

**Observance of
International Women's Day 2013**



LGED
Committed to Establish Gender Equality





BUG & LCS member, Sunamganj, CBRMP, LGED



**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department**

Observance of International Women's Day 2013

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Publication: March, 2013

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Message



I am very happy with this publication on the programme of LGED in observance of the International Women's Day 2013. LGED organized a comprehensive programme to observe IWD in all districts and at national level in Dhaka. Theme of the IWD 2013 'Women's right to information; commitment to build up a digital Bangladesh' was absolutely relevant with LGED's work. LGED, since its inception, has been playing an advocacy role to promote women's participation in development. In Institutionalizing gender, LGED has its own strategy and time-based action plan. For achieving gender

equality in LGED's projects, women's participation is highly encouraged at all stages of the project management.

I do confirm that LGED will continue its effort to contribute towards women empowerment during the coming years with more long-term initiatives in attaining gender equality as their rights, and hopefully this document would significantly contribute towards that.

Md. Wahidur Rahman
Chief Engineer, LGED



Acknowledgement

On behalf of the Gender and Development Forum of LGED, I would like to express my sincere appreciation and earnest thanks to the chief guest, Secretary, Local Government Division, Mr Abu Alam Md. Shahid Khan for embellishing the International Women's Day 2013 observance of LGED by his presence in the occasion. Our sincere

thanks to all the Executive Engineers, Senior Assistant Engineers and Upazila Engineers, who organized different events to observe the International Women's Day at local levels across the country. Our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to the LGED's Chief Engineer, Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman for his continuous guidance and all out support to make the event successful. We are thankful to the headquarter officials and all project directors, officers and staff for their hard and collective work in organizing the event. We express our gratitude and sincere appreciation to all those who attended the events of the day. Our special thanks to different partners, institutions and colleagues for their co-operation all through the arrangement of the observance.

Finally, our deepest appreciation goes to the 9 extraordinary women, who have reached the greatest success through their relentless efforts and determination. LGED feels proud having the scope to support them in their progress.

Abul Kalam Azad

Additional Chief Engineer and Chairman

LGED Gender Forum

Introduction

The 8th March, the International Women's Day (IWD), has its glorious history emerged through enormous revolutionary events and achievements of women's movements worldwide.

On 8th March, 1857 the women workers of sewing factories came out to the streets of New York, USA protesting against the subhuman environment prevailing in the workplace, minimum wages and daily 12 hour work. Police devastated the peaceful procession. After three years of continued protest, on 8th March, 1860 the women workers of the sewing factories became successful to mobilize themselves for establishing their own trade union. In 1899, the first conference of women on anti-war was organized in the Hague, the Netherlands. From 1905 to 1907, a huge number of women actively took part in the struggle against Russian imperialism. Later in 1908, 15,000 women marched through New York city demanding shorter hours of work, better payment and voting rights. To commemorate all those events, different national and International organizations felt the need to mark a day as the International Day of observance. After that feelings, 8th March was declared as the International Women's Day in second International Conference of Working Women in Copenhagen held in 1910.

Later, the United Nations gave recognition to IWD in 1975, and since then every year this day is being observed under certain themes. The theme for 2013 was -'Women's right to information; commitment to build up a digital Bangladesh'. Bangladesh started observing the IWD in early 1972 and from then this day is being observed by different government departments, development organizations and civil societies with greater importance.

IWD was first observed by LGED in 2010. In 2012 the day was observed very comprehensively under the initiatives of Gender & Development Forum of LGED. The day was simultaneously observed at national and at district levels.

The whole initiative to observe the day is to honour and give recognition to women's struggles and contribution towards human progress.

