groups were present. The chart presented demonstrates that attendees were mainly NGO representatives (48%) and journalists (23%). In general, there was an emphasis on civil society representatives (90%) compared to the local and national authorities (8%).

These data strongly suggest that workshop and seminar activities essentially reached stakeholders already devoted to empowerment of women, who are not necessarily drivers of change.

The project's intervention logic suffered from the dis-connect between the overall goal of giving voice to women in policy processes and the activities/outputs foreseen. No indications were given on how studies and its dissemination would align with Government current planning and bring policy changes. The interrelated matter of concerns between those three topics was not defined although it seems obvious that these three topics, directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly, are interlinked. If nothing else, they are assuredly linked through the budget resource allocation process. Each study was presented separately to a large but isolated panel of stakeholders, meaning that opportunities for a truly integrated approach and impact were missed.

View of members of Parliament from two main political parties on project events

What is your general perception of the workshops as participants?

MPs 1: "I have attended several workshops organized by BNPS in Dhaka.(..) All topics were theoretical and far from people's practical needs. (...)Most of the participants were from reputed NGOs, some government officials, lawyers, journalists and elite people of the society but I never saw anybody from the poorest section of the society ... poor grass roots level people are always kept in dark and very seldom consulted."

MPs 2: "I have attended a few workshops organized by BNPS (...)It is positive that BNPS has consulted intellectuals, feminists, journalists, lawyers, and some women MPs like us who are in power. They wrote articles in newspapers and spoke in the parliament sessions to catch people's attention.(..) All workshops/seminars were attended by the upper class of the society, renowned journalists, and sometimes some representations from different intellectuals but nobody from the grass roots level of the society."

(iii) Efficiency

The coordination and collaboration between IED and BNPS were of high quality, with BNPS supervising the overall process and IED organizing public events. However there is a general impression of insufficient guidance over project process. Due to the beneficiary history mentioned above, most BNPS staff members were new and lacked expertise in women's issues. Outsourcing of project activities was a proper response, but BNPS did not closely supervise all activities. While the overall guidance of public events was assumed by IED, BNPS staff did not design any workshop format to gather specific information from attendees.

Project budget line item	% of expenditure of the total budget
Honorarium for national consultants (study cost)	28%
Administrative support including salary for BNPS coordinators and equipment	29%
Conceptualization and organization of 9 districts workshops, 3 national level seminars, media campaign and meetings with policy makers including political parties targeted for lobbying and advocacy	27%
Publication of booklets, posters, leaflets	3%
Travel and per diems	3%
Bank charges & commission	1%
Total project expenditure	91%

According to the table above, consultants accounted for over a quarter of the overall budget. Clearly, much was expected from the mobilization of high-quality research expertise.

(iv) Impact

The absence of publication reduces considerably the project's impact to date and, if delays continue, may impair ultimate impact achieved.

The studies have not been integrated into the process of re-introducing the National Women Advancement Policy of 1997 or the preparation of the MTBF. Although the consultants had discussions with resource persons in the government and NGO sectors, it is uncertain that the studies helped ministries in formulating sector-specific operational strategies. While the project Final Narrative Report does not specify whether outcomes/impacts refer to policy changes, information gathered from interviews suggested that the project did not make any specific contribution so far to the ongoing policy reform related to women's issues.

MPs interviewees - project potential impact

What are the outputs of the project “promoting rights of women through changing mindset”?

MP1: “The project produced some good reports and organized lots of workshops, seminars, media campaign, press conferences etc. I doubt that all these could not change the mindset of the people in such a short period of the project. I have been invited to attend a workshop at a lavish, costly hotel in Dhaka just 3 days before the budget was adopted. The purpose of the workshop was to support parliamentarians to influence the change of budget in favor of women. . But we know that usually the budget is being finalized well ahead, say 2/3 months before the budget session. So I think that the money spent for such workshop was total waste of donor’s money and resources”

MPS 2 : “The project has produced a few good research reports on PRSP, budget, women’s policies etc. which, I suppose are in line with the government’s women development policy and these reports ascertained the actual status of women in Bangladesh. I suppose that women and policy-makers benefited from the activities of the project. I also hope that BNPS will continue the works for women’s development. This project also generated lots of recommendations and the government will consider them step by step.”

As relayed by a civil servant interviewee, there was no creation of information which could be used by policy makers and duty bearers as a reference tool for discussion. The incorporation of specific gaps matrix including monitoring indicators would have made it easier to assess the women’ advancement progress. The reactions of parliamentarians, as well (see box) give little reason to hope that the project had substantial impact.

