

Gender & Development Strategy for BADP II

Gender Mainstreaming in BADP II

**DELTA 14 Abdara Road, University Town, Peshawar
Project: Barani Area Development Project II
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I. Introduction

1. Background

The policy and planning documents for BADP II, and Asian Development Bank's loan documents, explicitly call for effective participation of women in the project, both at the institutional and community levels. Traditional socio-cultural constraints facing women of BADP's target districts, including mobility, purdah, low literacy rates, and low participation rates in the decision making process, result in a number of barriers to effective participation of women in projects. Survival strategies force low income rural women/ de facto heads of households, to work outside their courtyards but within their own village boundaries. Effective participation of women is affected adversely by line agencies and govt. service structures being either exclusively all-male departments or with male orientations. Gender segregation prevents all-male govt. staff, from accessing women and effectively involving them in service/ development activities at the community level. Therefore, through a gender equity strategy knitted in the design of the project, BADP has been structured to help overcome barriers to women's participation in project interventions.

2. Gender Analysis

The design of BADP caters sensitively to effectively involve women in the project, both as beneficiaries and as active participants. Measures for affirmative action, together with an enabling environment, and requisite capacity enhancement at the institutional level, and formation of community women's organisations and inclusion of women-specific interventions at the village level, effectively provides for a highly gender equitable design of BADP II.

2. (1). Affirmative Action: Placement of female staff at organizational level

As per the design, at the institutional level, placement of female staff in the capacity of Gender Coordinators (GCs) in each district, Gender Monitoring Officers and Female Credit Officers placed with NGOs, and a team comprising of both females and males for social organization responsibilities, assisted and backstopped by a Gender Coordinator at the PLU, should provide technically, a perfect framework for addressing gender concerns. How effectively this "perfect framework" is utilized would depend on the people placed on these positions; whether they have the technical competence to address gender concerns and have the sensitized attitude for handling this responsibility. A lacuna in the former could be addressed through various training programs but absence of the latter could bear totally detrimental impact on the project results.

Given the lack of women's access to public sector services, extension and other benefits, BADP has provided for placement of women in line agencies, for providing technical assistance to BADP staff and communities. Female Range Forest Officers (11), Livestock Extensionists (female, 11) and Agriculture Extension Officers (female, 11) have been provided for in the design. Most of the staff under this provision have been recruited and placed with the relevant line department already.

Additionally training for health practitioners and teachers has been provided for in the design to address the vacuum of qualified female social service deliverers at the village level.

2. (2). *Enabling Environment:*

Affirmative Action measures commensurate with logistical and accommodation support provided to female staff, including a hostel and separate office space, provides the requisite enabling environment for females to work for BADP.

2. (3). *Programmatic Interventions targeting Women:*

Interventions targeting women at the village level have been systematized in the program with budgetary allocations and resources given in project design as follows:

- Total project resources allocated to women-specific inputs amount to over 20% of project budget costs.
- 40% of all Village Organisations will be Women Organisations WOs.
- Financial services of not less than 30% will be extended to women borrowers.
- Female staff, as aforementioned, will be placed in line agencies as incremental staff.
- Placement of Gender staff at PLU and DIUs and of female staff with NGOs will be made responsible for targeting women in project interventions.
- Some of the project activities within each category of program component have been made women-specific. Some examples are as follows:
 - NRM & agriculture: kitchen gardening, nurseries and fruit and vegetable preservation.
 - Rural financial services: 30% to be extended to women borrowers and capacitated in skills, IGAs and MED.
 - Village level development: 40% of all VOs to be WOs with requisite training imparted in leadership and other skills to women activists.
 - Education and health interventions under village level development to be conducted through skills training, community schools and health campaigns.
- Gender training as part of institutional support arrangement to be imparted at organizational and community levels.

3. BADP Current Situational Analysis

Given the aforementioned measures, regarding institutional placement of female staff / Gender staff in BADP, partner NGOs and line agencies, with appropriate logistical and accommodation and other support provided to them, and women-specific programmatic interventions identified, **the *design very effectively lays down the strategic directions for BADP's gender and development strategy.***

Already BADP has recruited highly competent and experienced staff on the positions of GCs at the district level, and provided them at places with the requisite hostel and office facilities.

However with the *requisite coordination support from the PLU missing to date*, the staff is yet to embark on a meaningful gender program. Unless this support is forthcoming with necessary attitudinal changes from the GC at the PLU, the staff would continue to face impediments in program implementation at the district level. (This was categorically stated at the Gender Consultation conducted in Peshawar on the 14th and 15th of May, 2004, during the session on 'Identification of Problems'.)

Lack of support from the district management at the DIUs and the DDs' attitude was stated as a serious major problem in many districts.

Lack of coordination, and an array of expertise amongst the GC staff, has resulted in an arrangement of diverse initiatives taken for gender interventions. A *uniform work-plan* through the necessary coordination and support provided from the PLU, would bring more harmony and synergy to the program. High level of uniformity in the early stages of program implementation always provides for more effective progress and process monitoring. Once the gender program is successfully underway, a more flexible and rather iterative approach is called for.

Most of the program components under the Gender Equity Strategy are highly dependent on successful social organization process to be conducted at the village level. If the process is thwarted in favour of target orientation, specifically to cater for implementation of rural infrastructure schemes demanded by some influential, the raison d'être of the project, that seeks poverty alleviation through participatory development stands jeopardized. A *shift from target orientation in favour of effective social organization* to precede any identification or implementation of rural infrastructure schemes is necessary. However 'entry points' to gain credibility for BADP at the community level should be aimed for. Entry points are minor program activities undertaken easily to expedite social organization/ mobilization in a community. This entails a meaningful role for gender staff in the identification and implementation of rural infrastructure schemes.

Early stages of design and implementation of a Gender Equity Strategy and an operational plan is bound to produce reluctance, confusion and impediments. To overcome such challenges and produce synergistic results, it is necessary to *provide a platform for exchange of experiences, communication and collaboration to the Gender staff*. This can be easily achievable through monthly meetings of all Gender staff at the PLU, with the GC, and the PD chairing it.

A general tendency to implement programmatic interventions that are considered women-specific activities, but which are quite ineffective, is also observed in BADP II. Obsession continues, with kitchen gardening and food preservation for rural women, failing to recognize that farmers include women who work in fields on vegetable production and do not require kitchen gardens to cultivate vegetables. Similarly food preservation focusing on tomato ketchup and marmalades that are neither marketable in the rural area nor comparable to multi-national industries production, fail to generate income for women. Documented and anecdotal data continue to establish women as farmers, engaged in agricultural and livestock activities, but meaningful activities in NRM sector continue to target males only. This holds true for other components also, as a *welfare approach is seen more appropriate for females while a development approach is opted for male*

II. BADP Gender Strategy

BADP is a poverty alleviation area development project that aims to reduce poverty and improve the status of women in the targeted districts of NWFP. Toward BADP goal, poverty will be reduced through improved NRM practices and rural infrastructure, increasing number of enterprise active women and improving rural livelihood opportunities and employment. Women will be targeted by increasing their access to resources, services, livelihood and employment.

BADP will be implemented in 11 districts, through district and community level stakeholders, where services are delivered through partnership with both government and non-governmental organisations including the, NGOs, CBOs and a range of line agencies. The PLU will oversee the project with overall management and coordination responsibilities, and district management of the program will be handled by the DIUs.

BADP design document calls for active participation of women in the project, both as beneficiary and participant. Against this foundation, a draft gender equity strategy is presented for consultation and discussion with stakeholders.

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