LGED and Women's Advancement

Till to date, LGED has made significant progress in mainstreaming gender at its central and project management levels. LGED's rural development activities have created significant scope of employment for destitute rural women through Labour Contracting Society (LCS) ensuring equal opportunities comparing with men. This has brought a radical change in the lives and livelihood of rural women. In Small Scale Water Sector Projects of LGED, women are playing important roles in the Water Management Cooperative Associations (WMCA) and its sub-committees. In the urban sector, LGED has made provisions of income generating activities for poor women through introducing credit and savings schemes. Another approach LGED adopted for gender equality is the involvement of women in its Project Implementation Committees. LGED is also active in promoting women entrepreneurs with introducing women's section in all rural markets constructed by LGED. Apart from that, ensuring involvement of poor fisher women in beel resource management initiated by Community Based Resource Management Project (CBRMP) at Sunamganj and Haor Infrastructure and Livelihood Improvement Project (HILIP) is a big initiative of LGED to ensure women's entitlement in natural resources.

To ensure institutionalization of gender, LGED has introduced a long-term strategy (2008-2015). The strategy is being regularly reviewed to keep it fit to contemporary issues and policies. To carry out the strategy a Gender and Development Forum has been formed. The forum regularly reviews the strategy to keep it updated. Over the last year more than 103,003 women from rural areas and urban slums of the country have been trained to be organized, self-employed, and economically self-reliant. These women have successfully got inducted to different social institutions. Sector based monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the gender action plan and assessment of its impact has been included in annual development programs and it is being conducted every year. For creating an atmosphere congenial to women at work places and at various installations such as UP Complex Building, Ferry Ghat, Growth Center, Bus Terminal, Pouro (Municipal) Park, Markets built by LGED, separate rooms and toilets have been constructed. Moreover arrangement for sheds at the worksites have been made for the children of the women labourers. Through reconstructing primary schools and roads at interior villages have ensured a great contribution to increase enrollment and regular attendance of girls in school.

Women's Day Observed

LGED organized a very comprehensive programme to observe the IWD 2013. The programme was organized on 27 March, 2013 and held on the LGED premises in Dhaka. The programme included a seminar, thematic photo gallery, and recognition of the best 9 women beneficiaries from rural, water, and urban sectors for their significant achievements to become self-reliant. All the 9 winners were honored with crest, certificate and cash prize.



The programme was inaugurated by the Secretary of LGD Mr. Abu Alam Md. Shahid Khan, representatives of development partners and officials from different departments and institutions of the Government of Bangladesh along with communities work with LGED. The Chief Engineer of LGED, Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman chaired the inaugural session.

Chief Engineer, LGED, Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman



Chief Engineer of LGED, Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman expressed his satisfaction that he could arrange the observance of International Women's Day 2013 like previous years.

In his speech he drew the detailed background of the women's right-based issues and highlighted of different international conventions and strategies developed to bring gender fairness and equality to ensure increased access of women to development opportunities such as

education, health, nutrition and livelihood and curbing the offences like violence against women.

He mentioned Bangladesh is not lagging behind to promote gender equality. He said the Constitution of Bangladesh has ensured equal rights of men and women to all opportunities irrespective of religion, caste, creed and place of birth. He referred to the manifestoes of election declared by the daughter of Father of the Nation Bangubandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Sheikh Hasina where she has given priority of women's empowerment. The country has National Women Development Guidelines and Action Plan that was introduced in 1997 and all ministries, department are now following that guidelines and that has resulted in significant development of women's improved values and economic developments at different spheres of the society.

He briefly discussed about the history of the LGED and its pioneering roles in gender development. In 1995, with the introduction of small-scale water sector the programmes of gender equality started in LGED. Later, in 2000 Gender and Development Forum was formed. To ensure gender equality in all sectors of LGED a Gender Equality Strategy and Activity Plan for the year 2002-2007 was developed, and later after reviewing the progress of that strategy paper a revised Gender Equality Strategy and Activity Plan 2008 -2015 has been prepared and that again has been taken in the process to make it updated.

Mentioning the progress of women's enrollment in LGED activities, he gave a brief statistical presentation. It showed, during the fiscal year 2011 -12 through different activities in rural sector 11.48, in urban 1.99 and in small scale water sector 0.84 lakh women days employment were created. Apart from that, under self-employment activities 46,000 women raised savings of Tk. 4.6 lakh and took loans amounting of Tk. 217.18 core for investing different self-employment activities.