It is difficult to assess that a particular seminar or workshop triggered further activities such as establishment of networks or identification of policy makers by the beneficiaries.

(v) Sustainability

Any assessment of the sustainability of such studies in the Bangladeshi context would require a systematic process-tracing of the relationship between the beneficiary and governmental authorities. The evaluators are, however, doubtful that those studies (once published) will be able to make lasting changes. There is no sense of beneficiary ownership to date.

V. Conclusions

The conclusions presented here represent a synthesis of the answers to Evaluation Questions given in the previous section.

(i) The Project strategy was in line with actual and evolving women's policy needs; however, some factors reduced relevance as well as effectiveness

The project was designed as a pragmatic response to the evolving political context, in particular the commitment to re-introduce an updated version of the National Women Advancement Policy of 1997 with emphasis on minority groups and developing a road map for gender policy, especially for marginalized women.

The following elements of project intervention logic contributed positively to project relevance:

- Keeping the question of women on the agenda through research and dialogue with all stakeholders including local and national authorities.
- Focusing on the most critical issues that hamper women's advancement.
- Creating accurate knowledge and information sources/studies on gender issues to improve analytical and technical capacity on gender.
- Appointing experienced and well known consultants to enhance the seriousness and credibility of such studies.
- Identifying gaps between commitments and effective implementation and consider it for future strategies design.
- Improving efforts for coordination between government and non- government organisations over policies programming.
- Focusing on minority groups, especially on indigenous women.
- Attempting to create government ownership.
- Disseminating information over the country to raise global awareness.
- Identifying resource persons from media, academic institutions to enlarge the public targeted audience.

However, commissioning new studies was not preceded by a thorough screening of available information, or by a convincing justification, or by a clear methodological approach. There was no real explanation of how those studies could bring an added value to the existing information. The project intervention logic suffered from the disconnect between the overall goal of giving voice to women in policy processes and the activities/outputs foreseen. No indications were given on how studies and its dissemination would align with Government current planning and bring policy changes.

In project implementation, relevance and effectiveness were hampered by failure to generate new knowledge based on a local perspective, the narrow range of persons involved in dissemination activities, and absence of an effective mechanism for taking feedback into account.

(ii) The overall intervention logic lacked coherence, resulting in weak impact.

The project had an impact at the level of the individuals who benefited from information dissemination and visibility activities. However, at the institutional, operational and political levels, the project has had little impact to date. To some extent, this is because the studies have not been published yet, but it seems that the overall lack of coherence in the project design will limit the project impact even after studies' publication. By lack of coherence, we refer to the poor links between project activities, anticipated results, and general objectives. The project studies should have gone beyond analytical review of existing data and information. Lack of local and grassroots input / feedback, more a weakness in implementation rather than strategy, reduced the potential of the studies to be used as reference tool by policy makers. It does not appear that the studies have made progress in encouraging inclusion of gender equality indicators in monitoring and evaluation frameworks related to the PRSP, budget programming or global policy processes. Gender-related accountability has not been improved.

(iii) The added value of UNDEF is not clear, but changes in project strategy and implementation could have brought UNDEF's comparative advantage better to bear.

The project fell within UNDEF's mandate and yet, it is not clear that the project had impacts that could not have been achieved by another donor (for example, UNIFEM, or a European bilateral agency, or a program such as the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights). UNDEF's comparative advantage revolves around the fact that, first; it is a UN agency, with privileged access to government and civil society. Given its UN status, the UN is able to become engaged in controversial areas where other donors might be absent or reluctant to commit themselves. While gender is controversial in Bangladesh, there is no sign that this project involved itself in particularly sensitive and specific areas such as inheritance rights, for example. It appears to have failed to live up to its promise to highlight women belonging to ethnic minorities. Dissemination disproportionately targeted groups that were already committed to women's empowerment and did not involve marginalized women. The project operated firmly within the boundaries of the existing government policy process and did not change the nature of the dialogue. There are, of course, limits on what can be accomplished given limited funding and time, but one is left with the impression that more could have been accomplished.

VI. Recommendations

These recommendations stem from the conclusions of the evaluation:

(i) Maintain support to gender policy advocacy and women's movements.

While we have been critical of this project, nothing suggests that UNDEF should cease to support gender projects in Bangladesh. Women's situation in Bangladesh remains a critical barrier to development and momentum is required for women's progress. There is a need to pressure the government to better address gender issues. In this respect, the identification of performance criteria through studies related to women's issues is fundamental to ensure proper policy attention and the allocation of needed resources.