He discussed on the theme of 2013 and its relevance with the strategy of LGED that gives priority on access to information through digitalization of the MIS of LGED.

He concluded that LGED is actively working, and is committed to keep working to make Bangladesh a middle-income country by 2021 through building Digital Bangladesh under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. He thanked the audience, particularly the Secretary of LGD, for giving his valuable time to attend the event which was indeed very encouraging to LGED.

Secretary, Local Government Division, Mr. Abu Alam Md. Shahid Khan



Since the beginning of civilization women have constantly been contributing to development and progresses of mankind along with men . In this age of globalization it is impossible to tackle the challenges of the 21 century without integrated efforts of men and women. For that the Constitution of Bangladesh has ensured equal rights for men and women at all stages of state's activities and public life. The government is committed to build

a gender- equity based prosperous Bangladesh by 2021.

Mr. Abu Alam Md. Shahid Khan appreciated different innovative activities of LGED for promoting gender equality that resulted in significant progress for women.

He mentioned, at different areas women are working with full efficiency and which is more noticeable that they are now more conscious about their rights and dignity. He said that when the, Father of the nation Bangubandhu Sheikh Muzibur Rahman initiated the special rehabilitation programme for women freedom fighters, the door was opened for the womenfolk with enormous possibilities. He highlighted on the necessity of access to information and discussed on the theme of the year. He quoted the remarks by the honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina "the prime condition of women development is empowerment of women", and urged the audience to take an oath for building a women friendly Bangladesh towards a social system with gender equality.

Award for Achievement



On this occasion of IWD 2013, LGED awarded 9 women from rural, urban and water sector for their outstanding contribution to become self-reliant and motivating others to become financially independent. In all cases, those poor women had to go through enormous struggles and from an uncertainty could make them shifted to the hope for better future. As financially, socially too they could have established them selves in a position to exercise their rights in the family and in the community. A few of them have become the members of local government institutions, are representing their community to development forums, taking the lead in mitigating social injustices. Each of them are now an inspiration not only for their families but for the community as well for making a better future.

Brief introduction of the Nine women won the award of appreciation for becoming self- reliant and contributing to the development of others

Jaheda Begum (41) from Rabarbari village, Sunamganj with 5 children was very poor and depended on small income of her husband's day laboring. They were living in severe uncertainty. But the situation changed with her joining the credit group of Community Based Resource Management Project (CBRMP) in 2004. She got the opportunity of getting credit and training on different income generating activities. Taking loan around Tk. 28,000 for three times, she raised a broiler farm and that has been giving her family a constant income of around Tk. 36,000 each month. Apart from that she works as a para-vet and selling that service to the villagers she earns around Tk. 3000 per month. She is very happy with her earning and the expertise. The family is now self sufficient to meet all the daily needs and is able to make some savings that has made them secured from crisis. Following her, many poor people have been able to change their lives with some sustained livelihoods taking supports from CBRMP -LGED.





Sondha Rani (36) from Nachpara village, Pathorghata, Borguna with three children and disable husband was undergoing a very hard life having shortage of food and other essentials those were met by her lone income earned through working in houses of neighbors. But the situation changed when she joined as an LCS worker initiated by RDP-16 of LGED. Working around 18 years in LCS under 35

contracts she has gathered immense skill on different LCS based activities and that has given her quite a good income. She now owns land of 66 decimal, pond for fish culture a good house, 4 cows and a good number of poultry birds. She is a fully self-reliant woman and there is no shortage of money to meet her family needs. She has become a successful leader of LCS group and a very effective decision maker in her community.