There is also a need to continue to support the strong and highly motivated women's movement in Bangladesh. This movement has perhaps made the most significant contribution to ensure that gender mainstreaming remains a government concern. Women-led NGOs have been pushing for change in women's societal roles through research, advocacy, and taking direct action where possible. UNDEF should continue to support women's movements in Bangladesh and elsewhere.

(ii) Future studies should include original research to generate new information and ensure its use in the policy process.

Studies should not only consist of reviews but should generate new knowledge, especially in areas where such knowledge is lacking. Studies should cover not only topics and areas in which government commitment is already present, but should venture further into areas that lack and deserve more attention. This would stress UNDEF's comparative advantage as an agency willing and able to get involved into neglected and controversial areas.

Greater efforts need to be made to collect and analyse key poverty-related and gender disaggregated data for women from marginalized communities, e.g. tribal groups such as the largely Buddhist Chakma's, Hindus and the Urdu-speaking Biharis to guide appropriate responses to these problems through policies programming.

(iii) Future projects should include more participatory research and more clearly articulate the relationship between the production of studies, their dissemination, and policy impact.

We found that, at the project design stage, there was insufficient consideration of how the studies produced were going to have the substantial impact on policy and programming. Such consideration would have revealed the necessity for a more inclusive and participatory approach in the production of the studies, involving extensive stakeholder consultations and the inclusion of comments and suggestions. The resulting "buy-in" would have increased impact.

The focus on socio cultural empowerment of women sensitization into the project proposal through extensive information generation should have emphasized the need to develop proposals inherent on a field to increase the stakeholders' capacity and empowerment.

VII. Overall assessment and closing thoughts

The project was clearly relevant to UNDEF's mandate and, subject to the reservations about project design pointed out above, was appropriate for the development context. It represented, in theory a sound investment of UNDEF resources. However, some of the weaknesses of the project identified here were already present at the design (i.e., proposal and project document) stage and could have been identified. Adjustments made at that stage could have greatly increased the impact and overall value of the project. Specifically,

- Bangladesh has been a virtual laboratory for research and the site of some of the most rigorous empirical work on social and gender issues in development. UNDEF could have expected a stronger justification for additional studies to be made in the original proposal.
- UNDEF could have scrutinized the proposed methodological approach more carefully to ensure that it provided for not only a review of the situation but provided, as well, a strategic basis for future action. It would have been fundamental to ask the original proposal to show how the proposed studies would be aligned with ongoing government planning and to ensure that they would incorporate local and grassroots perspectives. The issue of UNDEF value added could have been more critically assessed at the proposal stage, not after project completion.

VIII. Limitations, constraints and caveats

Due to the shortage of time given in the country at the time of the mission, it was impossible to set up meetings with officials of the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWCA). It would have been interesting to explore what are the studies of reference for government policy makers and what gaps could be filled by new studies.

For the same reason and given the Parliamentary session at the time of the evaluation mission, the meeting with MPs was set up after the field mission with semi-structured questionnaires to ascertain the impact of the project to date and the anticipated impact of such studies in the future.

Annex 1: Evaluation Questions

DAC criterion	Evaluation Question	Related sub-questions
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent was the project, as designed and implemented, suited to context and needs at the beneficiary, local, and national levels? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were the objectives of the project in line with the needs and priorities for democratic development, given the context? Should another project strategy have been preferred rather than the one implemented to better reflect those needs, priorities, and context? Why? Were risks appropriately identified by the projects? How appropriate are/were the strategies developed to deal with identified risks? Was the project overly risk-averse?
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent was the project, as implemented, able to achieve objectives and goals? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent have the project's objectives been reached? To what extent was the project implemented as envisaged by the project document? If not, why not? Were the project activities adequate to make progress towards the project objectives? What has the project achieved? Where it failed to meet the outputs identified in the project document, why was this?
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent was there a reasonable relationship between resources expended and project impacts? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was there a reasonable relationship between project inputs and project outputs? Did institutional arrangements promote cost-effectiveness and accountability? Was the budget designed, and then implemented, in a way that enabled the project to meet its objectives?
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the project put in place processes and procedures supporting the role of civil society in contributing to democratization, or to direct promotion of democracy? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has/have the realization of the project objective(s) and project outcomes had an impact on the specific problem the project aimed to address? Have the targeted beneficiaries experienced tangible impacts? Which were positive; which were negative? To what extent has the project caused changes and effects, positive and negative, foreseen and unforeseen, on democratization? Is the project likely to have a catalytic effect? How? Why? Examples?

Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>To what extent has the project, as designed and implemented, created what is likely to be a continuing impetus towards democratic development?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>To what extent has the project established processes and systems that are likely to support continued impact?</i> ▪ <i>Are the involved parties willing and able to continue the project activities on their own (where applicable)?</i>
UNDEF value added	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>To what extent was UNDEF able to take advantage of its unique position and comparative advantage to achieve results that could not have been achieved had support come from other donors?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>What was UNDEF able to accomplish, through the project that could not as well have been achieved by alternative projects, other donors, or other stakeholders (Government, NGOs, etc).</i> ▪ <i>Did project design and implementing modalities exploit UNDEF's comparative advantage in the form of an explicit mandate to focus on democratization issues?</i>

Annex 2: Documents Reviewed

Related documents

Dr Kaniz N.Siddique“The status of women in national PRSP”

Prof. Salahuddin M; Aminuzzaman“Study report on the status of the implementation of national policy and international covenants from gender aspect

Dr Pratima Majumder“The status of women in regards to budgetary allocation for women and marginalized groups”

Darcy Ashman, Daring to Lead, the Evolution of Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha, 1986- 2009, June 2009

Rokeya Kabir (director of BNPS), A review of PRSP in Bangladesh from Gender Perspective, 2008

“Promoting Rights of Women through changing mindset”;Mid term report – October 2009,

ToR of the consultants hired to carry out the studies into “Promoting Rights of Women through changing mindset” project

Minutes and key notes paper of project activities, Promoting Rights of Women through changing mindset

Document on Gender Issues

UNDP (2010), The 2010 Human Development Index and its components

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). 2009.

UNDP (2010) Gender Inequality Index, value

The World Bank, Whispers to Voices, genders and social transformation in Bangladesh, Bangladesh Development Series N°22, Mars2008

Asian Development Bank, Country Gender Assessment: Bangladesh, 2010

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General Economic Division, Panning Commission, Government of People ‘s Republic of Bangladesh, Steps towards change, National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction revised (200ç-2011),December 2009

United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). 2008. *Who Answers to Women? Gender And Accountability*. p. 44 (citing a study done for the Ministry of Finance by the Financial Management Reform Program). www.unifem.org/progress/2008/publication.html

Annex 3: Persons Interviewed

Date	Name	Designation	Office/Organisation
5/12	Ms. Rokeya Kabir	Executive Director	BNPS
5/12	Mr. Omar Tarek Chowdhury	Director	BNPS
5/12	Ms. Shahnaz Sumi	Deputy Director	BNPS
5/12	Ms. Dilara Rekha	Coordinator, UNDEF project	BNPS
5/12	Mr. Faisal Bin Maid	Coordinator, Program Monitoring Evaluation	BNPS
5/12	Mr. Mujib Mehdi	Coordinator, Documentation,	BNPS
5/12	Ms. Nasrin Begum	Asstt. Coordinator, Training,	BNPS
5/12	Ms. Naila Akhter	Development Officer	BNPS
5/12	Dr Mijanur Raham	Chairman	Human Rights Commission
6/12	Dr Kaniz N. Siddique	International Consultant	Consultant, Status of women in PRSP in Bangladesh
6/12	Ms Farjana Rupa	Journalist	Desh TV
6/12	Ms Nadira Kiron	Journalist	ATN Bangla
6/12	Numan Ahmed Khan	Executive Director	IED
6/12	Mir Shamsul Alam	Coordinator UNDEF Project	IED
6/12	Md. Hamiduzzaman	Associate Coordinator	IED
6/12	Jyoti Chattopaddyay	Project Coordinator	IED
6/12	Farah Ruhida Haseen	Development Officer	IED
7/12	Dr Akbar Ali Khan	Former Advisor	Ministry of Finance
7/12	Dr Fahmida Khatum	Director	Centre policy Development (CPD)
8/12	Ms. Purabi Kunda	Senior Lawyer	District Judge Court, Netrakona
8/12	Mr. Abul Basher	Counselor (Local Govt Representative)	Pourashava (Municipality), Netrakona
8/12	Ms. Sufia Begum	Counselor(Local Govt Representative)	Pourashava (Municipality), Netrakona
8/12	Mr. Suvash Banik	Senior Lawyer	District Judge Court ,Netrakona
8/12	Mr. A.T.M. Rajjak	Cultural Activist	Sahitta Shova (Cultural Organisation), Netrakona
8/12	Md. Abul Kalam Fakir	Chairman	Challisha Union (Lowest tier of Local Govt), Netrakona
8/12	Mr.Manabendra Biswas	Senior Lawyer	District Judge Court, Netrakona
8/12	Ms. Ferdous Ara Yasmin	Principal /Academician	Mahmudpur High School
8/12	Ms.Kahinur Begum	Asstt. Director	Sabalombi Unnayan Sangsha (NGO)
8/12	Ms. Taheja Begum	Organizing Secretary	Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (Women Rights Org.)
8/12	Mr.Haider Jahan Chowdhury	Journalist	Daily Jananetra (Local Daily Newspaper), Netrakona
8/12	Mr.Gaji Mojjammel Hossain	Political Leader	Awami league (Present Govt. Party)
8/12	Mr. Ali Amjad Khan	Manager	BNPS Netrakona Centre
8/12	Ms. Champa Sarker	Development Officer	BNPS Netrakona Centre
8/12	Mr.Sheikh Safiul Alam	Program Organizer	BNPS Netrakona Centre
8/12	Mr. S.M.Manirujjaman	President	Satradal(Student wing of the BNP-opposition Party), Netrakona
8/12	Ms. Shahnaz Sumi	Deputy Director	BNPS, Central Office
17/12	Ms Nilufar Chowdhury Moni	MP	MP, Nationalist Party
18/12	Ms Rowshan Jahan Shati	MP	MP from Awami League