Kazi Sharmin (35) from village Garakhola, Modhikhali Upazial, Faridpur. She got married while studying higher secondary in 1990 and after that she could not continue her education. Husband was involved in fish business. After giving birth to two girl children the family fell into conflicts and at last with her two children Sarmin returned to her father's home. She with assistance

from Government Women's Department learned sewing and boutique and to free herself from her father's burden she took a shop under RDP-24 project of LGED and started selling her products with other commodities. It opened her future. Now she has a capital of Tk. 2000,000 and four workers work in her shop. She has a factory for boutique works where 20 women are working. Her children are studying in college and school. She has no more anxiety in life. Many women have got encouragement from her and they are taking efforts to become self-reliant. She is an icon for the destitute women to get their way out of distress.



Rup Banu (45) from Lobipur Sadar Upazila, Lakshimpur is a member of Agrani Gandhabbopur sub-project of Small Scale Water Resource Development Project (SSWRDP), LGED. She could not go to school due to extreme poverty. She was married to a poor day laborer and had to do domestic work in neighboring families to maintain the family. Having no homestead land, they had to take

shelter on her father's land constructing a thatched house. When they were with no hope for future, LGED's road maintenance work in their locality opened the scope of income. She joined the work and saving some money from her monthly income started agricultural activities with her husband taking a lease of a small land. It saved money cutting the cost of food, and it helped them to buy a own homestead of 8 decimal.

Later Rup Banu joined one Water Management Cooperative Society (WMCS) of of Agrani Gandhabbopur sub-project of SSWRDP and brought a big change in her life. She took different agriculture trainings and expanded her agricultural activities to 36 decimal leased land. Rup Banu got an extra training on seed preservation and that gave her an extra income along with other agricultural activities.

Now her family is able to meet the daily needs. She can defray the educational cost of her son and by this time she has given marriage of her two daughters. Her house is now with tin roof, has own tube-well, she has bought a rice thrashing machine for increased seasonal income. She is now very happy and an active member of agriculture sub-committee of WMCS. **Rup Banu** is an inspiring woman to others for becoming self-reliant.

Ranu Begum (45) from Bikona village, Jhalokathi was a poor and only bread winner of the family with two children. She was running her family with day laboring and could hardly maintain the family needs. But after joining WMCS under SSWRDP of LGED a change came in her family. She got training on different livelihood activities by the project and taking loan from WMCS she started some income generating activities including poultry farming, cow rearing, fish culture and so on. That made a good income to her family over the year and resulted in buying 66 decimal of agricultural land. She is now self-reliant and dreams for a better future.



Tanjila Katun (34) from Haripur village of Jhila union in Chapainababganj belonged to a vulnerable family. She was the youngest of five brothers and sisters. At a very the early age she was married and was soon deserted and had to be back to her poor father's family. Her life became uncertain and totally hopeless.

However, at one stage, she got the opportunity to join a WMCS of SSWRDP of LGED at Dariapur. It brought a significant change in her miserable life. She got training on livestock and taking loan from WMCS, she first started to rear poultry and goat and later taking more loan she expanded her livestock rearing activities including poultry farming, cattle breeding, ox fattening and so on. That made a good income for her family over the years and resulted in buying a land of 33 decimal.

She is a management committee member of a WMCS and a leading woman in the area for initiating different social activities for the fellow members in her community. With her initiative and assistance of LGED a literacy programme started in her area and that has made 180 poor people literate. In Samilty, she takes active roles in different social development issues and raising awareness of the Smaily members on gender and development, women rights, prevention of violence against women and so on. In her area, she is much known for her roles and social development activities. She has a plan to initiate some activities for the women and child health care for her Samilty members.

Through hard work, training, presentence efforts Tanjila today is a successful woman to make her family self-reliant and an encouragement for others to achieving that.



Shiuli Akhtar (28) from Mushlibad Basti, Jamalpur with two children. Her husband is a teacher with a very poor earning, and the family was acutely insolvent. She joined in a savings group of Secondary Town Integrated Flood Protection Project-2 (STIFPP-2) of LGED and that brought a change in her family. Taking loan from the group around Tk 10,000 and training on sewing she bought two sewing machines and started tailoring work. It worked very well and at present she has a sewing training center. Now she has a total earning of Tk. 15,000 per month. She is very grateful to the STIFPP-2, which has contributed largely to make her family solvent.



Sonia Begum (27) being displaced by river erosion took shelter in Dhalpur Basti, Dhaka in 1991. She got married but was deserted by her husband with one child. She fell in a big problem. She was too uncertain with her life, but in 2009 some scopes came with the Urban Partnership For Poverty Reduction Project (UPPRP)-LGED activities in her locality. She joined one Community Development Committee (CDC) of

UPPRP and got a grant of Tk. 5,000. She started a cloth vending business with that and later taking a loan of Tk. 10,000 from her CDC she expanded her business and started a tailoring shop. Now she has a capital of Tk.100,000 and earns a regular good income. She by this time trained more than 20 poor women in tailoring work and they are now, through tailoring, making quite a good income. Sonia now leads her CDC and under her initiatives the CDC has taken many development activities including waste management, handicraft activities, boutique work, tailoring and so on, and those have significant impact on creating income of many poor and deserted women.



Nargis Begum (40) from Chakmuktar Naogaon, was born in a poor family and married to a poor day labourer. Her life was with full of struggle and hardly could meet the needs of living. But after joining Urban Partnership For Poverty Reduction Project (UPPRP) of LGED she could change her life and bring economic solvency in the family. She got training and utilized the

grant from the project in small business and expanded that slowly she has brought significant wellbeing in her family. She has now savings of Tk. 16,160. She has got training on better living with good environment and health, and awareness of women rights and justice. Her children now go to school. There is no shortage of food. Now her only dream is to make her children properly educated and she is very hopeful that she can do that. She is very grateful to LGED for the project assistance and bringing them in group for development.

Photo Gallery : Advancement of women through innovations



Audience





Observance of IWD in Districts



LGED observed IWD 2013 in 64 districts along with the national level programme. To observe the day under the leadership of concerned Executive Engineers every district brought out rallies and arranged discussions on the theme of the IWD 2013.







The way forward...

LGED is committed to promote women's rights and gender equality in all spheres. It has its own strategy for that with short and long term goals. The strategy is being continuously reviewed by a Gender Forum dedicated to monitoring and implementing the gender strategy plan of LGED. The theme of this year was very significant and it is aligned with LGED's strategic options. LGED is engaged to increase the provisions and scopes to create opportunities for the girls and women in terms of their increased access to school, market, work and other civic facilities for their development. Through this seminar and other activities in marking the IWD, LGED has shared and learned different views and that will be materialized to strengthen the strategy to work for women's empowerment toward establishing the rights of equal share of them in all development opportunities.

A few key initiatives of LGED to institutionalize gender policy in LGED

- ✓ Taking efforts for mainstreaming gender equality in LGED
- ✓ Monitoring and evaluating project progress disaggregating gender
- ✓ Regular reviewing and evaluating the strategy of gender equality
- ✓ Arranging training and orientation courses to make the staff aware about gender and development perspectives
- ✓ Producing books and other materials on gender issues and policies
- ✓ Arranging dialogues on gender aspects between all projects of LGED observing International Women's Day
- ✓ Building a network with other institution to promote gender values
- ✓ Ensuring support to gender needs, like thorough establishing a Day Care Center and so on

Women participation and development by different activities by LGED

Women employed and earned	
Rural sector:	11.48 Lac
Urban sector:	1.99 Lac
Water sector:	0.84 Lac
No.of women taken lone for self employment	46,000
Loan taken by women for self employment	217.16 Crore
Women mobilized for raising savings	450,000
Amount saving by women	32.83 Crore
No. of women members in committees	87,993
No of Shops owned by women that built by LGED	395
Women run shops for business	63,971(Rural) 8,971(Urban)
Training received on gender awareness),	2387 (Staff), 130168 (Beneficiary) (of that 14,676 are women)
Women need based facilities, like separate rooms, toilets etc. introduced at UP Complex Building, Ferry Ghat, Growth Center, Bus Terminal, Pouro (Municipal) Park, Markets.	133 toilets built in growth center and market

Source: LGED Progress Report 2011-12