Annex 4: Actual implementation of activities – milestones and dates

Sequences of project activities		
Milestones	Specific activities	Date
1. Realization of three studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The status of women in the PRSP ii. The status of women as regards to the national budget iii. The status of the implementation of national policy and international covenants related to gender 	November 2008 until June 2009 (all studies were finalised around June 2009 according consultants interview)
2. Dissemination and validation of findings at national and local levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. 3 validation workshops ii. 9 local workshops iii. 3 National Seminars iv. Press conferences v. TV talk show vi. Rallies mobilisation 	<p>2 months: from 18 April and 30 May 2009</p> <p>5 months: from October 2009 to February 2010</p> <p>2 months: April to May 2010 (expect national seminar on policies organised on June 2006 because vote of budget in Parliament)</p> <p>November 2009 & May 2010</p> <p>May & June 2010</p> <p>March and April 2010</p>
3. Publication of studies		Expected in December 2009 but not yet published on December 2010 (evaluation time)

Annex 5: summary of studies contents

“The status of women in national PRSP is published and available for all concerned”

The study report of is mainly about the content and processes used during the design of PRSP I and PRSP II. Questions addressed include when and why the PRSP was formulated and how women’s issues were formulated and the extent to which civil society representatives as well as local authorities representatives were / are informed about the PRSP process and content. However, the study only summarized the challenges to gender equality and laid out a framework to shape in broad way future initiatives for reducing gender gaps in a range of dimensions. There is no specific attention to gauge the efficiency of PRSP implementation to date from gender perspective to date. In this sense, the study failed to produce the anticipated output.

“The status of women in regards to budgetary allocation for women and marginalized groups”

The study assessed correctly that women get little benefit from national budget in Bangladesh because of low allocation to women’s policies and weak efficiency of expenditures regarding those allocations: “about 10 to 25% of the resources allocated to the MOWCA remained unused”. However the main reasons given were holistically defined as “dominance of politicians and donors in the implementation of budget, “non identification of women’s issues, lack of a gender strategy, and poor monitoring and evaluation. In line with the explanations, recommendations related to “the efficiency of the MOWCA” and the identification of “women’s problems before planning development programmes”. In brief, there was no specific approach to change the nature of dialogue with the government or to put in light some specific approach where the government is not involved yet.

“Study report on the status of the implementation of national policy and international covenants from gender aspect”

The study is an institutional and operational analysis of the inventory of all policies and laws enacted in Bangladesh for women. There was no benchmark on how to monitor better the effective implementation of women’s policies, although the conclusion stated that “laws do not bring about substantive changes in women’s position unless they address the strategic gender issues [...] some measures at macro, meso, micro and individuals levels need to be taken”.

Annex 6: List of Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BIDS	Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies
BNPS	Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSOs	Community Service Organizations
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFID	UK Department for International Development
IED	Institute of Environmental Development
JAS	Joint Assistance Strategy
JICA	the Japan International Cooperation Agency
LCG WAGE	The Local Consultative Group on Women and Gender Equality
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MOWCA	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
MTBF	Medium-Term Budget Framework
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NAP	National Action Plan
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NCWD	National Council for Women Development
NSAPR-II	National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction, or NSAPR-II
PfA	Beijing Platform for Action
PRSP	The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
TdR	The Terms of Reference
WB	World Bank